

4. Suffered under Pontius Pilate, crucified dead and buried

Series: I Believe - The Apostle's Creed

Date: 23 October 2022, 19th Sunday after Trinity

Location: St George's, Battery Point

Texts: Isaiah 53, Hebrews 2:5-18, Matthew 26:26-29

The punishment that brought us peace was upon him and by his wounds we are healed. Isaiah 53.5
Alexamenos worships his god.

Why did Jesus die?

Historical Reality - suffered under Pontius Pilate

- The Prefect of Judea AD 26-36
- Not a philosophical theory or moral system
- When God stepped into history and died on a Roman cross

What is the meaning of the cross?

- For those crucified in Jesus right and left it meant, Rome is in charge
- NT writers speak about the meaning of Jesus death and what it accomplished using lots of different pictures
- Ultimately it is a mystery, ie we cannot come to the end of it, but we can understand it
- Pictures like the facets of diamond, help us see more of what Jesus has done

The forgiveness of sins (cf. Luke 24.47 and Acts 2.38)

Sin

- Not an indulgence in chocolate or ice-cream
- But a rejection of God as God and a seeking to replace him with ourselves or something else
Forgetting that we are made in his image, and trying to make him, and the world in our image.
- "The depravity of man is at once the most empirically verifiable reality but at the same time the most intellectually resisted fact." Malcolm Muggeridge.
- Pictures from Isaiah
- Transgression - A breaking of trust. A crossing of boundaries that shouldn't be crossed.

- Iniquity. - Hebrew word means crooked, twisted, bent out of shape
- Spirals out in our relationships - with God, with each other, with the world, with ourselves. Things fall apart - large and small scale
- Victims and Agents. Responsible for our actions, yet trapped in a cycle and by a power that is beyond us.

The cross as God's solution to our problem

The punishment that brought us peace was upon him / by his wounds we are healed.

- Punishment - God could give us over to the consequences of our sin, both letting things unravel, and his judgment when he steps in to fix things.
- But instead in Isaiah's figure of the suffering servant, the figure of the suffering servant steps in to bear our punishment, to be crushed for our iniquity. And we know that it was on the cross that Jesus, the incarnate Son, did this.
- The result: Peace - the restoration of relationship. Reconciliation.
And Healing - by his wounds, our wounded humanity is made whole.

SUBSTITUTION @ the heart - Jesus in Our place

- He took our pain. He bore our suffering. He was pierced for our transgressions.

We've looked at RECONCILIATION and HEALING as two pictures that help us see what Jesus' death accomplished. Each of these pictures or metaphors speak to a different aspect of the human condition.

Forgiveness - our moral debt has been paid and relationship is restored.

Redemption. This picture is taken from the slave market, where you would buy or redeem a slave. If they had been kidnapped, you could pay for their ransom.

Christ has paid our ransom at the price of his blood

Cleansing. Tainted, soiled by our moral and spiritual failures. On the inside Jesus blood washes us clean.

Sacrifice. Taken from the temple. That's where you go to meet with God. But God is holy and we are not.

Do you want to come near to God? Do you want to worship? You can.

Victory. Jesus is our champion who fights our greatest enemies, Sin and Satan and Death. His victory frees us from their power.

Since the children have flesh and blood, he too shared in their humanity so that by his death he might break the power of him who holds the power of death—that is, the devil— **15** and free those who all their lives were held in slavery by their fear of death.

Justification. Being declared not guilty, in the right with God.

What is your greatest spiritual need? Which of these pictures resonates with you?

Reconciliation - Alienation and welcome home

Redemption - Freedom

Victory - Fear

Justification - guilt and innocence

Cleansing - Takes our shame, makes us clean and beautiful

Sacrifice - Purifies us and makes us able to draw near to a holy God

“Before you were a guerilla you were my son” - 2013 advertising campaign against FARC rebels in Colombia.

"This Christmas, I'm waiting for you at home. Demobilize. Over Christmas, everything is possible."

God didn't just post a picture - he sent his Son, to become one of us, to carry our iniquity, to take our punishment, so that we could be forgiven and come home. He stands there, like those Colombian mothers, his heart full of love, waiting for us, arms outstretched.

Repentance and faith.

Will you come to him? Will you turn from yourself and turn to him? Will you entrust yourself to him?