

## **Lighthouse Bible Church**

**March 31<sup>st</sup>, 2013 Easter Sunday**

**Philippians 2: 5 – 11** *Scripture Reading 1<sup>st</sup> Corinthians 15: 1 - 8*

**‘From Torture to Triumph’**

### **Stand – Read – Pray**

Today is the day that Christianity celebrates the most incredible event in all of human history and that is the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead after His unbelievable torture and eventual death on the cross.

You remember that when Jesus was alive He entered Jerusalem on what is known as Palm Sunday to the cheers of the people saying ‘Hosanna to the Son of David, blessed is He who comes in the name of the Lord’. *Their shouts would change.* He taught in the temple, He held the final Passover meal with His disciples and then He was betrayed into the hands of His enemies, the Jewish religious leaders, the Pharisees & Scribes.

On Friday of that week He was beaten, tortured, whipped, pierced and hung on a cross to die. And after He died, He was buried in a brand new tomb and on Sunday morning the tomb was empty. Jesus showed Himself alive from the dead and was the resurrection and the life to anyone who would believe in Him.

And because the resurrection of Jesus Christ and Him being the way of salvation is one of the most important and fundamental doctrines of Christianity, there is a spiritual battle for the souls of the lost as it relates to that important doctrine and to this important day. One of the ways the enemy attacks the importance of the resurrection is to lessen its significance and to change the meaning of that day.

The enemy knows that resurrection Sunday loses its importance when it gets portrayed as something much less significant than it really is or when the celebration of it is changed to celebrate and mean something entirely different;

Instead of resurrection Sunday, it is Easter Sunday where the Easter bunny is celebrated and focused on; Where decorating, hiding and finding Easter eggs is the focus of the day. Where wearing nice clothes and spending time over an extra long weekend with family and friends becomes the focus. Where anticipating springtime and the changing of the seasons is focused on; and so it goes.

While there is nothing wrong with any of those things, in and of themselves, it can begin to shift our focus from what this day and this week was truly meant to celebrate and that is the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead. The One who is the Author and Finisher of our Faith and the one to whom every knee will bow.

We want to look at Him this morning and two aspects of this special day as they are set out over and over again in scripture and in our passage here in Philippians that looks at our Lord's humiliation and crucifixion and His exaltation because of His resurrection. That is why I titled this message 'from torture to triumph' so let's look at it in Philippians 2: 5 – 11

**Philippians 2: 5 – 6** is talking about **Jesus Christ, who being in the form of God, did not consider it robbery to be equal with God.**

What Paul is saying is that Jesus existed in the form of God. That word **being** is the word *huparcho* and it means to exist as something. In **the form of God**, in the *morphe* of God or in the essential attributes and character of God. What Paul is saying, and what we have seen in our continuing study of John, is that Jesus is God in human form. Remember **John 1: 1 – 3, 14.**

And He did not **consider it robbery to be equal with God**. He did not consider it something to be held on to, to be equal with God. So what did He do? Look at Verse 7.

**Verse 7 – 8a but made Himself of no reputation, taking the form of a bondservant and coming in the likeness of men. And being found in appearance as a man.**

He left the glories of heaven and His relationship and fellowship with the triune, three in one, God and came to this earth as a man, in the person of Jesus Christ. That phrase ‘**made Himself of no reputation**’ is one word in the Greek language and it means to abase Himself or empty Himself or to lay aside His form, as God, and take on the **form of a bondservant** the form and **likeness of a man, the appearance of a man**.

He had all the attributes of God and yet He was fully and with all the attributes, a man, not just a man but a **bondservant**, a slave, the lowest form of a man of that time. What He in essence did is what **Verse 8** goes on to say **He humbled Himself...**

In His humility Verse 8 goes on to say that **He became obedient to the point of death, even the death of the cross**. He humbled Himself by coming in the likeness of men, being persecuted like other men, and dying like a criminal, between two criminals, identified as a criminal and dying the most torturous death imaginable.

And you want to know something, He was willing to do that because **He was obedient to the point of death, even the death of the cross**. He wanted to do the Father’s will and His will was for Jesus to suffer and die for your sin and mine and be raised after 3 days. This was all in God’s plan from the foundation of the world and Jesus knew it during His life and ministry.

In **Matthew 16: 21** Jesus told His disciples **He must go to Jerusalem and suffer many things from the elders and chief priests and scribes and be killed and be raised the third day.** He knew this.

**Mark 8: 31** Jesus said **the Son of man must suffer many things and be rejected by the elders and chief priests and scribes and be killed and after three days rise again.**

**Luke 18: 31 – 34** it says **Then Jesus took the 12 aside and said to them ‘behold, we are going up to Jerusalem, and all things that are written by the prophets concerning the Son of Man will be accomplished. For He will be delivered to the Gentiles and will be mocked and insulted and spit upon. They will scourge Him and kill Him and the 3<sup>rd</sup> day He will rise again.** He knew that He needed to go through this because it was the Father’s will and because it was written in the word of God that it would happen.

As a matter of fact, He knew exactly how torturous this would be for Him; He was already talking about being mocked, spit on and scourged and killed, but He was doing it for you and for me. In **Isaiah 52: 14** it said that **His appearance would be marred more than any man.** In **Isaiah 53: 3** it says **He will be despised and rejected by men,** the very men He came to save, the very likeness, image and appearance and form He came as, all men would hide their faces from.

**Isaiah 53: 4 – 5** says that **He would be stricken, smitten and afflicted** and the amazing thing is that it was God that was doing it through these hateful men. It even, as **Isaiah 53: 10** said **pleased God to bruise Him and make Him an offering for sin.**

He would be **bruised**, He would be **chastised** and He would received **stripes** all so that we can have our **iniquities and our sins healed and forgiven**. When Jesus is telling His disciples He has to go to Jerusalem and be killed, He knew what that entailed, He knew what He would have to go through.

As a matter of fact, **Psalm 22** records what Jesus would say and what would happen to Him. He will cry out **my God, my God, why have you forsaken Me?** As He is going through this it says He would be **poured out like water and all His bones will be out of joint and His heart will be like wax. His strength is gone, His tongue will cling to His jaws Verses 14 -15 says. He knows they will pierce His hands and His feet as Verse 16 says. He knows that He will be able to count all His bones as Verse 17 says. He knows that while He is dying on the cross the soldiers **will be dividing His garments among them and casting lots for His clothing.****

He knows all of this and He is willing to humble Himself to the point of death, an excruciating tortuous death. But He is willing to do it because the wages of our sin is death and His death on the cross was the only acceptable sacrifice to God that could save you and me from our sin.

Scripture records what Jesus went through in His humiliation and torture and eventual death on our behalf. And by the way, it included Him shedding His blood because **Hebrews 9: 22** says **that without the shedding of blood there can be no forgiveness.**

It started with Him in the garden sweating as it were great drops of blood, Luke records

It continues with the soldiers spitting on him and pulling out His beard and wrapping a cloth over his head and repeatedly punching Him; bleeding

It continues with a crown of thorns being placed on His head and beaten down into His skull with a reed. Bleeding.

It continues with Him being tied to a post and whipped many, many times until the flesh is torn from His body, bleeding all over.

It continues with Him having both hands nailed to a cross and His feet nailed to a cross; bleeding

And it ends with Him giving up His Spirit because His obedience to the Father's perfect will was finished and He died on the cross. The soldiers took a spear and thrust it through His side and out came blood and water.

That is why **1<sup>st</sup> Peter 1: 18 – 19** says that **we were redeemed**, from the penalty and punishment of our sin, **and from our aimless conduct** (listen) **by the precious blood of Christ, as of a lamb without blemish and without spot.**

Now if that were the end of the story, Jesus would have done nothing more than died a martyrs death like many other religious leaders who had a profound impact on the world, but who are still dead. Not so with Jesus.

But this is just where the story begins that we celebrate today, the resurrection of Jesus from the dead. That is why **Hebrews 12: 2** says **that for the joy set before Him, He endured the cross...**

He endured the cross because He knew the joy that waited on the other side of the grave and that was His triumph over death and His exaltation by God the Father. Look back at **Philippians 2: 9 – 11**: Read

Jesus was crucified and died on good Friday, He was put into the tomb at the end of Friday and was there all day Saturday and rose from the grave early Sunday morning. Jesus overcame death because He is God. He had the power to lay His life down, and He did, and He had the power to raise it again, and He did.

Death, the Bible says in **1<sup>st</sup> Corinthians 15: 54** is swallowed up in victory. **Hebrews 2: 14** says that Jesus **destroyed him who had the power over death, that is the Devil**. Jesus conquered the grave and death by His 'R'.

Remember what the angel said in **Luke 24: 5 – 7** **why do you seek the living among the dead? He is not here, but is risen. Remember how He spoke to you when He was still in Galilee, saying 'the Son of Man must be delivered into the hands of sinful men, and be crucified and the 3<sup>rd</sup> day rise again?**

We are saved from the punishment of our sin, which is eternal pain and torment in hell, because Jesus took our punishment. He was the only sinless sacrifice acceptable to God and God accepted His sacrifice and showed His acceptance by raising Him from the dead.

Because of that Philippians 2 says that **God has highly exalted Him, given Him a name above all names so that every knee will bow before Jesus and every tongue should confess Jesus Christ is Lord;** which presumes His resurrection and victory and power over death in order for that to happen.

And He did, that is the hope that we as born again believers have today just like **1<sup>st</sup> Peter 1: 3** says **we have a living hope through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead.**

We, as born again believers **stand** solid in our faith and are **saved** from our sins, for all eternity, because of the important doctrine of the resurrection of Jesus Christ according to **1<sup>st</sup> Corinthians 15: 1 – 8.**

That is why Jesus says in **John 11: 25 – 26** **I am the resurrection and the life. He who believes in Me, though he may die, yet shall he live and whoever lives and believes in Me shall never die.** And then He says this **‘do you believe this’?**

The same question must be asked of you here today. Do you believe in the tortuous death and triumphant resurrection of Jesus Christ? Do you believe that God so loved you that He was willing to give, in such a cruel way, His Son, that if you believe in Him, you could have everlasting life?

Do you believe and are you willing to acknowledge that you are a sinner and that your sins nailed Jesus to the cross? Have you ever lied, stolen, used the Lord’s name in vain, looked with lust, been angry with anyone? Then God sees you as a lying, thieving, blasphemous, adulterous, murder at heart and you will have no part in the kingdom of heaven; and the price or wages of your sin is death.

Do you believe that Jesus died for your sins, that He was buried and that He rose the 3<sup>rd</sup> day and is alive today? Do you believe you can have all your sins forgiven, no matter what you have said or done, by repenting of them and putting your faith and trust in Jesus as your sin bearer.

Do you believe that if you confess with your mouth Jesus as Lord and believe in your heart that God raised Him from the dead you can be saved? Well, you can. And that’s what makes this day so important.



Do you see how far away from the true celebration of the tortuous death and triumphant resurrection of Jesus Christ we have come today? When there is more time spent coloring eggs than worshipping Jesus. When there is more money spent on the Easter holiday than given in a worship service. When there is more attention given to an Easter bunny than to the God of the universe who became a man who was tortured and died on the cross for our sins.

You have one of two choices today, either you believe in the resurrection or you do not. If you do not then **1<sup>st</sup> Corinthians 15: 19** applies to you. **If in this life only we have hope in Christ** because you don't believe in His resurrection from the dead, **you are of all people the most pitiable.** And You are still in your sins and you have no hope, and whatever faith you have is empty.

If you do believe in the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead and have put your faith and trust in Him as your Lord and Savior, then this is truly a day of celebration for you.

You have a living hope because of the resurrection of Jesus Christ to an inheritance incorruptible, undefiled, reserved in heaven for you.

Closing prayer.

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Introduction:

Verses 5 – 6 Jesus Christ, the form and equal with God

John 1: 1 – 3, 14

Verses 7 – 8 Jesus took on the form of a bondservant

He was obedient to the point of death

Matthew 16: 21, Mark 8: 31  
Luke 18: 31 – 34, Isaiah 52: 14  
Isaiah 53: 3 – 5, 10, Psalm 22: 14 – 17  
Hebrews 9: 22, 1<sup>st</sup> Peter 1: 18 – 19  
Hebrews 12: 2

Verses 9 – 11 God has high exalted Jesus above all

1<sup>st</sup> Corinthians 15: 54, Hebrews 2: 14  
Luke 24: 5 – 7, 1<sup>st</sup> Peter 1: 3, John 11: 25 – 26  
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