

“Christ Came To Die”

Luke 9:20-27

August 27, 2017

INTRO: God gave me an epiphany...

Next 2 sermons... most defining, & to some, distasteful

Explains & exposes the chasm between:

Those who claim Christ... vs.

Those Christ will claim.

Truth in advertising... too many sold a bill of goods.

Consequences: It's like “fake syrup!”

CONTEXT: Focus on “Why Christ came...”

- Seek & Save
- Serve (vs. being served)
- Today...

- *“In this session, we’ll explore the amazing truth that Jesus willingly suffered and sacrificed Himself in order to provide a way for humanity to experience reconciliation with God. As **Luke 9 will show us, followers of Jesus are also to embrace the call to suffer & sacrifice** – all in service of proclaiming the message of the gospel and advancing God’s kingdom in this world...”*

- DisciplesPath

BIG IDEA:

***Jesus came to suffer and to sacrifice –
AND to call us to do the same.***

- Christ CAME:
 - Jesus suffered
 - Jesus sacrificed
- Christians GO:
 - Christ calls Christians to Suffer
 - Christ calls Christians to Sacrifice
- Christ Commands & Christians Choose 2 things:
 - Deny Self

“To deny yourself means to give up or surrender all you have and all you are to Jesus. Human management is certain to get in the way of divine ownership. Therefore, living as a disciple of Christ means continually choosing to set aside or even abandon your plans, your interests, your desires, your hopes, and your dreams in order to follow His plans and His interests in this world.” –

DisciplesPath

- Pick up YOUR Cross
 - Daily
 - AND then “Follow Me” (a.k.a. OBEY)

T/S: Many people are comfortable with the THEORY of surrender and sacrifice and even suffering... BUT... these are not “theories” to be balanced with “real life,” they are Christ’s commands that serve as the fruit of “real life.” - JDP

TEXT:

Luke 9:23

*“And He was saying to them **ALL**, “If **ANYONE** wishes to come after Me (a.k.a. be My disciple) he **MUST** deny himself, and take up **HIS/HER** cross **DAILY**, and **FOLLOW Me.**”*

T/S: Mutually exclusive principle: (black/white; dead/alive... NOT faith/faithfulness!)

I. SURRENDER

- a. Suffering Savior (Isaiah 53)
- b. Suffering Saints (2 Timothy 3:12)
- c. Spiritual Seduction
 - i. Compliment vs. Compromise/corruption (love of wife, kids, adulteress)
 - ii. Cheap-grace, middle-road, lukewarm liars (per Jesus, Paul, John, Titus...)
- d. Sent
- e. Serve
- f. Shrink-back...

➤ **VIDEO:** David Platt

T/S: “As you contemplate the reality of Jesus’ suffering, allow yourself to be vulnerable and honest about your own struggles. Ask for guidance on how to continue living for God’s glory even during suffering.” – DP

II. SOVEREIGNTY (see Job)

- a. Slay-me
- b. Sickness
- c. Sustainer
- d. Short-sightedness
- e. Strength thru suffering
- f. Sing a song of praise

➤ **VIDEO:** “Though You Slay Me” (John Piper)

III. SAFETY

- a. Sure of danger...
- b. Security IS Jesus!

➤ **VIDEO:** “Afghanistan Witness”

*** “The blood of the martyrs is the seed of the Church.” – Tertullian

“Living as disciples of Christ will require us to make sacrifice(s). And let’s be clear, we’re not talking about vague & general sacrifices, such as giving up the pleasure of immorality or releasing the opportunity to be filthy rich. Instead, the sacrifices we make to follow Jesus will be both real & concrete.” – DisciplesPath

- i. **Matthew 10:37-39:** “Anyone who puts ANY-thing before OR above Christ is not worthy of Him... and that’s according to HIM.” – JDP

- ii. **Matthew 16:24-27**: “According to Jesus the Christ, coming after Jesus the Christ and faithfully following Jesus the Christ... is DEFINED by DENYING one’s self.” – JDP
- iii. **Luke 9:57-62**: Some say they will follow... but then come up with excuses. Jesus uses compassionate confrontation to clarify where people really are...
- iv. **Luke 14:31-33**: Count the cost... pay the price... OR you cannot be His disciple.

*** Witness MUST win out over safety!

T/S: This is why any and all opposition to complete, faithful obedience is so damning & dangerous...

- Any non-suffering, non-sacrificial gospel is a false gospel!
- You won’t find any balancing of obedience in the Bible...
- Hebrews 11 is not filled with creative jugglers of Jesus’s grace...
 - Think about Esther; Daniel; 3 boys; Stephen; John; Paul...
 - Jesus!

IV. SACRIFICE

- a. How much would you sacrifice for Jesus?
- b. How does your faith fit into our social norms?
- c. How long would you stand strong with our Savior?
- d. Can you smile in the midst of your storms?
- e. Are you truly living Spirit-led?

- f. How sympathetic are you to souls that are lost?
- g. What do the sheep & shepherds seek amidst suffering?
- h. Do you see the supernatural affects of faith & grace around you?
- i. How selflessly are you serving your Savior?

Four SACRIFICES of biblical followers:

PLANS

POSITIONS

POSSESSIONS

RELATIONSHIPS

“God will have no rivals for our affections. If we’re ever forced to choose between honoring God and honoring our loved ones, we must be ready to choose God unequivocally. Those who would stand in the way of God’s interests in our lives or try to discourage us from obeying Him are to be denied the authority to dictate our direction. God is our most sacred relationship, and God alone.” – DisciplesPath

➤ **VIDEO:** “I Am N” (Voice of the Martyrs)

T/S: Jim Elliot & Nate Saint inspirational examples...

V. SADNESS

- a. Sad reality... American dream vs. spiritual nightmare?
- b. Shocking, screaming, shivering revelations...
- c. Simple-truth...
- d. Straight-forward reality...
- e. SEE the Seriousness (please!)

➤ **VIDEO:** “Victoria” (Nigerian nightmare)

CLOSE:

VI. SEPARATION

- a. Hebrews 10, 11, 12 (NO separation)
- b. Suffering Savior & Suffering Saints (Shepherd/sheep)
- c. You can't separate faith from faithfulness!!!

VII. SCRIPTURE

- a. 2 Timothy 3:12
- b. Romans 12:1-2
- c. Matthew 10:16

➤ **READ aloud:** **Philippians 1:1 – 2:2**

Philippians 1:29

*“For it has been granted to you
on Christ’s behalf not only to believe in Him,
but also to suffer for Him.”*

T/S: I'm going to close with one last song after we pray... Let the lyrics feed your soul and fuel your spirit. We ARE the PEOPLE of the CROSS!

Let's Pray

➤ **VIDEO:** Selah – “People of the Cross”

DISCIPLE'S PATH NOTES & OUTLINE:

TITLE: Christ Came To Die

BIG IDEA: Jesus came to suffer and to sacrifice – and to call us to do the same.

INTRO: In this session, we'll explore the amazing truth that Jesus willingly suffered and sacrificed Himself in order to provide a way for humanity to experience reconciliation with God. As Luke 9 will show us, followers of Jesus are also to embrace the call to suffer & sacrifice – all in service of proclaiming the message of the gospel and advancing God's kingdom in this world (Luke 9:20-27).

Illustration: The storyline, opening & closing lines, and ultimate message of Charles Dickens' "A Tale of Two Cities" is offered as a cultural portrait of sacrificial love...

REFLECT: Prepare to engage the climax of Jesus' mission in this world – His death as a sacrifice for the forgiveness of our sin.

KNOW the STORY:

The truth that Jesus is both fully God and fully human is a foundational doctrine of the Christian faith. And yet it's often hard to imagine Jesus as a genuine human being. It's difficult to think of Jesus, our Lord, encountering such human experiences as loneliness, rejection, and physical pain...

Yet... (see Luke 9:20-27 & make a list of the promises therein)

UNPACK the STORY:

- I. Jesus Suffered
 - a. Jesus suffered the CROSS & the CUP
 - b. Jesus suffered LONLINESS
 - c. Jesus suffered ANONYMITY
 - d. Jesus suffered REJECTION
 - e. Jesus suffered SCORN
 - i. Criticized
 - ii. Slandered
 - iii. Mocked
 - iv. Wrongly-accused
 - v. Plotted-against
 1. Yet He did not retaliate...
 2. See 2 Timothy 2:21ff
 3. Jesus was never granted a pass from suffering. He endured all the pain... not to mention the spiritual torment included with carrying the full weight of our sin. Jesus demonstrated His power by passing through His suffering in victory – and His example inspires us to strive for the same!
 - a. Contrast Christ's obedience with cultural "balance."

- b. “In the name of give-and-take & worldly-balance, humans will almost always subtract suffering and sacrifice from their pool of options and replace them with self-serving substitutes... Whereas, by contrast, Christ-likeness calls for a simple & straight-forward ‘Yes Lord!’ – no matter what.” – JDP
- c. Faithful obedience DENIES self, while faith-less balance DISGUISES self
- d. “You can’t take out the U & I from suffering & sacrifice!” – JDP

II. Jesus Sacrificed

a. One overwhelming CROSS

- i. During Jesus’ day the cross was nothing but an instrument of shame, torture, and execution.
- ii. For Jesus, the cross was more than painful & humiliating
- iii. For Jesus, the cross was a sentence of ultimate sacrifice!
 1. A sentence Jesus willingly chose to carry
 2. A sentence Jesus took with “unflinching obedience”
 3. See Hebrews 12:1-2!!!

b. Two obedient CHOICES: (Note: “...as you seek to live as Christ’s disciple in this world, you must make these choices as well.” – DisciplesPath)

- i. You must choose to deny yourself!

1. “To deny yourself means to give up or surrender all you have and all you are to Jesus. Human management is certain to get in the way of divine ownership. Therefore, living as a disciple of Christ means continually choosing to set aside or even abandon your plans, your interests, your desires, your hopes, and your dreams in order to follow His plans and His interests in this world.” – DisciplesPath
2. Jesus said this is a DAILY endeavor!
- ii. You must choose to take up your own cross!
 1. The cross points to Jesus’ faithful execution of God’s will.
 2. Jesus made a willing sacrifice.
 3. As His disciple, you must make the same choice/sacrifice.
 4. Having set aside control of your own life, you must take up whatever work Jesus calls you to perform.

ENGAGE:

- “Many Christians are comfortable with the theory of surrendering to God or submitting to His will.
- We understand why we should surrender...
- We agree that the concept of surrender & submission is important...

- BUT... we often forget that surrendering is NOT a theory...
- “Surrender” is a verb!
- Read Psalm 37: 5-9
- Read 2 Timothy 2:21-26 (again)

MEMORY VERSE: Philippians 1:29

*“For it has been granted to you
on Christ’s behalf not only to believe in Him,
but also to suffer for Him.”*

FRIENDS In SUFFERING:

- We receive many blessings because of the suffering Jesus endured...
 - A chance to experience forgiveness of our sins
 - A chance to experience reconciliation with God in this life
 - A chance to experience eternal life
 - Knowing our King can literally empathize with us...
 - Knowing our King does literally sympathize with our struggles
 - See Hebrews 4:14-16
 - See Hebrews 5:7-9

T/S: “As you contemplate the reality of Jesus’ suffering, allow yourself to be vulnerable and honest about your own struggles. Ask for guidance on how to continue living for God’s glory even during suffering.” – DP

PERSONAL STUDY:

- II. Jesus Calls Us To Suffer
 - a. All people suffer in some way... at some time in this fallen world
 - b. Christians’ responses to suffering should differ from the world...
 - c. The world suffers hopelessly, desperately, and/or bitterly...
 - d. Christians suffer purposely. – DP
 - i. Christian purpose in suffering is to spread the gospel.
 - ii. Christian purpose in suffering is to advance God’s good
 - e. See the BIBLICAL EXAMPLES:
 - i. Paul is perhaps the greatest example we have in the Bible of suffering for the spread of the gospel...
 - ii. Paul’s writings show we have the gift of believing in Christ... AND

- iii. Paul's writings show we have the privilege of suffering for Christ...
- iv. QUOTE: "While we never suffer to REDEEM the world... we DO suffer to REACH the world with the gospel message." – DP
- v. Scriptures to show:
 - 1. Philippians 1:29 & 3:7-9
 - 2. Colossians 1:24-26
 - 3. 2 Timothy 1:8-12

f. A closer look at Paul & Philippians:

- i. "Paul was willing to go anywhere and to suffer any persecution for the privilege of sharing God's message about Christ. For this Paul was beaten, stoned, shipwrecked, imprisoned, sleep-deprived, hungry, thirsty, cold and without adequate clothing (2 Corinthians 11:24-28).
- ii. Read Philippians 1:12-18
 - 1. Paul wrote to the Philippians as a Roman prisoner
 - 2. Paul knew he had been labeled a criminal...
 - 3. Paul knew it would "cost" others to associate with him...
 - 4. Paul feared the faithless would be drawn away from Church...

5. QUOTE: “Paul wanted the church at Philippi to have the proper perspective on the trouble he was experiencing. It wasn’t something to be ashamed of or discouraged about. He wanted them to know not only that God was at work in the circumstances of his incarceration, but how God was at work. He wanted them to understand how God uses our sufferings – the dangerous, stressful, heartbreaking, and life-threatening circumstances in our lives – to spread the gospel to those who don’t know and to strengthen others who would become more emboldened to speak up about Him.” - DisciplesPath
6. Paul shows us that God can use our suffering for His good...
7. QUOTE: “The circumstances in your life that have hindered you, bothered you, or frustrated you may actually be magnifying His presence and power in the eyes of those surrounding you. Knowing that doesn’t make those circumstances any more fun, but it can help you endure suffering with purpose & resolve.” – DisciplesPath
8. Question: When have you seen personal suffering result in something good???

III. Jesus Calls Us To Sacrifice

- a. QUOTE: Living as disciples of Christ will require us to make sacrifice(s). And let's be clear, we're not talking about vague & general sacrifices, such as giving up the pleasure of immorality or releasing the opportunity to be filthy rich. Instead, the sacrifices we make to follow Jesus will be both real & concrete." - DisciplesPath
- b. Read the following Scripture texts for context & guidance:
 - i. Matthew 10:37-39: "Anyone who puts ANY-thing before OR above Christ is not worthy of Him... and that's according to HIM." – JDP
 - ii. Matthew 16:24-27: "According to Jesus the Christ, coming after Jesus the Christ and faithfully following Jesus the Christ... is DEFINED by DENYING one's self." – JDP
 - iii. Luke 9:57-62: Some say they will follow... but then come up with excuses. Jesus uses compassionate confrontation to clarify where people really are...
 - iv. Luke 14:31-33: Count the cost... pay the price... OR you cannot be His disciple.
- c. Four SACRIFICES of biblical followers:
 - i. Sacrifice of POSSESSIONS
 1. While God does not forbid us from having possessions...
 2. God does not want possessions having us!

3. "To ensure that God has 1st place in our hearts, we must untie our affections from the things we own." – DP
4. "We must be able to part with material possessions and wealth whenever God leads us to do so." – DP
 - a. What are some of your most prized possessions?
 - b. Would you let them go to follow the Lord's leading?

ii. Sacrifice of RELATIONSHIPS

1. QUOTE: "God will have no rivals for our affections. If we're ever forced to choose between honoring God and honoring our loved ones, we must be ready to choose God unequivocally. Those who would stand in the way of God's interests in our lives or try to discourage us from obeying Him are to be denied the authority to dictate our direction. God is our most sacred relationship, and God alone." – DisciplesPath
 - a. Note the difference between:
 - i. Church-goers
 - ii. Christ-followers
 - b. What symptoms indicate that one of your personal relationships is taking precedence over your relationship with God?

iii. Sacrifice of PLANS

1. God's plans always trump our plans... no matter what!
2. See James 4:13-15
3. Surrendering our plans include:
 - a. Ambitions
 - b. Intentions
 - c. Methods

iv. Sacrifice of POSITIONS

1. We give up our achieved titles/positions if need be...
2. We give up our earned rest &/or relaxation if need be...
3. See John 3:30
4. See Luke 22:27