

Sermon Series: From Bethlehem to Calvary to Heaven—Lord of Life Lutheran, Westfield, IN—3/24/2004

Title: “Behold the man”

Text: John 19: 1-6

Intro.: Ills.: *The True Definition of Repentance*

Theme: As we view the passion and suffering of Christ, the Holy Spirit desires to move us from a feeling of pity to one of repentant awe, producing within us a transformation to live out the new life Christ lived and died to give us.

Pity for Jesus can be nothing more than a way of minimizing His impact upon you

- Pity can take on the form of self-pity
 1. Pilate was feeling convicted and guilty about the trial and punishment of an innocent Jesus
 1. **Print and read 19: 1-3**
 2. Caught up in self-pity, he tried to expunge the innocent blood of Jesus from his hands through pointless sadism
 3. **Ills.: The Wrong Kind of Pity**
 2. Often we go through various forms of *mea culpa* (I am guilty) to solicit pity to quiet a raging conscience
 1. “*Godly sorrow brings repentance that leads to salvation and leaves no regret, but worldly sorrow brings death.*” 2 Cor 7:10
 2. Adopting a self-scourging approach to self-deprecation and self-denial to take the focus off the real sin
 3. My public reaction to the horror of Jesus’ flogging/crucifixion masks the fear of being found out in personal sin
 4. **Ills.: The difference between Judas and Peter**
- Pity cannot move us to be different
 3. Pilate tried to use pity for Jesus to move the crowd to let him off the hook
 1. **Print and read 19: 4-6**
 2. All it did was cause the Jewish leaders and crowd to become more galvanized in their intent to kill Jesus
 4. Living in a manipulative relationship with others to make them codependent with my guilt
 1. When we try to move someone out of guilt or shame or remorse or altruism, all we confront is ugly old man of sin
 2. Only Jesus’ new creation within us can transform old self and bring the new self of mercy/righteousness to pass
 3. “*Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation; the old has gone, the new has come! All this is from God, who reconciled us to himself through Christ and gave us the ministry of reconciliation.*” 2 Cor. 5: 17-18

Sorrow over Jesus’ suffering can lead to a life-transforming experience with Jesus

- Don’t blunt the sorrow over Jesus’ death but allow God to turn it into righteousness
 1. “*See what this godly sorrow has produced in you: what earnestness, what eagerness to clear yourselves, what indignation, what alarm, what longing, what concern, what readiness to see justice done. At every point you have proved yourselves to be innocent in this matter.*” 2 Corinthians 7: 11
 2. God can turn the ashes of sorrow into the day of joy
 1. “*The ransomed of the LORD will return. They will enter Zion with singing; everlasting joy will crown their heads. Gladness and joy will overtake them, and sorrow and sighing will flee away.*” Isaiah 51:11
 2. Rejecting self-pity and allowing the message of the cross to confront our fallenness and bring us back to true living
- Dying and rising to Jesus on a daily basis in our lives
 3. It happened at the moment that Christ called us in our baptism
 1. “*Or don't you know that all of us who were baptized into Christ Jesus were baptized into his death? We were therefore buried with him through baptism into death in order that, just as Christ was raised from the dead through the glory of the Father, we too may live a new life.*” Romans 6:3-4
 4. It happens at this time of year when we are confronted by the story of the passion and resurrection
 1. “*I want to know Christ and the power of his resurrection and the fellowship of sharing in his*

sufferings, becoming like him in his death, and so, somehow, to attain to the resurrection from the dead." Philip. 3:10-11

5. It happens every day as we die to ourselves and our sin and in repentant love for Jesus turn to rise to a new start

1. **Ills.: Mercy that acts**

The true definition of repentance

A pig recently traveled on a six-hour US Airways flight from Philadelphia to Seattle, and he didn't ride coach. Two passengers convinced the airline representative that the pig needed to fly with them as a "therapeutic companion pet"—like a seeing-eye dog—so the pig was permitted to sit with them in the first-class cabin of the plane. Passengers described the 300-pound pig as "enormous, brown, angry, and honking." He was seated in three seats near the front of the plane (and his companions), but the attendants reportedly had difficulty strapping him in: "It became restless after takeoff and sauntered through the cabin." One passenger said, "He kept rubbing his nose on people's legs trying to get them to give him food and stroke him." Upon landing, things only got worse. The article reports, "the pig panicked, running up and down through economy class squealing." Many passengers, also screaming, stood on their seats. It took four attendants to escort the pig out of the airplane, and he escaped upon reaching the terminal. (He was later recaptured). When asked to comment on the story, US Airways spokesman David Castelveter said, "We can confirm that the pig traveled, and we can confirm that it will never happen again." At one time or another each of us has done something that seemed right at the time, but we later said, "That will never happen again." **Citation: Linda M. Gehrs, assistant editor of *PreachingToday.com*; from Associated Press story, *Chicago Sun Times* (10-30-00)**

The Wrong Kind of Pity

self-pity reduces the universe to a personal wound that is displayed as proof of significance. Pity is adrenaline for acts of mercy; self-pity is a narcotic that leaves its addicts wasted and derelict. **Citation: Eugene H. Peterson in *Earth and Altar. Christianity Today*, Vol. 32, no. 13.**

Mercy that acts

A young boy, on an errand for his mother, had just bought a dozen eggs. Walking out of the store, he tripped and dropped the sack. All the eggs broke, and the sidewalk was a mess. The boy tried not to cry. A few people gathered to see if he was OK and to tell him how sorry they were. In the midst of the words of pity, one man handed the boy a quarter. Then he turned to the group and said, "I care 25 cents worth. How much do the rest of you care?" (James 2:16) points out that words don't mean much if we have the ability to do more. **Citation: Stanley C. Brown in *Vital Sermons of the Day. Leadership*, Vol. 5, no. 1.**

John 19:1-5

¹Then Pilate took Jesus and had him flogged. ²The soldiers twisted together a crown of thorns and put it on his head. They clothed him in a purple robe ³and went up to him again and again, saying, "Hail, king of the Jews!" And they struck him in the face.

⁴Once more Pilate came out and said to the Jews, "Look, I am bringing him out to you to let you know that I find no basis for a charge against him." ⁵When Jesus came out wearing the crown of thorns and the purple robe, Pilate said to them, "Here is the man!" As soon as the chief priests and their officials saw him, they shouted, "Crucify! Crucify!" John 19:6 [NIV]