



# WEEKLY SERMON

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**Sunday** April 2, 2023

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**Message:** Palm Sunday - 2023

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**Text:** Luke 23:32-38; Matthew 27:46; Luke 23:46

In John 3:16 we read again that familiar verse "For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life." It has been said what London, the great metropolis, is to the British Empire, John 3:16 is to the Scriptures. London was the hub of the wheel known to the world as Great Britain. John 3:16 is the hub of the wheel known as God's eternal love which turns this universe. Even those, who have not appreciated nor personally appropriated to themselves the provisions of God's love, readily recognize that the outstanding characteristic of God is giving.

**He gave His head** ... to wear a curse for me. "And the soldiers platted a crown of thorns, and put it on his head." (John 19:2)

**He gave His cheek** ... to be smitten for me. "He giveth his cheek to him that smiteth him." (Lamentations 3:30)

**He gave His eyes** ... to shed tears over sin. "And when he was come near, he beheld the city, and wept over it." (Luke 19:41)

**He gave His tongue** ... to pray for cruel enemies. "Then said Jesus, Father, forgive them; for they know not what they do." (Luke 23:34)

**He gave His back** ... to be beaten for sinners. "The plowers plowed upon my back: they made long their furrows." (Psalm 129:3)

**He gave His side** ... to be speared for rebellious unbelievers. "But one of the soldiers with a spear pierced his side, and forthwith came there out blood and water." (John 19:34)

**He gave His hands and feet** ... to be nailed for undeserving sinful mankind. "They pierced my hands and my feet." (Psalm 22:16)

**He gave His blood** ... to redeem hopelessly condemned, corrupt criminals, "...ye were not redeemed with corruptible things, as silver and gold... But with the precious blood of Christ..." (I Peter. 1:18, 19)

**He gave His life** ... to all believing sinners. "The gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord." (Romans 6:23)

The Old Testament is God's love concealed, and the New Testament is God's love revealed. Every great truth of the Old Testament points toward John 3:16, while every great doctrine of the New Testament emerges from it. What the sun is to our solar system, John 3:16 is in its relation to the Christian message. In a similar fashion to the way the planets range in their ceaseless rotation around that vast central magnet and flaming quasar we call the sun, the hope of all believers revolves around John 3:16. As the planets receive their illumination from the sun, so do all the distinctive life-giving truths of redemption come from John 3:16.

The unspeakable riches of divine grace; the eternal forgiveness of all sins; the propitiation, reconciliation, justification, sanctification and eventual glorification of redeemed humanity are all included in the declaration of John 3:16.

The hope of all the ages for all hopeless humanity becomes as bright as a flaming meteor across the inky black skies of fallen mankind when they lay hold of the love of God expressed in this verse. Someone wrote:

"**For God**" gives the source of love.

"**So loved**" gives the fact of love.

"**The world**" gives the object of God's love.

"**He gave**" describes the act of His love.

"**His only begotten Son**" presents the gift of His love.

"**That whosoever believeth in him**" gives the message of His love.

"**Should not perish, but have everlasting life**" defines the fruit of God's love.

Perhaps John 3:16 could also, with good reason, be compared to a radio broadcasting station. The messages being sent out by God's messenger boys, called ether waves, emitting from His tower of mercy are: "**God loves.**" "**God gives.**" "**God saves.**"

In *His* Amazing Grace

**Pastor David Miklas**

**The world's OUTLOOK is extremely GRIM.  
The Christian's UPLOOK is extremely GLORIOUS.**

Why are churches barren? Why do the heavens seem as brass when we raise our petitions for Holy Spirit empowered revival? Could it be **UNFORGIVENESS** has hindered the workings of revival? If we willfully refuse to forgive others, then God will not forgive and bless us. The spirit of revival has often been withheld because of bitterness grudgingly harbored between the members of the congregation. Do we, deep in our souls, desire the blessings of revival? Then the only cue is forgiveness, as we remember Psalm 85:6, "**Wilt thou not revive us again: that thy people may rejoice in thee?**"

# “Calvary PRAYERS of our Lord”

**INTRODUCTION:** A church marquee read, “**Easter and the Resurrection is the rest of the story of Christmas.**” And so it is, as we believe in the virgin birth, sinless life, vicarious death, and the glorious resurrection of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. This Palm Sunday we again come to remember those events of Calvary two thousand years ago when Jesus completed our so great Salvation. All because of Calvary, the Apostle Paul can say in I Corinthians 2:2, “**For I determined not to know anything among you save Christ and Him crucified.**”

**It was at Calvary where God so loved the world and turned His back on His only begotten Son.**

**It was at Calvary where the National Anthem of Heaven, found in John 3:16, was played.**

**It was at Calvary where Christ cried, "It Is Finished," and once and for all eternity completed the payment for sin by His shed blood.**

**It was at Calvary where the cross of Jesus became the emblem of suffering and shame.**

All because of Calvary we can sing,

**“King of my life, I crown thee now, Thine shalt the Glory be.  
Lest I forget thy thorn-crowned brow, lead me to CALVARY.  
Lest I forget Gethsemane, Lest I forget thine agony,  
Lest I forget thy love for me, Lead me to CALVARY.”**

**“One day they led Him up CALVARY’S mountain.  
One day they nailed Him to die on the tree.  
Suffering anguish despised and rejected:  
Bearing our sins, my Redeemer is He!”**

**"Marvelous grace of our Loving Lord,  
Grace that exceeds our sin and our guilt,  
Yonder on CALVARY’S mount outpoured,  
There where the blood of the Lamb was spilt."**

This morning, would you again turn your thoughts back to the cross of Calvary and think of what the Lord Jesus Christ suffered for you? Please focus your attention on Luke 23:33-38:

**“And when they were come to the place, which is called Calvary, there they crucified him, and the malefactors, one on the right hand, and the other on the left. (34) Then said Jesus, Father, forgive them; for they know not what they do. And they parted his raiment, and cast lots. (35) And the people stood beholding. And the rulers also with them derided him, saying, He saved others; let him save himself, if he be Christ, the chosen of God. (36) And the soldiers also mocked him, coming to him, and offering him vinegar, (37) And saying, If thou be the king of the Jews, save thyself. (38) And a superscription also was written over him in letters of Greek, and Latin, and Hebrew, THIS IS THE KING OF THE JEWS.”**

While on the cross, our Lord only uttered **SEVEN** sentences between 9:00 AM and 3:00 PM. Three of these statements were made during the first three hours of His crucifixion, while the last four were uttered at the end.

**FIRST:** the words of **FORGIVENESS**, "Father, forgive them; for they know not what they do." Luke 23:34

**SECOND:** the words of **SALVATION**, "Today shalt thou be with me in paradise." Luke 23:43

**THIRD:** the words of **AFFECTION**, "Woman behold thy Son; behold thy mother." John 19:26-27

**FOURTH:** the words of **ANGUISH**, "My God, My God, why hast thou forsaken me?" Matthew 27:46

**FIFTH:** the words of **SUFFERING**, "I thirst." John 19:28

**SIXTH:** the words of **VICTORY** "It is finished." John 19:30

**SEVENTH:** the words of **CONTENTMENT**, "Father, into thy hands, I commend my spirit." Luke 23:46

During our Lord's earthly ministry He taught us much about prayer, not only by His teachings, but also by His example. As such, when we view the cross, we again find our Lord in an attitude of prayer. How significant! How instructive!

**The first utterance from the cross was a prayer found in Luke 33:34, "Father forgive them; for they know not what they do."**

**The middle utterance from the cross found in Matthew 27:46 was also a prayer, "My God, My God, why hast thou forsaken me?"**

**The last utterance from the cross found in Luke 23:46 of our text was also a prayer, "Father, into thy hands, I commend my spirit."**

It is interesting to note that Jesus began his ministry in prayer; for when He was baptized, the Bible says in Luke 3:21, "Jesus also being baptized, and praying..." Now as He closes His ministry, thus fulfilling His purpose for coming to earth, three times Jesus prays from this place of agony and shame. It is on these three prayers that we focus our attention this morning.

### **The FIRST PRAYER is found in Luke 23:33-34.**

**"And when they were come to the place, which is called Calvary, there they crucified him, and the malefactors, one on the right hand, and the other on the left. (34) Then said Jesus, Father, forgive them; for they know not what they do. And they parted his raiment, and cast lots."**

As Jesus is closing His earthly ministry in prayer while dying on a cross, He prays, "Father forgive them; for they know not what they do." Our Lord never lost His sense of divine mission. He did not pray, "Father forgive ME;" He prayed "Father forgive THEM." He knew His purpose for being on the cross was dying to pay the sinners' debt.

On the surface this appears to be a prayer for forgiveness, and rightfully so. However, I believe it was more than that. Think about this. Because of our ignorance, does God forgive us of our sin? It says here "Father forgive them; for they know not what they do." In essence, Jesus is saying, "Father forgive them because of their ignorance."

Does God force forgiveness on anybody? No, forgiveness is not forced. You must request forgiveness, and if you never request it, it will never be granted. It almost looks like Jesus is forcing forgiveness upon these men who are committing the most heinous crime that has ever been committed. That's the way it appears, but that's not the way it is.

If we take this word "**forgive**" in verse 34 and look at it in the original language, we will discover something very interesting. This Greek word, "**atheami**" is translated in our English text by several different words found in the New Testament.

**Matthew 19:14** - Jesus said in verse 14 "**Suffer the little children, and forbid them not to come unto me.**" Now that Greek word "**atheami**" which is translated "**forgive**" in Luke is translated "**suffer**" here in Matthew 19:14.

**Matthew 27: 49** - Notice what the crowd around the cross said, "**The rest said, Let be, let us see whether Elijah will come to save him.**" The Greek word "**atheami**" is not translated here as "**forgive**" as in Luke 23:34 or translated as "**suffer**" as in Matthew 19:14, but rather it is translated "**let be.**"

Now if you were to determine one word or one expression that would fit each and every case to define the Greek word "**atheami**" perhaps the expression would be "**don't interfere.**"

Jesus said in Matthew 19:14, "**Atheami.**" He was saying, "**Don't interfere with these little children**

**that are coming unto me, let them come unto me for such is the kingdom of God."**

When Jesus said in Matthew 27:46 "**My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?**" and the soldier put some vinegar on a sponge and gave it to Him to drink, the crowd said, "**Atheami.**" The crowd was saying "**Don't interfere; let us see if Elijah will come to save Him.**"

Now as Jesus was being nailed to the cross and being raised up upon that cross in agony He was saying, "**Father, "Atheami!" Don't interfere, don't interfere!**" For if He hadn't prayed that prayer, the wrath of God may have smitten anyone who would have dared to touch His Son.

Jesus was saying, "**Father hold back your wrath; Father postpone your judgment.**" By way of Interest, the word "**FORGIVE**" in Luke 23:34 is in the Greek imperfect tense indicating continuous action in the past. In other words, Jesus was praying this prayer even before He had arrived at the cross, Jesus kept saying, "**Father, don't interfere.**" I believe,

**When they SCOURGED Him, He said, "Father, atheami, don't interfere with them."**

**When they SPAT in His face and spittle ran down through His beard, and they PLUCKED that beard, He prayed, "Father, don't interfere, extend your mercy."**

**When they BLINDFOLDED Him and smote Him with a reed and said, "Prophecy, who it is that smote thee," He prayed, "Father, don't interfere, Father postpone your judgment."**

**When they drove the NAILS through His hands and through His feet into the cross, He was praying, "Father, don't interfere."**

**When they TOOK His clothing, stripped it from Him and put Him to shame before His followers, He prayed, "Father, don't interfere."**

**When Jesus LOOKED down from the cross and saw the gathered crowd for whom He was dying, He prayed, "Father, don't interfere, postpone your judgment."**

When I think about that, I say to myself, we have a compassionate Saviour. Even as He was going through the agony of the cross, He was concerned for these sin sick souls that they might still have mercy extended to them.

Not only did Jesus have in mind those at the cross who were brutally crucifying Him. But when Jesus prayed, "**Father forgive them,**" He included all of humanity - past, present and future including you and me. In Hebrews 2:9 the Bible teaches us, "**Jesus tasted death for all men.**"

Jesus prayed for me that day as much as if He had called my name and said, "**Father, postpone your judgment of David Miklas. He is a terrible, hell-deserving sinner. Even though he knows it not, Father, postpone your judgment of him.**" And thank God He is still willing to hold back the judgment because He wants people to be saved. But postponement does not mean escape; and unless you turn to Jesus, someday you will die and go to hell, without hope, and without the Savior.

Folks, in every community around this church there are people for whom God is holding back the judgment of eternal damnation. These are your neighbors, your co-workers, your friends, and even your relatives. God is postponing His wrath against people. We are to go to them and share how Christ, on the cross of Calvary, cried "**Father, don't interfere, extend your mercy.**" For in II Peter 3:9 we read, "**The Lord is...long suffering to us-ward, not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance.**"

**The SECOND PRAYER is found in Matthew 27:45-49.**

**"Now from the sixth hour there was darkness over all the land unto the ninth hour. (46) And about the ninth hour Jesus cried with a loud voice, saying, Eli, Eli, lama sabachthani? that is to say, My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me? (47) Some of them that stood there, when they heard that, said, This man calleth for Elias. (48) And straightway one of them ran, and took a sponge, and filled it with vinegar, and put it on a reed, and gave him to drink. (49) The rest said, Let be, let us see whether Elias will come to save him."**



As we look at the second prayer, Matthew picks up where Luke leaves off. The words Jesus used, "**Eli, Eli lama sabachthani?**" were spoken in the Aramaic language meaning as the text says, "**My God, My God, Why hast Thou forsaken me?**" Now listen carefully,

The **FIRST** recorded words of our Lord during His earthly ministry are found in Luke 2:49 where He said to His parents, "**...know ye not that I must be about MY FATHER'S business?**"

The **LAST** recorded words of our Lord on the Cross before He died are recorded in Luke 23:46, "**Father into Thy hands, I commend my Spirit.**"

Our Lord's FIRST words were "**...know ye not that I must be about MY FATHER'S business?**" and His LAST recorded words were "**Father into Thy hands, I commend my Spirit.**" If you were to search the gospels, you would find Jesus always addressed God as "**My Father.**" Even in our Lord's High Priestly prayer recorded for us in John 17, six times Jesus uses the word "**Father.**"

Now on the Cross we can understand Jesus' first prayer, "**Father forgive them; for they know not what they do.**" This is in harmony with what He is **DOING**. He is dying for sinners, dying to pay the sin debt.

But the next prayer out of our Lord's mouth is a prayer that **STARTLES** and **STAGGERS** us. Here we behold, "**THE RIGHTEOUS ONE BEING FORSAKEN**", as our Lord for the first and only time in His earthly ministry interrupts the progression of using "**My Father**" and cries, "**MY God, My God, why hast Thou FORSAKEN ME?**"

Why did Jesus, all of a sudden and right in the middle of His agony on the cross, cry "**My God, My God?**"

Why did Jesus, for the first and only time, transfer from saying "**My Father**" to "**My God**" and then go back to "**Father into thy hands I commend my spirit?**"

This certainly is a dark hour for the Lord Jesus. As he is bearing the sins of the **WHOLE** world upon himself, the Father turns His back on His Son hanging there. Can you imagine this statement, "**God being forsaken by God?**" Can anybody understand that?

"**MY God, My God, WHY hast Thou FORSAKEN ME?**" was a question which none of those around the Cross could have answered. Yet it was answered for us in Psalm 22. This Messianic Psalm furnished a wonderful prophetic **FORE-VIEW** of Christ's sufferings. Psalm 22:1-2 opens with the very words of our Saviour's fourth cross utterance, "**My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me? why art thou so far from helping me, and from the words of my roaring? (2) O my God, I cry in the daytime, but thou hearest not; and in the night season, and am not silent.**" Then in verse 3 the answer is given to the question why? "**But Thou art holy...**"

At the Cross, God exhibited His holiness and satisfied His justice by pouring out His wrath on the one who was made sin for us. What human pen is able or fit to write about the **HOLINESS OF GOD?**

**So holy is God, that mortal man cannot look upon Him in His being and live.**

**So holy is God, that the very heavens are not clean in His sight.**

**So holy is God, that when Abraham stood before Him, He cried in Genesis 18:27, "I am but dust and ashes."**

**So holy is God, that when Isaiah had a vision of His glory he exclaimed in Isaiah 6:6, "Woe is me! for I am undone ... for mine eyes have seen the King, the Lord of Hosts."**

**So holy is God that we are told in Habakkuk 1:13, "He is of purer eyes than to behold evil, and canest not look on iniquity."**

It was because the Saviour was bearing our sins that the **HOLY GOD** could not look on Him, turned His face from Him, and forsook Him.

This is the true explanation of Calvary. God's holy character could not do less than JUDGE sin even though it was found on Christ Himself. It was there at the cross that God's justice was satisfied and His holiness vindicated, because **"God is of purer eyes than to behold evil, and canest not look on iniquity."** In fulfillment of prophecy, Jesus cried, **"MY God, My God, why hast Thou FORSAKEN ME?"**

Now in order to feel the depth of this cry of our Lord in Luke 27:46, we need to understand the key word **"forsaken."** The word means:

**"To denounce,"**                      **"To abandon,"**  
**"To desert someone,"**        **"To leave one helpless."**

There on the cross, Jesus was literally DISOWNED, and DENOUNCED by the Father, so Jesus had to cry, **"My God, My God, why hast Thou ABANDONED Me."** O this is the most frightful of all. Can you imagine a creature forsaken by its creator, a man forsaken by God? The cry of saints in all ages has been, **"Forsake us not, O God."** For the Lord to hide His face from us is unbearable. Now if this is true of you and I, how infinitely more so for the beloved Son of the Father.

Yet the awful doom awaiting the lost is set forth in II Thessalonians 1:9 where we read **"Who shall be punished with everlasting destruction from the presence of the Lord, and from the glory of His power."**

Here is Jesus on the cross with all the sins of mankind heaped upon Him. Jesus, now in the sight of the Father, is a sinner. Jesus is experiencing an eternity in Hell for you and me. **So what does God the Father do?** He who cannot look at sin or stand in the presence of sin turns His back on Jesus, draws the curtain of Heaven closed from earth's sight. Now Jesus, without the fellowship of the Father, cries **"My God, My God, why hast thou DISOWNED Me."**

Jesus was willing for our sins to be laid upon Him, so that God could DENOUNCE, DISOWN and ABANDON Him, so you and I would not have to be forever **"punished with everlasting destruction from the presence of the Lord."**

Can you imagine as a parent, what it would be like to DISOWN your child, your own flesh and blood?

Can you, as a child of a parent, imagine what it would be like to be DISOWNED by your parents?

Let me quote John 3:16 this way, **"For God so loved YOU that He was willing to DENOUNCE His only begotten Son, That YOU who believe should never be DENOUNCED, but have everlasting life."**

And that my friends is exactly what God did, because **HE LOVED YOU AND ME.** Since Jesus was found guilty in my stead, His own Father turned His back on Him and thus Jesus cried not **"MY FATHER"** rather He cried **"My God, My God, why hast thou forsaken Me."**

There in heaven Jesus is pronounced GUILTY.

He is FORSAKEN, DENOUNCED, ABANDONED by His own Father.

If God spared not the Lord Jesus when sin was found on Him, what possible hope is there for the unsaved ones? Why would he spare you when you stand before Him at the Great White Throne with your sin upon you? For again we read, **"Who shall be punished with everlasting destruction from the presence of the Lord, and from the glory of His power."** Jesus cried, **"My God, My God, why hast Thou forsaken Me?"**

Here was a cry of desolation; may you never echo it.

Here was a cry of separation; may you never experience it.

Once you have made the step of faith, God will turn back toward you so you can say, "My Father which art in Heaven hallowed be Thy name."

**The THIRD PRAYER is found in John 19:28-30.**

"After this, Jesus knowing that all things were now accomplished, that the scripture might be fulfilled, saith, I thirst. (29) Now there was set a vessel full of vinegar: and they filled a sponge with vinegar, and put it upon hyssop, and put it to his mouth. (30) When Jesus therefore had received the vinegar, he said, It is finished: and he bowed his head, and gave up the ghost."

Here we have the 6th saying of the cross, "It is finished"

In the Greek, Jesus used another very interesting word here in John 19:30 when He said, "It is finished." It is the word "Tetelestai." In order to understand this word, it is necessary to go back to Genesis 1, where we find a Hebrew word that is equivalent to the Greek. In Genesis 1:10, 12, and 16 we find the words "And God saw that it was GOOD."

This word "Good" in the Hebrew means **PERFECT or COMPLETE**. One cannot add to it; one cannot subtract from it. It is exactly the way God wanted it to be. The Greek equivalent to that is this word "Tetelestai."

When Jesus realized He had fulfilled the Old Testament prophecies, and He had perfectly paid the price for our sins, He said, "Tetelestai." "It is perfect, it is complete." You cannot add anything to it, you cannot subtract from it, "IT IS DONE."

It appears immediately after Jesus said "Tetelestai," "It is perfect, It is complete," He prayed "Father, into thy hands, I commend my spirit." Father, I have completed the task at hand, not I commend my Spirit," thus fulfilling scripture that no man took His life, but Jesus willingly gave it up to complete our so great Salvation. We put our faith and trust in the Christ who PERFECTLY provided us with a completed SALVATION. I feel so sorry for people who are always adding to what is perfect. We sing that Hymn, "JESUS PAID IT ALL" Do you believe that? Do you have to pay anything for salvation? **NO!!**

**JESUS PAID IT ALL, All to Him I owe,  
Sin had left a crimson stain,  
He washed it white as snow."**

Perhaps you are here this Lord's day, Palm Sunday, and you have heard the Gospel story over and over again. Yet, over and over again you have rejected the Saviour's "SO GREAT SALVATION." Reject the Saviour today, and tomorrow it will be too late. Today, we beg you in Jesus' name to cry unto God, "Be merciful to me a sinner and save me for Jesus' sake."

Again focus your attention on Romans 10:9, "If thou shalt confess with thy mouth the Lord Jesus, and shalt believe in thine heart that God hath raised Him from the dead, thou shalt be saved." Once again survey the wondrous cross on which the Prince of Glory died. Here Jesus cried "It is Finished." Hallelujah for "The Old Rugged Cross."

**On a hill far away stood an old rugged cross  
The emblem of suffering and shame.  
And I love that old cross where the dearest and best,  
For a world of lost sinners was slain.**

**Oh, that old rugged cross, so despised by the world,  
Has a wondrous attraction for me;  
For the dear Lamb of God left His glory above  
To bear it to dark Calvary.**



In the old rugged cross, stained with blood so divine,  
A wondrous beauty I see;  
For 'twas on that old cross Jesus suffered and died  
To pardon and sanctify me.

So I'll cherish the old rugged cross,  
Til my trophies at last I lay down;  
I will cling to the old rugged cross,  
And exchange it someday for a crown.

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If God has spoken to your heart after reading the sermon "**Calvary PRAYERS of our Lord**" right now talk to God about what He has spoken to you.

Do you have the assurance that one day you will go to heaven? If you have no assurance that you know Jesus Christ, then I trust you will decide to accept Him as your personal Savior. The Bible tells us in

Acts 16:31, "**...Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved...**"

Romans 10:13, "**For whosoever shall call upon the name of the Lord shall be saved.**"

This prayer is here for those who need to ask Jesus to be their personal Savior: "**I do want to go to Heaven. I know I am a sinner, and I do believe Jesus Christ died for me. I realize I cannot buy this great salvation, nor can I earn it. Knowing Jesus died on the cross and arose from the grave to pay my sin debt and to purchase my salvation, I do now trust Him as my Savior, and from this moment on I am completely depending on Him for my salvation.**"

If you made the decision to accept Jesus Christ as your personal Savior, let me know. Please send an e-mail to, [pdmikBBM@aol.com](mailto:pdmikBBM@aol.com) and I will send you some literature that will help you in your Christian life.

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