

Lenten Theme: Symbols of the Cross—Lord of Life, Westfield, IN 3/10/04

Title: “A Strange Way to be Healed”

Text: Mark 15: 1-15

Intro.: *Ills.: Old wounds resurfacing*

Theme: Although our sinfulness was great the substitutionary suffering of Jesus was even greater to perfected pay and remove the debt which we owed.

Much of our convenience came at the expense of Jesus’ suffering

- Pilate, wanted an easy way out of sin
 1. He knew the charges were bogus and Jesus was innocent
 2. He tried to manipulate the crowd through bartering, scourging, brow-beating but caved in to their pressure to crucify Jesus
- We so casually treat our sins and sinful habits at the expense of Jesus’ suffering
 3. We participate in and turn a blind eye to sins that constantly push God’s patience
 1. Minimizing and justifying sins in our life
 2. Allowing secular culture to keep pushing us back in terms of accepted/legal (homosexual marriages, expanding legalized gambling, standards of decency)
 4. *“If we deliberately keep on sinning after we have received the knowledge of the truth, no sacrifice for sins is left. . . how much more severely do you think a man deserves to be punished who has trampled the Son of God under foot, who has treated as an unholy thing the blood of the covenant that sanctified him, and who has insulted the Spirit of grace? Hebrews 10:26-29*

The Father used the absurdly painful to accomplish the utterly impossible

- To get our attention and our focused devotion
 5. The sheer magnitude of the punishment inflicted leaves no doubt to sin’s seriousness
 6. It causes us to repent in tearful humbleness over the shame of our sin
 7. It causes us to respond in joyful devotion to one who willingly handed himself over
- A reverse substitution to give us release from the death penalty
 1. Barabbas offered as a tongue-n-cheek substitute but Jesus chosen to take his place
 1. The irony was that Barabbas represents our true condition deserving death
 2. Jesus, the sinless substitute, chosen to take each of our place on death row
 1. *“The soul who sins is the one who will die. The son will not share the guilt of the father, nor will the father share the guilt of the son. The righteousness of the righteous man will be credited to him, and the wickedness of the wicked will be charged against him.” Ezekiel 18:20*
 2. *“God made him who had no sin to be sin for us, so that in him we might become the righteousness of God” 2 Cor. 5:21*
 3. As impossible as great exchange seems, the release from the death sentence is real
 1. Imagine Barabbas’ incredulous disbelief as he was “sprung” by Jesus’ sentence
 2. Do you and I have the “wonder of faith” over the great release we have in Jesus?

Old wounds resurfacing

When my mother-in-law was first married, she was in a serious car accident that caused her to be thrown into the windshield (it was in the days before mandatory seatbelts). She told us that for years, following the removal of the glass from her face and the healing of the scars, she would periodically have a small piece of hidden glass rise to the surface of her skin. Although it didn’t hurt her while it was lodged beneath her skin, the glass shard became very painful again as it moved toward the surface.