

CHRIST, THE POWER AND THE WISDOM OF GOD

READING: John 19:6-24

Easter 2016

Sermon No. 411

20th March 2016

PALM SUNDAY

- Palm Sunday commemorates our Lord's Triumphal Entry into Jerusalem

Ω Week before the Resurrection of Jesus

- It is called "Palm Sunday" for obvious reasons

Ω The people laid down palms and sang [joy]

Ω "Hosanna to the Son of David"

Psalm 118:25-26

⁹ "Praise God! Blessings on the One who comes in the name of the Lord!

¹⁰ Blessings on the coming Kingdom of our ancestor David! Praise God in highest heaven!"

- "Crucifixion Week"

Ω The death, burial and resurrection of our Lord Jesus

Ω Upper Room . . . Betrayal . . . Christ's commitment

Ω The Garden of Gethsemane . . . Calvary . . . Empty Tomb

- Supernatural . . . many *on* the Cross . . . more *through* the cross

Ω Imputing of Christ's righteousness

Ω Atonement

Ω Mankind's redemption

"The creation of the world only cost Him His breath; its redemption cost Him His own blood"

Focus: The Cross . . . Christ's death on the Cross

- The crucifixion challenges our human values
 - Ω Capital punishment
 - Ω But unlike those who faced crucifixion, Jesus was clearly not a criminal
 - Ω Yet He was willing to offer Himself to die . . . that we might be redeemed
- For this reason, we commemorate His death [many would say why]
 - Ω It is central to our faith
 - Ω It is commanded

1 Corinthians 11:26

THE VOICE ²⁶ Every time you taste this bread and every time you place the cup *to your mouths* and drink, you are declaring the Lord's death, *which is the ultimate expression of His faithfulness and love*, until He comes again

 - Ω CH Spurgeon . . . his theology in four words . . . HE-DIED-FOR-ME
 - Ω Thomas Arnold – Headmaster of Rugby School – 1800's

"I know of no one fact in the history of mankind which is proved by better and fuller evidence of every sort, to the understanding of a fair inquirer, than the great miracles which GOD hath given us . . . that Christ died and rose again from the dead"
- In Baptism we identify ourselves with Him in His death
- Not only is it central to our faith . . . *it is life-changing*
- Not only life-changing . . . *it reveals to us the Power and the Wisdom of GOD*

The world's great intellectuals have a field day with this

1 Corinthians 1:18-25

- That is the argument Paul presented . . . to counter the intellectual view

NLT ¹⁸ The message of the cross is foolish to those who are headed for destruction! But we who are being saved know it is the very power of GOD. ¹⁹ As the Scriptures say, "I will destroy the wisdom of the wise and discard the intelligence of the intelligent."

The intelligence of the intelligent . . . will be disposed of!

²⁰ So where does this leave the philosophers, the scholars, and the world's brilliant debaters? God has made the wisdom of this world look foolish. ²¹ Since God in His wisdom saw to it that the world would never know Him through human wisdom, He has used our foolish preaching to save those who believe. ²² It is foolish to the Jews, who ask for signs from heaven. And it is foolish to the Greeks, who seek human wisdom. ²³ So when we preach that Christ was crucified, the Jews are offended and the Gentiles say it's all nonsense. ²⁴ But to those called by God to salvation, both Jews and Gentiles, Christ is the power of God and the wisdom of God. ²⁵ This foolish plan of God is wiser than the wisest of human plans, and God's weakness is stronger than the greatest of human strength

- Paul says 1:22, "The Jews require a sign"

Ω "Moses worked miracles; let us see miracles worked and then we will believe!"

Ω They forget that the wonders that Moses worked were nothing compared to those which Jesus worked

Ω Rich man . . . (Luke 16:29-30) but if one goes to them from the dead, they will repent.' ³¹ But he said to him, 'If they do not hear Moses and the prophets, neither will they be persuaded though one rise from the dead.'"

Ω But Paul, who was made all things to all men put his foot down!

§ "I don't care what the people want . . . we preach Christ crucified"

§ "We dare not, we cannot and we will not alter the great subject matter of our preaching . . . that is that Jesus Christ died for us"

- Paul also adds 1:22, “and the Greeks seek after *human* wisdom”

Ω Human wisdom . . . is the world's wisdom

Ω The words and writings of the philosophers . . . poets . . . intellectuals

Ω The world thinks . . . true wisdom belongs to them

Ω But Paul stated clearly . . . 1 Corinthians 2:2

For I determined not to know anything among you except Jesus Christ and Him crucified

Ω In effect he is saying

§ I don't care for fancy speech

§ I don't seek admiration

§ I just want to share . . . what *really* matters

Ω Paul says, there *are* many messages out there . . . many arguments

Ω But Paul says that may be so . . . but as for us we preach Christ crucified

That is the Gospel . . . 1 Corinthians 15:3

For I delivered to you first of all that which I also received: that Christ died for our sins according to the Scriptures

To get a full appreciation of His death . . .
remember who Christ is!

- He is not . . .

Ω A man made into a GOD

Ω A GOD degraded to the level of a man

Ω Something between a man and a God

He is GOD

Hebrews 1:8

NKJV ⁸But to the Son *He* says: "Your throne, O God, *is* forever and ever; A scepter of righteousness *is* the scepter of Your kingdom"

- He is . . .

Ω One with the Father

Ω Eternal . . . He has neither beginning of days, nor end of days

Ω Omnipresent, filling all space

Ω Omnipotent, having all power in Heaven and on earth

Ω Omniscient, knowing all things from eternity

Ω Creator

Ω Judge of all

Ω The Image of the invisible God!

He was willing to take our place on the Cross . . . embrace this

Isaiah 53:4-6

⁴ Surely our griefs He Himself bore, and our sorrows He carried; Yet we ourselves esteemed Him stricken, smitten of God, and afflicted. ⁵ But He was pierced through for our transgressions, He was crushed for our iniquities; The chastening for our well-being fell upon Him, and by His scourging we are healed. ⁶ All of us like sheep have gone astray, each of us has turned to his own way; But the Lord has caused the iniquity of us all to fall on Him.

Here is the question: are you still looking for signs
. . . still searching for human wisdom?

Or have you *truly* recognized that Jesus Christ is the Power and Wisdom of GOD

Remind people that it is at Calvary that the truly wise go . . . because that is where salvation is to be found!

- In none other than the LORD Jesus Christ
- Had there been no death on the Cross
 - Ω No redemption . . . no reconciliation . . . no hope
- So while it is unpleasant to think of Christ's treatment on the Cross
 - Ω The beatings . . . the pain . . . slow death
 - Ω Mocking . . . injury . . . even GOD turning away from His Son
- IT IS SO CRITICAL . . . the power and wisdom of GOD revealed
 - Ω Here at Calvary Jesus Christ . . .
 - § Overcame the powers of darkness
 - § Opened the Kingdom of Heaven to all who believe
 - § Became our substitute
 - Substitution is key—Christ standing in the place of sinners and numbered with the transgressors because of their transgressions, not His own
 - § Paid our sin debt
 - § Discharged all our liabilities
 - § Made us acceptable in GOD's sight . . . heirs of God . . . and, in due time, to be glorified with Christ forever!

Now things appear very differently

1 Corinthians 1:26-31

²⁶For you see your calling, brethren, that not many wise according to the flesh, not many mighty, not many noble, *are called*. ²⁷But God has chosen the foolish things of the world to put to shame the wise, and God has chosen the weak things of the world to put to shame the things which are mighty; ²⁸and the base things of the world and the things which are despised God has chosen, and the things which are not, to bring to nothing the things that are, ²⁹that no flesh should glory in His presence. ³⁰But of Him you are in Christ Jesus, who became for us wisdom from God—and righteousness and sanctification and redemption— ³¹that, as it is written, “He who glories, let him glory in the Lord.”

Let us never forget . . . it took a miracle of Grace to provide redemption for a world of lost sinners . . . that makes Jesus our only hope!

- There is no hope for the sinner anywhere else but in Christ

Ω Pharmaceutical companies seek that elusive wonder drug

Ω That ‘cure-all’ . . . that universal remedy . . . I hope it is found one day

Ω But there is already a solution to every disease of the soul . . . that is Christ!

Let us never forget also . . . that everything that Christ is and everything Christ has, is ours . . . that must make Jesus is our only joy

- He has to be the source of all our joy and contentment

Ω He gave Himself for us on the Cross

Ω We are able to take the whole of Him and enjoy Him to our heart’s content!

Colossians 2:3 **In HIM lie all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge**

Romans 8:16-17 ¹⁶The Spirit itself beareth witness with our spirit, that we are the children of God: ¹⁷ And if children, then heirs; heirs of God, and joint-heirs with Christ; if so be that we suffer with Him, that we may be also glorified together

That means adopted into GOD's family . . . joint-heirs with Christ

That means with all the entitlements to an inheritance in the Kingdom of GOD

How will you approach Easter this year?

There is so much to be thankful for in the LORD

- If you are born again . . . thank GOD
- If you have never met the Lord Jesus, then we pray that you'd look to HIM right now

Jesus Christ

§ Took away our sin

Psalm 103:12

He has removed our sins as far from us as the east is from the west

2 Corinthians 5:21

GOD made Him who had no sin to be sin for us, so that in Him we might become the righteousness of GOD

§ Died in our place

Romans 4:24

He was handed over to die because of our sins, and He was raised to life to make us right with GOD

§ Defeated death

Here attention is rightly given to the Resurrection

Romans 6:9

Knowing that Christ, having been raised from the dead, is never to die again; death no longer is master over Him

Revelation 21:4

And He will wipe away every tear from their eyes; and there will no longer be any death; there will no longer be any mourning, or crying, or pain; the first things have passed away."