

Lenten Theme: Symbols of the Cross—Lord of Life, Westfield, IN 3/31/04

Text: Luke 23: 44-46

“And it was now about the sixth hour, and darkness fell over the whole land until the ninth hour, the sun being obscured; and the veil of the temple was torn in two. And Jesus, crying out with a loud voice, said, “Father, into Thy hands I commit my spirit.” Having said this, he breathed his last.”

Title: You are in good hands

Introduction: Ills.: Comparing your hand to Dad’s

Theme: Jesus’ final cry is not one of resignation but rather of rest and because of that he forever guarantees that we will find a Heavenly Father who wants to receive us into his loving hands

Because Jesus bridge the gap between us and God

- The last events leading up to Jesus’ death punctuated seriousness of sin
 1. Jesus endured not only six ours of pain but eternity of hell.
 1. The sun stopped shining (not eclipse, clouds) miraculous dimming of sun
 2. As in ancient plagues of Egypt—God’s power and wrath displayed
 3. **Ills.: if sun removed for more than a day the earth would begin to freeze**
 2. The terrible consequence and impact sin has on us and our world around us
 1. *Indeed, your anger consumes us. Your rage terrifies us. You have set our sins in front of you. You have put our secret sins in the light of your presence. Indeed, all our days slip away because of your fury. We live out our years like one long sigh. Each of us lives for 70 years—or even 80 if we are in good health. But the best of them bring trouble and misery. Indeed, they are soon gone, and we fly away. Who fully understands the power of your anger? A person fears you more when he better understands your fury. Teach us to number each of our days so that we may grow in wisdom. Psalm 90:7-12*
- God graphically displayed that in Jesus he got the job done
 1. The separation of sin between God and us was gone
 2. Temple curtain was always a painful, foreboding reminder of it
 3. Ripped from top to bottom—it took God to do it

Because Jesus re-established the lines of relationship between us and God

- Jesus not only redeemed us from sin but also reconciled us to God
 1. **Ills.: When you are at odds, it is easy to forgive but hard to reconcile**
 2. *But now in Christ Jesus you who once were far away have been brought near through the blood of Christ. For he himself is our peace, who has made the two one and has destroyed the barrier, the dividing wall of hostility, by abolishing in his flesh the law with its commandments and regulations. His purpose was to create in himself one new man out of the two, thus making peace, and in this one body to reconcile both of them to God through the cross, by which he put to death their hostility. He came and preached peace to you who were far away and peace to those who were near. Eph 2: 13-17*
- We can turn our life over into the hands of the Heavenly Father
 1. Because God is the “time keeper” of my life
 - *My times are in your hands. Psalm 31:15*
 2. Because God loves us for the sake of Jesus
 - *“My sheep listen to my voice; I know them, and they follow me. I give them eternal life, and they shall never perish; no one can snatch them out of my hand. My Father who has given them to me, is greater than all; no one can snatch them out of my Father's hand.” John 10: 27-29*
 3. Because God will never allow anything more to separate us from him because of Jesus
 - *“For I am convinced that neither death nor life, neither angels nor demons, neither the present nor the future, nor any powers, neither height nor depth, nor anything else in all creation, will be able to separate us from the love of God that is in Christ Jesus our Lord.” Rom 8:38-39*
 4. **ILLS.: Lost at Boblo Island**