
Sermon Notes

December 13, 2020

First Congregational Church of Pomfret

No Longer Alone... Experiencing the Joy of Emmanuel The Price Psalm 22:1, Matthew 27:46

One Is the Loneliest Number

- ❖ Who is the loneliest person who ever lived?
 - world history is filled with the life stories of people who face isolation and function alone in order to fulfill the roles and responsibilities God assigns them
 - but, there is only one candidate who really qualifies to wear the moniker of “the world’s loneliest person”
- ❖ One who was abandoned, rejected, betrayed and denied by friends as well as isolated and alienated from God
- ❖ The very One who comes to earth as God’s love gift to us willingly submits and subjects Himself to the most extreme form of loneliness possible so that we will never be alone

Solitude Or Loneliness?

- ❖ Jesus frequently withdraws and seeks solitude in order to pray and commune with His Father
 - solitude leads to strength: an enriched, deep communion and fellowship with the Father

- Jesus was powerful in His public ministry because of the hours spent in secret with His Father
- ❖ As Jesus comes to the climax of His earthly mission, He comes face to face with an overriding sense of loneliness
 - while Jesus sweats drops of blood, His disciples sleep
 - Jesus is alone when He is put on trial
 - though a few loved ones gather at the foot of Jesus’ cross, they are incapable of offering anything but tears
 - the only person who speaks on Jesus’ behalf is a dying thief who calls Him Lord and testifies to his fellow criminal that *this man has done nothing wrong*

Why Does Jesus Submit to This?

- ❖ Why is the Savior’s loneliness a necessary part of the cup of suffering from which He must drink?
 - sin causes separation
 - between people
 - between people and God
 - Jesus becomes sin (2 Corinthians 5:21)
 - the wages of sin are death
 - sin demands death
- ❖ Because of His great love for us and His great desire to please His Father, Jesus embraces this loneliness for God’s glory and our good

- ❖ Although Jesus' loneliness IS real, Jesus is not dismayed or destroyed by it
 - only a few hours before His arrest, trial, torture and crucifixion, Jesus tells His disciples the reason He will be able to stay true to His mission
 - ***Behold, the hour is coming, indeed it has come, when you will be scattered, each to his own home, and will leave me alone. Yet I am not alone, for the Father is with me.*** (Jn. 16:32)
 - yet, how can the same person who cries out, ***My God, my God, why have you abandoned me?*** also say, ***Yet I am not alone, for the Father is with me?***
 - God the Father is fully present in the midst of Jesus' suffering pouring out His infinite wrath against sin on the infinite sacrifice Jesus is making
- ❖ Although the conscious presence of the Father's love for the Son is taken away in this moment, the Father and Jesus are one
 - Jesus fully and willingly participates in fulfilling the Father's plan to save lost people from sin and restore them to a full relationship with Him
 - in that sense, the Father is with the Son even when the comfort of His presence is absent
 - from eternity past, both the Father and the Son are resolved upon the same, gracious purpose
- ❖ Isaiah 53:10 reveals ***it was the will of the LORD to crush him; he has put him to grief...***
- ❖ By faith, Jesus trusts that His Father is with Him, sustaining Him even in the midst of His most dreaded hour

So What?

- ❖ How does any of this help when the thick clouds of loneliness descend on me?
- ❖ How can I make Christ's words my own: "I am alone: and yet I am not alone, because the Father is with me"?
 - trust that Jesus knows all about your sorrows
 - Jesus Christ has entered into the realm of human loneliness so that we might no longer be alone
- ❖ Jesus came to rescue a lonely world. He came to bridge the gap caused by sin
 - Jesus takes OUR sin and gives us HIS life
 - Jesus has been in deeper darkness than you are in now
- ❖ God knows, God understands, God cares
 - God promises that the Christ of Christmas is able to bring His presence to you in a new way
 - you are not alone

Personal Reflection

1. Follow Jesus' example of spending time in solitude with His Father. As you do so, ask Him to renew your strength and deepen your faith.
2. Can you say with Jesus, "I am alone: and yet I am not alone, because the Father is with me"? If not, what action do you need to take in order to more fully trust the One who promises to never leave you or forsake you?

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