

Why God Made Man - Part 4 of 6

by Paris Reidhead

The sermon explores the conflict between God and Satan, the nature of idolatry, and the significance of the birth and baptism of Jesus.

Duration: 57:34

Scripture: Matthew 4:1

Topics: "Purpose"

Description

In this sermon, the preacher tells a story about a farmer and his wife who are struggling financially. The farmer is frustrated and tells his wife that they need to find a way to make more money. The next day, a lamb runs into the farmer's knife three times and dies. The preacher then discusses the lust of the flesh and the lust of the eye, emphasizing how people are often willing to trade money for material possessions. He also shares a personal experience in Sudan, highlighting the importance of empathy and understanding others' struggles.

Transcript

Our Heavenly Father, we thank and praise Thee that Thou hast given to us this wondrous revelation of Thy love in the person of the Lord Jesus Christ. And as we come now to consider this mystery of Thy grace, this marvelous revelation of Thy love, this unfolding of Thy great plan of redemption and the implications that it has for us in our ministries and in our life and walk with Thee, speak to us, minister to every heart. Let none of us be omitted in the breaking of the bread.

May the eyes of our hearts be opened and may we see Jesus high and lifted up and His train filling the temple. In His worthy name and for His sake we ask it. Amen.

Now, back to 1 Corinthians 2, but we speak the wisdom of God in a mystery, even the hidden wisdom which God ordained before the world unto our glory, which none of the princes of this world knew, for had they known it, they would not have crucified the Lord of glory. The wisdom of God in a mystery, the hidden wisdom which God ordained before the world unto our glory. Because of man's sin, because of this tremendous transfer of authority from man to whom God had given it, to the God of this world, prince of this world, to Satan, there has been ever this conflict.

Perhaps Daniel, more clearly than any other, explains to us the nature of the warfare that is going on. You recall that when he prayed and 21 days later, Michael the archangel came saying, I have been withstood

by the princes of Persia. There had been an unseen and heavenly battle going on.

And that battle had continued. We are told in Ephesians chapter one, that there are principalities and powers and the rulers of the darkness of this present age. Satan has established a hierarchy of government, a hierarchy that had been absolutely effective in controlling the affairs of men.

I mentioned to you in the earlier service about the introduction of idolatry into the world with the Tower of Babel and the enthronement of Semiramis. That idolatry continued. It later on came, no longer Semiramis, but Astarte, Astaroth.

And then later on we find Juno. And in Ephesus, we find Diana. But it is always the idolatry associated with the lust of the flesh, sexualism, sexual indulgence.

Remember I said there were three times on the pitchfork. The first in terms of introduction here is the lust of the flesh. And the second is the lust of the eye.

Now the function of the eye is to see. And what we see are things. On Monday, when there were no day services, Marjorie and I just went for the first time.

I don't think we've ever done it. We just strolled through the shopping mall. First, we wanted a little exercise.

And secondly, we wanted where was air-conditioned. And we concluded that that was probably the best place for an air-conditioned exercise. But we realized as we walked that everyone was setting out things in the most attractive, most exciting way.

And it's always amazing, isn't it, what people would rather have than money. It just always surprises me what they're willing to trade money for. Can't wait to get rid of it.

And they always trade it for things, big things or houses. We drove from seeing Shoshone Falls down one of the streets. We saw some of those beautiful estates, looked like it to me anyway, with five or six acres of yard, beautifully landscaped.

Well, that's a lovely thing. I have no objection to it. If they continue to tithe and then give offerings to the Lord, I don't object to it.

I think it's kind of a bad trade. But that's their business. That's not mine.

But the point is that things are traded for money. Well, you would expect, wouldn't you, if you had a goddess of sex, the lust of the flesh, that there would be some kind of an invented god of things. And we have it in the scripture.

Baal. Did you know what the word Baal means? Literally, it's owner. And Baal worship was for the purpose of appeasing the evil spirit that owned the field or the valley or the village, whatever it was.

You find Baal Kirgath, the owner of Kirgath. Baal Peor, the owner of Peor. And Baal worship was to appease the evil spirit that owned the real estate, to induce him to give up the fruit of that real estate so that one could trade it for what they wanted.

Now, you remember that the people in the land that God gave to Abraham, it wasn't unoccupied land. There were folks there. And God was fed up with their idolatry and their wickedness and their brutality.

They worshipped Ashtaroath, they worshipped Baal, and they worshipped Moloch. And the brutality and cruelty and evil associated with this was so horrendous that God said, they got to go. And so his purpose was to give that to Abraham and to his descendants.

Now, Abraham never got occupancy of it, and Jacob's family didn't. But when Moses led the children of Israel out of there, they were going to go in to do what God had told them to do, namely to destroy these lands because they were subject to judgment of their crimes that they had committed. And we, you know the history, I needn't rehearse it, only to tell you that after Israel got into the land, they never did what God told them to do.

They never did that. They never dealt with the people that were there. Oh, they took their farms, they took their land, but they let the people live.

And in so doing, they brought themselves into terrible bondage. Let me illustrate it. Here's a farmer.

Yeah, he got one of the farms from the Canaanites, and he's trying to get a living out of it. Now, the Canaanite did pretty well. But remember, he was a Baal worshipper, and the Israelite is a Jehovah worshipper.

Now, God had told them this was a land flowing with milk and honey, and all they had found, it was a land full of brambles and stones and rocks. Because of the problems that they had in obeying God, God couldn't bless them. Well, one day this Israelite farmer is down there chopping away, got an ox, a couple of oxen, and he's trying to stir it up and get some oil so he can plant it.

And leaning on the fence against the road there is an old Canaanite farmer that had owned this piece of property before the Jews came in. And then when he gets down there, the Israelite lets the oxen blow for a little while, and they chat. Now, he shouldn't be there, that Canaanite shouldn't have been there, but he's there.

And you're not doing very well. When I had this farm, I was getting a lot more than you're getting out of it. Well, that's what they tell me, but I thought I was a pretty good farmer, but I'm not doing very well.

You're telling the truth. I wonder why. He said, you don't understand how we get crops here.

You just came in here, you don't know. Well, how do you get crops? Did you ever notice that big thick place in the stone wall down there? Yeah, I noticed that. Sure.

What's that mean? It's got all those brown streaks down it. Well, that's an altar. An altar to whom? To Baal, to the spirit that owns this land.

You can't get a crop here unless you make a sacrifice to the spirit that owns this land, the owner of it, the evil spirit that governs it. Well, what do you do? He said, I kill sheep, but you worship Jehovah. Only place you can sacrifice sheep is there at that tabernacle, but we're more practical.

We got to have food. I don't know what you get from worshiping Jehovah, but when I was here, I had to have a crop to support my family. Well, what'd you do? Well, he said, we just killed a lamb, put the blood of the lamb on the stone, left the lamb there, and actually, after we killed it, we took it home and ate it, but we

let the blood out of it there on those stones as a sacrifice to Baal.

We didn't want to waste the meat, let the vultures get it, so we'd take it home and we'd have lamb stew, but that's what we did. We sacrificed it. You got a good crop? Oh, you got about three or four times more than you do.

So that night, when they're asleep, getting ready to go to bed, the farmer says to his wife, you know, I talked to the old man who used to own this place, and he told me how they got good crops. Well, you better find out something, because I haven't had a new dress for so long, and this kitchen equipment is worn out, and if we don't get something, there are going to be problems, and I'm warning you. You better figure out some way to get more money than we've had the last couple of years here.

I thought this land would be full of milk and honey, just got that's all I can find. So next day, it's real strange. A lamb just comes running down the field and leaps up on that wall, and the old farmer's there whittling on a stick, and you know what that lamb does? It runs into his knife.

Three times it runs into it, and it just lays down in its blood. It was all an accident, of course. It wasn't intentional, but boy, they got a good crop that year, and someone says, what did you do? Well, I had an accident with a lamb.

It ran into my knife. He's not going to say he killed it, but you know what he did. He killed it, and we got a good crop.

That's what that thing in your field is. That's an altar to Baal. Baal worship, and you know what the scripture says in Judges? Joshua, they feared the Lord, and they served the gods of the land.

Oh, I wish that had been confined to them, but I find today churches are filled with people that say they fear the Lord, but they serve the gods of the land. Now, that was owner. That was Baal worship.

So, worshiping Juno or Ashtaroth, they got license for immorality. Worshiping Baal, they got the means of accumulating things. Now, there's one other type of worship we find associated here, and that's the worship of Moloch.

When Marjorie and I arrived in Africa, it was in Egypt. We stayed at the American University Guest House. We arrived the night before the day that Parliament opened, and then Farouk was king of Egypt, and the parade route went right by the American University Guest House.

So, we were out there standing up on the Wainscote High brick wall, holding on to the steel iron rods and fence that went around the property. So, we were over the heads of the folks standing on the sidewalk, and we could look down the street and see these gorgeous Arabian horses as they were outriders for the state's coach, and they came prancing with all their pride and beauty, and then the black horses that pulled the... I think there were six black horses that pulled the coach, and in there was the king Farouk and his queen, and as he came down the street, the people picked up the cry, Malik Kabir! Malik Kabir! Great King! Great King! Malik, M-L-K. King.

Moloch. Radicals. M-L-K.

King. Well, who's the king at the World Service? Isn't it Prince of Darkness? So, what they had, and according to some of the archaeologists, there were at times in certain places great statues of the king,

and he's there like Abu Simbel down on the Nile River. So, elsewhere there were statues of the king.

In some cases, they had his hands out and hands clasped so, so that the forearms on the thighs made a basket, and it was all giant size. Into that basket would be placed lighted charcoal. There were tunnels that cut into the rock that went out behind the statue, and there the priest had bellows made of goatskin that had been peeled off and properly attached, and they would work these bellows and force the air up through until that became like a blacksmith's forge, a very hot charcoal fire.

The worshipers of Moloch would come, speak to the priest, tell the priest what they wanted. Now, when they sacrificed to Moloch, it was to get position. Pride of life is associated with position.

Governor of a province, mayor of a city, on the council, some position. You know, when you've had all of the sexual indulgence you can tolerate, and all of the things you can accumulate, there's only one thing left, and that's power over people. And so, they would come to Moloch.

Now, the offering, the typical offering to Moloch was a baby, usually a firstborn son, but since he was made out of stone, he didn't have two good eyes, what he wanted was a baby, sometimes a girl, and try to get it eight days, ten days, two weeks old. And the parents would come and stand there. Both of them had to agree, had to come together.

And they would tell the priest what position they were asking Moloch to give them, and then the father would take the little child, like some basketball player does, trying to get the trajectory to put the ball through the basketball hoop. The father would take the child and get the trajectory, and then throw the little child, arms and legs flailing, perhaps screaming, to land squarely in the fire, and to be consumed as a living sacrifice to Moloch. Now, that's what the children of Israel did.

They were feared Jehovah, and they served the gods of the land, and the gods of the land were Ashtaroath, and Baal, and Moloch. Evidencing the control that the god of this world has, even on the people that were to be a people to show forth his praise, how they were seduced, and induced, and beguiled, and chose to serve the gods of the land. Now, this has continued down to the present.

You say, oh, we don't have that today. Oh, don't we? You don't think so. Well, I beg to differ with you.

We still have the same three goddesses and gods today. And you as pastors know that in among your people are parents that seemingly have made decisions to sacrifice their children to their own personal ambitions, and sometimes even in Christian work. Whenever we come to the place that we are prepared to sacrifice integrity in the glory of God for sexual indulgence, for possessions, or for position, it's a type of idolatry.

For all that's in the world is the lust of the eye, the lust of the flesh, and the pride of life. Now, I said that I was going to take you back to Ephesians chapter 2, and I propose to do so now. I want you to notice in 21, principalities.

These would be the evil spirit that governed countries, and power, and might, and dominion, and every name that is named, not only in this world, but also in that which is to come. And then I want you to go down to the second chapter in the first verse. And you, who were dead in trespasses and sins, were in time past, you walked according to the course of this world.

You did. I did. You walked according to the prince and the power of the air.

You did. You walked according to the spirit that now works in the children of disobedience, among whom also we all had our manner of life in times past, fulfilling the lusts of our flesh, past in the lusts of our flesh, fulfilling the desires of the flesh and of the mind. This is the things that we could see, and the positions we could occupy, and were by nature the children of wrath, even as others.

Now I've cited that just to establish that the race of men, wicked men, was under the control of the God of this world. Wherever you go, wherever you are, it's true. I've told you about Africa, where they cicatrized the back, where they cut the back.

But there are a lot of other marks that you see in other parts of the world which are equally definitive. Now, such were we. Such were all men.

There were no exceptions. All have sinned and come short of the glory of God. All are under the sentence of death.

No exceptions whatever. However, there was, in the fullness of time was come, one woman who by her choices had sought to please God, and God chose her as a vessel. He overshadowed her, and one cell in her body was quickened, not by male sperm, but by the Holy Ghost.

And that person that was born of Mary was Emmanuel, God come in the flesh. Now, remember what we had back here in 1 Corinthians 2, the hidden mystery. And remember the problem that God has.

He has to defeat his ancient foe, and he has to vindicate his holiness and satisfy the law so that he can be just, and the justifier of those that repent and believe. So Mary, chosen vessel, one cell in her body, quickened by the Holy Ghost. And that which is born of her is God come in the flesh.

We are told by the Council of Nicaea later that he was very God, a very God, no less God. And he was very man, a very man, no less man. Perfect union, God come in the flesh.

Now, as a babe, then he is to be nurtured at the breast of Mary. He's to be tended and protected. God, in order to provide for the family, has those that have been scattered are out there.

I don't know who they are, but I know this, that one time 10 tribes went and they took scripture with them when they went, those 10 scattered tribes. And maybe they are, I don't know whether they are or not. I don't, I just know this, that they knew the stars and they knew the message and they were called magi.

And, and they, they were watching and they learned from God by means that he used to communicate that there was going to be one born who was of the utmost importance, a king. And so they brought kingly gifts. These three wise men, they bought gold and frankincense and myrrh, very expensive gifts.

And they came and they laid these kingly gifts at the feet of this infant. And God had a purpose in it because the enemy was stirred up. Something was happening and he didn't know what was happening, but he had to stop it because he's the God of this world and he's the prince of this world.

And he has a king that's amenable to his suggestions. And so the king says, now you go down there and you find every baby under two years of age and you kill it. And the angel says, you get up Joseph and you take Mary and the babe and you go where I'll show you into Egypt.

And isn't it marvelous? In their little pack on the back of a donkey, they had gold and frankincense and myrrh, which would sustain them in their 12 years as refugees in Egypt for their years. Oh, I think it's

marvelous. I think it's so thrilling how God makes the wrath of men to praise him, how he prepares.

And so they trekked down into Egypt and there they live protected and they lose sight of it and they forget about it. Then the angel of the Lord says, you can go back home to Nazareth. So they go around about way.

They don't go through Jerusalem. They go up and cut across and go into Nazareth. And we're told that Jesus increased in wisdom and stature and favor with God and with man.

And at the age of 30, he's now been an apprentice carpenter. He's become a journeyman carpenter. He's become a master carpenter.

And he has been there working in that home with Joseph to care for his mother and the others in the family. And John has been set forth. That's a cousin of Jesus.

And so Lord Jesus goes down to the Jordan and there John is proclaiming there one coming after me who's preferred before me. He will baptize you with the Holy Ghost and with fire. I'm not worthy to unlatch his sandals and loosen them.

He's coming. And down into the water comes the Lord Jesus. And John sees and God gives revelation to John.

That Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God. And John says, I have need to be baptized of you. And the Lord Jesus said, no, but that all righteousness may be fulfilled.

Now, baptism was to those who came in evidence of repentance. And those who came prior to his coming all had much sin of which to repent. They had walked according to this course of this world, according to the prince and the power of the air.

They were dead in their trespasses and sins and they needed to repent of sin. But this one, of whom the silence of heaven would be shortly broken and the voice of God would say, this is my beloved son in whom I'm well pleased. God never could have said that about anyone else at the age of five, much less than at the age of 30.

But he always did those things that pleased the father. The only person that ever walked and left his footprints in sand, that the father could say, I'm well pleased. Oh, so what could he come for baptism? So what could he change his mind about or set his mind? Well, he is God come in the flesh and as the eternal son, he has the right to be worshiped, the right to have the worship of angels, the right to have men honor his name.

But we are told in the Kenosis chapter in Philippians, let this mind be in you, which was also in Christ Jesus, who being in the form of God, thought it not something to be grasped after or insisted upon that he should be equal with God, but being found in fashion as a man, he deliberately accepted the limitations of his humanity. Do you understand what baptism meant to the Lord? The laying aside of the right to act in his essential deity as son. He did not lay aside his deity.

He laid aside the right to act in his deity and he accepted the limitations of his humanity. Why? That in all things he might be like unto his brethren, so that at another time he could say, as the father sent me, so send I you. Our Lord Jesus was conceived by the Holy Ghost, indwelt by the fullness of the Godhead

bodily.

He went into the water of baptism, saying by it that he accepted the limitation of his humanity. He presented his body to the father and when he came out of the water, John said, I saw the Holy Ghost like a dove come upon him. And later on in Nazareth, he said, the spirit of the Lord is upon me.

He didn't say in me because the spirit of God had been in him from his conception and birth. But his divine human personality was now clothed upon and covered and anointed by the spirit of God. And as F.B. Meyer, in one of the great little books, number 37 in Moody Colportage series, said, in that book, Christ for the Christ life, for the self life, we must remember that everything done by Christ in the three years of his public ministry was done by the father through the Holy Spirit and was not done by him in his essential deity, his son.

For if it had been done by him in his essential deity, his son, he never could have said as the father sent me, I so send I you. But since he accepted the limitation of his father, presented his body to the father and the spirit of God came upon him and everything done by him was done by the father through the spirit. Then he was in all points like unto his brother.

But he had the spirit without limit and we certainly with very, very severe limits. But we must understand, though, what this meant. So our Lord Jesus then went high into the mountains there overlooking the valley of the Jordan until he found a cave where he could thus be apart from the sun and shaded a bit.

And there without food and without water, he ministered to perhaps by angels, but there alone for 40 days, he exposed himself now to the conflict with his ancient foe. The one that he said, I be Satan, fall as lightning from heaven down to earth. Now he is there and the conflict is joined and the proposition is presented to his intellect, to his mind.

What is it? What does the enemy have to present? Remember what he has? The lust of the flesh, the lust of the eye, the pride of life. And he said, you're hungry. That's the desire of the flesh.

If you would say the word, you can turn these stones into bread. And our Lord Jesus said, man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word out of the mouth of God. And he resists the temptation.

And then he said, if you will bow down and worship me, I will give you the kingdoms of the world. If you'll cast yourself down, your angels will protect you. Temptation, all that the enemy had, he brought and he focused on the Lord Jesus and he met it with the word of God and he resisted it.

Totally and completely. And then down to begin his ministry, first in Cana and then to Nazareth, where he takes the scripture from Isaiah, the spirit of the Lord is upon me. He has anointed me, has sent me and said, this day is the scripture fulfilled in your ear.

And three years of public ministry, drawing to himself 12 that will have special relationship with him. One of whom is ultimately to choose to betray him. And only three will be considered close enough to him to go with him to the mountain of revelation.

And the one of the three that had gone with him to the mountain of revelation to whom God had said, this is the Christ, the son of the living God. And he then begins to explain to them how that he, he must go to Jerusalem and be killed and be raised from the dead. And this one of them, Peter listens to the voice of Satan and says, no, no, no, you don't have to do that.

You don't be this far from you, Lord. And the Lord Jesus said the very one to whom he had said, flesh and blood has not revealed this unto you, but my father, which is in heaven. He now says, get thee behind me, Satan.

Speaking through Peter, evidencing that a person can speak, be taught by God one day, one hour. And if he lends himself, he can bring that which is not of God, but of the enemy. So we are to trust and try all things.

And our Lord Jesus recognized who it was trying to dissuade him from fulfilling the purpose of the father. So we come then to that moment in time when his ministry has been completed. The 11, the 12th having betrayed him or about to betray him, having left the place of the supper to go on out to complete the transaction and the bargain to get the money that was to come to him.

And the Lord Jesus goes into the garden and goes aside taking three with him as he went further. And then he goes apart from them and he prays. Have you seen him praying there? Have you ever wondered why it was that as he prayed, perspiration like great clots of blood, was perspiration burst out of his brow and his face.

Have you ever seen that? Why? Do you know why? Let me explain. The Lord Jesus Christ was now fulfilling the purpose for which he'd come. Do you remember the text that says he was made to be sin for us.

He who knew no sin that we might be made the righteousness of God in him. The Lord Jesus Christ now is extending the hands of his love out through time. And in a sense he is reaching around a race of wicked men and he is identifying himself with that race.

In a sense he's reaching out to me and he's reaching out to you and he's crushing us to himself. So that his identification with us is so complete. I want you to hear what I'm saying very carefully.

His identification with us is so complete that it is as though in the eyes of his father he is made to be what we were. Now how can I explain that to you? Perhaps if I bring the illustration that came from an experience in Sudan it will help. My task, our task, was to get the language of the people in the area.

One tribe there was the Ngesina tribe. We were forbidden by the government to go into their area but they brought their cattle down, their flocks, down into our area. And so while they were there with their flocks and herds I could go with them and pick the language off their teeth as they spoke and record it to make the sample we needed to compare their language as the other languages in the area.

This particular day we'd awakened as we usually did about six o'clock. We'd had breakfast and I was walking out across the, through the grass. It was all brown, brilliant, blighted with the sun.

And even though the sun was off to my shoulder, wasn't in my face, the reflection on the brown grass was so bright that I had my helmet pulled down over my forehead. And my eyes squinted up about as tight as I could get them. And I was looking down at the path because I didn't want to have any more of that light burn my eyes than I had to.

I glanced up and see where the path was going and I saw a dark bundle there. And I didn't know but what maybe it was a couple of bundles of thatch grass because the women were out getting the grass to go and repair their roofs and re-thatch their roofs where it needed it. I thought maybe they'd gotten tired and left it

there to pick it up in the morning.

But as I got nearer, I smelled a strange smell. A smell of something rotten. And I looked up and there in front of me was a leper.

Now I'd seen lots of pictures of lepers, motion pictures of lepers. I'd read books about leprosy. I'd talked with missionaries that had worked with lepers.

You see the leper is, leprosy is not a type of sin. Leprosy, the leper is the picture of the sinner. And now I was coming on to a leper.

The first one that I'd ever encountered in the flesh. Never seen one before. Close up.

And I walked up to him and there he sat, his feet in front of him. He had no toes. They'd been eaten away and there were just maggot filled ulcers on the end of his feet.

Big pads on his knees and on his elbows told me how he moved like this. He had no fingers. They were rotted away, little bones sticking through the proud flesh.

Around his neck someone had put a leather thong with a half a gourd. And in it I could see how he got food. He'd take the palms, heels of his hand when he saw a little grain and he'd pick it up and he'd put it in the gourd.

Then when he got a little of it, he'd shake the gourd and try to get the grain to ride to the top and get up. Put his tongue down and lift the grain with his moist tongue. And here he was, his eyelid way turned down, matter seeping out down his cheeks.

His nose just a rotting hole in his flesh. His lips turned down and teeth all but gone. And he's holding out his hands to me and he's saying, put yourself in my place.

What if you were here and I were you? What would you want me to do for you? Overcome with emotion I said to him, under my breath in English, oh I'll do anything I can to help you. And when I said that the picture seemed to change. Up till then I'd been looking at a stranger that I'd never seen before.

But when I said I'll do anything to help you, in my eyes the whole scene changed and I was the leper and the Lord Jesus was where I was. And he was saying, I'd do anything to help you. Now don't misunderstand me.

I didn't do what I'm about to tell you. But I realized for the first time what the Lord Jesus had done. If I had done for that leper what Christ did do for me, this is what it would have meant.

I would have had to have reached out calculating all of the filthy disease and have lifted him up and put his feet on my feet, his hands in my hands, his face on my face. And then somehow in the alchemy of love I would have had to have so compressed and so pulled that his disease would have appeared to have gone out on me and my health on him. The word says, he was made to be sin for us.

He who knew though that we might be made the righteousness of God in him. He identified himself with us so completely that in the eyes of his father he was us. He was there.

He the just one, we the unjust. And the purpose was that he might vindicate the holiness of God and satisfy the justice of God and make it possible for God to be just and the justifier of them that believe in Jesus, that repent of their sin and savingly embrace him. Well, there he is in the garden playing with great drops of blood bursting from his brow.

And when he comes out and they would put thongs upon him, he accepts the thongs. Why? Because he's not coming out as himself. He's coming out as me and I deserve the thong.

And when they buffeted him and bruised him and scourged him, he accepted it. Why? Because you deserve the wrath of God. You deserve everything that the law could do.

And when he went to the cross, he was there in his identification with you to the place that what he consented to have the nails driven through his hands and feet. Why? Because he was there as me, as you. Representing us by our identification because the word had been so explicit.

It said the soul that sinneth, it must die. And only by his identification with us to that end, could he satisfy the law in our behalf and vindicate the law and uphold the righteousness of God. And he died the just for the unjust that he might bring us to God.

But before he died, in those three awesome hours, when darkness covered the cross and surrounded it, all of hell came. That was a preternatural and unnatural darkness. It was the darkness made by the prince of darkness surrounding the son of God.

And we are told in the Psalms exactly what happened. How that his heart melted within him like wax. And how that he was buffeted and bruised so that he didn't even resemble a man anymore.

And when there wasn't anything more that hell could do to him because of its hatred of him as God and the God's law and holiness could do to us because of our iniquity and sin and God's law has been vindicated and his holiness upheld, the Lord Jesus said it's finished. And he died and he gave up the ghost. Everything hell could do had been done.

Now what has happened? By our Lord Jesus going to the cross, light is said to darkness, do your worst. Truth is said to the lie, have your day. Life is said to death, what have you to do? Do it now.

And hatred, love said to hatred, work all that you could ever work. And when he said it's finished, he had not only done all that was necessary to make it possible for God to forgive and pardon us, but he had also taken every spear and every arrow and every club that hell had and he died. And three days later, that God life that could not die returned again to that body and he was raised from the dead.

And he led captivity captive and the foe was defeated in open conflict. From where you are, Brother Fred, would you lead us in closing prayer?

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