

Sermon Series: “Names of the Passion” – Lord of Life Lutheran, Westfield, IN—3/9/2008

Title: “Lamb of God”

Text: *The next day John saw Jesus coming toward him and said, "Look, the Lamb of God, who takes away the sin of the world! John 1:29*

Intro: *Ills.: Agonizing over the paid debt*

Theme: In the picture language of the words, “*Lamb of God*,” we find both a strong and comforting reassurance that our salvation in Jesus is both complete and able to carry out God’s plan for us to deliver us home to heaven.

A Lamb that takes our place

- Jesus became the lamb which God provided when none could be offered by us
 1. The Abraham - Isaac story of Genesis 22
 - a. Abraham was faced with a request which was impossible and crushing — sacrifice his only son (**22:2**)
 - b. Isaac asked the innocent but disturbing question, “***But where is the lamb***” **Gen 22: 7**
 - c. Often, we are at our wits end, tapped out, not able to give another thing, and yet our broken life demands more
 2. With Abraham we can say, “***The Lord will provide***” **Gen 22: 14**
 - a. When our sin has wreck our life or another’s — ***The Lord will provide***
 - b. When we cannot forgive the vilest of things another has said or done — ***The Lord will provide***
 - c. When sin-sick and consequence weary in our lives— ***The Lord will provide***
 - d. When faced with impending or unexpected death, caused by sin’s creep in our life — ***The Lord will provide***
- Jesus become the lamb by which God forever will ***Pass-over*** our guilt (**Print Exodus 12: 5, 7, 13**)
 1. God’s great salvation analogy began in the first Passover of Egypt when he spared enslaved Israel’s lives
 2. Fast-forward to Jesus’ pivotal moment at 3 in the afternoon on that first Good Friday — when the lambs of that Passover were being brought to the temple to be killed — God offers up Jesus, ***the final Passover Lamb***
 3. We no longer are required to appease God’s anger, Jesus takes our place, steps in the way, takes the hit, forever

A Lamb that covers our debt

- A Lamb whose blood is shed because a death is required for sin (**Print Hebrews 9: 22**)
 1. The terrible truth about sin (any sin) and its cost in our lives is that it requires death as a payment
 - a. “*The soul who sins will die.*” **Ezekiel 18:4**
 - b. The reason for the sacrifice of lambs in the O.T. was to demonstrate deadly seriousness of sin
 - c. That is why Jesus had to die such an ugly and gruesome death — it was on behalf of all of our sins
 2. When with callous disregard we march off in stubborn rebellion and sin in our lives, no sacrifice remains
 - a. **Print Hebrews 10: 26-29**
- A perfect Lamb which makes a “once-for-all” payment for sin (**Print Hebrews 9: 25-26**)
 1. In the Old Testament God always required the sacrifice of a perfect lamb
 - a. The price of a lamb was no small sacrifice for the average Israelite household
 - b. Any deliverance is always something which comes at great cost – why Jesus pictured as God’s lamb offering
 - c. **Ills.: God bought back his own sheep**
 2. But unlike the world’s treasure and false religions’ peace, Jesus, ***once-for-all***, paid the price of peace for us
 - a. *For Christ died for sins once for all, the righteous for the unrighteous, to bring you to God. 1 Peter 3:18*
 - b. Come out from under the oppressive and crushing guilt of your past, the Lamb of God has died for you

A Lamb who secures our victory (Print Rev. 7: 9-17)

- Willing to submit and serve the Lamb of God

1. Normally, we do not see in the picture of a lamb a source of power and comfort
 2. *But we preach Christ crucified: a stumbling block to Jews and foolishness to Gentiles, but to those whom God has called, both Jews and Greeks, Christ the power of God and the wisdom of God. 1 Cor. 1:23-24*
 3. Is Jesus, the Lamb of God, too weak of a Savior for you, or will you humble yourself to be led by him?
(7:10)
- Willing to be washed by the blood of the Lamb
 1. He may use trials and tribulations in our life by which he brings us to our knees and closer to him (7:14)
 2. **Ills.: God Abandoned His Lamb**
 - Willing to set our passion on following him home to heaven above all else in our lives (7: 15-17)
 1. *I give them eternal life. They will never be lost, and no one will tear them away from me. John 10:28*

Agonizing over a paid debt

I was having breakfast with my dad and my younger son at the Real Food Café on Eastern Avenue, just south of Alger in Grand Rapids. As we were finishing our meal, I noticed that the waitress brought our check, then took it away, and then brought it back again. She placed it on the table, smiled, and said: "Somebody in the restaurant paid for your meal. You're all set." And then she walked away. I had the strangest feeling sitting there. The feeling was helplessness. There was nothing I could do. It had been taken care of. To insist on paying would have been pointless. All I could do was trust that what she said was actually true and then live in that—which meant getting up and leaving the restaurant. My acceptance of what she said gave me a choice: to live like it was true or to create my own reality in which the bill was not paid. That is our invitation—to trust that we don't owe anything. To trust that something is already true about us, something has already been done, something has been there all along. To trust that grace pays the bill. **Rob Bell, *Repainting the Velvet Elvis* (Zondervan, 2005), p. 151-152**

God Bought Back His Sheep

There's a line in the Old Testament written by Isaiah that tells the result of God's gamble, (Isaiah 53:6): "We all, like sheep, have gone astray, each of us has turned to his own way." Although God has a right to own us because he created us, he gave us the option of freedom, and we all left. We chose sin and did not love him as he wanted to be loved. In response, he chose to send out his own son to look for us, to hunt us down, to find and redeem us at a terrible cost--the cost of his own life. A shepherd notches the ear of a lamb born to his flock and has rightful ownership. That lamb deliberately walks away. The shepherd searches near and far to get that lamb back. A long time later, he finds not a baby lamb but a grown sheep for sale at an animal auction. The shepherd recognizes his mark on that sheep's ear. He goes to the auctioneer and says, "I can see the mark. That sheep is mine." The auctioneer says, "Listen, you must bid and pay just like anybody else." The shepherd bids and pays an outrageous price, far above any reasonable market value in order to get his lamb. He now has a double right to own this sheep: from birth, from redemption. God has a right to own us as creator and because he has paid the blood of his own Son--an outrageous price far above our market value--in order to redeem us back again. **Leith Anderson, "The Lord Is My Shepherd," *Preaching Today*, Tape No. 136.**

God abandoned his Lamb so that you never would be

Author Max Lucado writes vividly of the abandonment of the Son on the cross as he bore our sin: "Here is the cup, my Son. Drink it alone." God must have wept as he performed his task. Every lie, every lure, every act done in shadows was in that cup. Slowly, hideously they were absorbed in the body of the Son. The final act of incarnation. The spotless Lamb was blemished. The King turns away from his Prince. The undiluted wrath of a sin-hating Father falls upon his sin-filled Son. The fire envelops him. The shadows hide him. The Son looks for his Father, but the Father cannot be seen. "My God, my God...why?" It was the most gut-wrenching cry of loneliness in history, and it came not from a prisoner or a widow or a patient. It came from a hill, from a cross, from a Messiah. "My God, my God," he screamed, "why did you abandon me!" Never have words carried such hurt. Never has one being been so lonely. The despair is darker than the sky. The two who have been one are

Exodus 12: 5,7,13

The animals you choose must be year-old males without defect. . . Then they are to take some of the blood and put it on the sides and tops of the doorframes of the houses where they eat the lambs . . . The blood will be a sign for you on the houses where you are; and when I see the blood, I will pass over you. No destructive plague will touch you when I strike Egypt.

Hebrews 9:22

In fact, the law requires that nearly everything be cleansed with blood, and without the shedding of blood there is no forgiveness.

Hebrews 10:26-29

²⁶If we deliberately keep on sinning after we have received the knowledge of the truth, no sacrifice for sins is left, ²⁷but only a fearful expectation of judgment and of raging fire that will consume the enemies of God.

²⁸Anyone who rejected the law of Moses died without mercy on the testimony of two or three witnesses. ²⁹How 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 9: 25-26

Every year the chief priest went into the holy place to make a sacrifice with blood that isn't his own. However, Christ didn't go into heaven to sacrifice himself again and again. Otherwise, he would have had to suffer many times since the world was created. But now, at the end of the ages, he has appeared once to remove sin by his sacrifice.

Rev. 7:9-17

⁹After this I looked and there before me was a great multitude that no one could count, from every nation, tribe, people and language, standing before the throne and in front of the Lamb. They were wearing white robes and were holding palm branches in their hands.

¹⁰And they cried out in a loud voice: "Salvation belongs to our God, who sits on the throne, and to the Lamb."

¹¹All the angels were standing around the throne and around the elders and the four living creatures. They fell down on their faces before the throne and worshiped God, ¹²saying: "Amen! Praise and glory and wisdom and thanks and honor and power and strength be to our God for ever and ever. Amen!" ¹³Then one of the elders asked me, "These in white robes--who are they, and where did they come from?"

¹⁴I answered, "Sir, you know." And he said, "These are they who have come out of the great tribulation; they have washed their robes and made them white in the blood of the Lamb.

¹⁵Therefore, "they are before the throne of God and serve him day and night in his temple; and he who sits on the throne will spread his tent over them. ¹⁶Never again will they hunger; never again will they thirst. The sun will not beat upon them, nor any scorching heat. ¹⁷For the Lamb at the center of the throne will be their shepherd; he will lead them to springs of living water. And God will wipe away every tear from their eyes."