

From Victim to Savior

April 12, 2020 ~ DCC remote from Vista ~ John 19.17-22, Luke 24.1-8, 44-48

Summary of “Passion Week” Series

- ❖ Last Week -> “From Hero to Villain” ~ Palm Sunday to Condemnation
- ❖ Today -> “From Victim to Savior” ~ Crucifixion to Resurrection
- ❖ Four roles for Jesus are given in titles of the two sermons
 1. **Hero** - Hailed as a hero at His triumphal entry to Jerusalem
 2. **Villain** - Treated as villain by religious leaders and Roman authorities
 3. **Victim** - Viewed as victim by all who saw Him mistreated and killed
 4. **Savior** - Rose from the grave to reveal Himself the Savior of mankind
- ❖ These first three titles all refer to a perception of Jesus – not the reality
 - ✧ Each of the first 3 titles is wrong – and we’ll examine why that’s so
 - ✧ Only the role of Savior was true – It was also the least understood
- ❖ But first let’s review this period from Thursday morning to Sunday morning

Last Week Ended with Jesus Before Herod

- ❖ Pontius Pilate (Roman governor) washes his hands and submits to mob’s cry
- ❖ Jesus is scourged, mocked, and forced to carry cross to place of execution
 - ✧ John says Jesus carried cross but Synoptics all mention Simon (Cyrene)
 - ✧ It’s thought Jesus’ strength failed Him / Worked Himself nearly to death
 - **III: Deb Hanes** ~ “It’s not the years but the miles...”
- ❖ Variation in story of carrying cross brings up an interesting point

Variations in Gospel Accounts

- ❖ You may be surprised to learn that skeptics love the Gospels
 - ✧ “**Why?**” / Skeptics insist many differences are errors
- ❖ There are many variations in the Gospel accounts
 - ✧ Want to harmonize the Gospel accounts / I’ve only done some as needed
 - “**Phil – Have you done that? - Oh Phil doesn’t seem to be here today...**”
- ❖ Anybody evaluating first person accounts must work carefully
 - ✧ People will say different things, but they’re not necessarily untrue
 - ✧ God has given us a logic primer in the Gospels

Xition: It’s for differences that I chose John’s account of Jesus on cross

Chose Text from John for Two Reasons

1. John devotes least space here – 6 verses (*Matthew 13 ~ Mark 12 ~ Luke 18*)
 2. Devotes more space (4 verses) to what Pilate wrote (*All others only 1*)
- ❖ “**What did Pilate write – and how is it referred to in Gospels?**”
 - ❖ **Matthew** ~ “**This is Jesus, the King of the Jews**” – accusation
 - ❖ **Mark** ~ “**The King of the Jews**” – inscription of His crime
 - ❖ **Luke** ~ “**This is the King of the Jews**” – inscription
 - ❖ **John** ~ “**Jesus of Nazareth, the King of the Jews**” – title
 - ❖ We have variation in the phrase with every Gospel text
 - ❖ But the core message is always the same – “**the King of the Jews**”
 - ❖ Written in Hebrew, Greek, and Latin / different languages for different phrases
 - ❖ As Mark records, this was the “**inscription of Jesus’ crime**”
 - ❖ Pilate refused to change it / He probably wanted to tweak the Jews
 - Little did Pilate know that what he’d written was actually true
 - ❖ Just as HP Caiphus didn’t know the truth behind his statement
 - **Read John 11.47** – “**Then the chief .. were scattered abroad.**”

Title of Hero was Wrong

- ❖ Jesus was not the hero the apostles and people thought He was
 - ❖ He was far more – but He was still a disappointment to them
 - ❖ When they heard a kingdom was coming – they pictured power and glory
- ❖ Phrase “**kingdom of heaven**” in Matthew / “**kingdom of God**” elsewhere
 - ❖ **Isaiah** prophesied it (**Read 9.6-7**): “**For unto us a .. will perform this.**”
 - ❖ Jesus rejected in Nazareth ~ **Read Luke 4.16-22a** “**So He came .. of His mouth**”
 - **Read Is 61.1-2a** – ended mid-sentence “**And the day of vengeance of our God**”
 - But this is what the Jews were most looking forward to - vengeance
- ❖ In **Matthew 16** Peter affirms Apostles regard Jesus as the promised Son – the King
 - Jesus prophesies concerning His death / Peter rebukes Him
 - ❖ The last verse (**v28**) read “**Assuredly, I say to you, there are some standing here who shall not taste death till they see the Son of Man coming in His kingdom.**”
- ❖ Their ignorance still present in **Acts 1.6**
 - ❖ “**Lord, will You at this time restore the kingdom to Israel?**”

Xition: Jesus was not the Hero anyone wanted . . .

Title of Villain was Wrong

- ❖ Jesus died as a villain, with villains, just as was prophesied of Him
 - ✧ **Isaiah 53.12** ~ “.. He poured out His soul unto death, And He was numbered with the transgressors, And He bore the sin of many, And made intercession for the transgressors.”
- ❖ Yet no one truly believed Him to be a villain
 - ✧ The people regarded Him as a holy prophet / A select few as far more
 - ✧ Pontius Pilate and his wife called Him “just” **Mat 27.19, 24**
 - ✧ Centurion at cross called Him “Son of God” and “a righteous man”
 - ✧ Religious leaders wanted Him dead due to notoriety ~ popularity ~ contempt
- ❖ Jesus was not a villain, though He suffered as a villain to intercede for villains

Title of Victim was Wrong

- ❖ Modern America has given the term victim a bad rap
 - ✧ **Book**: In 2018 two sociologists (*Bradley Campbell and Jason Manning*) published “The Rise of Victimhood Culture: Microaggressions, Safe Spaces, and the New Culture Wars”
 - ✧ **Def**: victim ~ “harmed, injured, or killed as a result of a crime, accident, or other action”
- ❖ Jesus was killed – it was a crime – but there the similarity ends
- ❖ A word often appears ahead of victim – “defenseless”
 - ✧ To be victimized is to be taken advantage of – cheated – fooled – bested
 - ✧ **III: Batman Begins** ~ Liam Neeson – “Your parents death was your father’s fault.”
 - ✧ Police can rationalize crime and evil by presuming guilt of victim
- ❖ But Jesus was not a victim in this sense – quite to the contrary
 - ✧ Three times Jesus told the Apostles He was going to be killed in Jerusalem
 - ✧ In **Mat 20.28** He said He came to “give His life a ransom for many”
 - His life was not taken from Him – He gave it for a specific purpose
- ❖ We can see this clearly at the moment of Christ’s death
 - ✧ **Mark and Luke** ~ “Jesus cried out with a loud voice, and breathed His last.”
 - ✧ **Mat 27.50** ~ “Jesus cried out again with a loud voice, and yielded up His spirit.”
 - ✧ **John 19.30** ~ “He said, “It is finished!” And bowing His head, He gave up His spirit.”
 - ✧ Mark=Servant ~ Luke=Man ~ passive – “breathed His last”
 - ✧ Matthew=King ~ John=God – authoritative – “delivered up” and “gave up”

Xition: Jesus was not a Hero, a Villain, or a Victim... He was a Savior . . .

Only the Title of Savior is True

- ❖ Yet it's the one that no one understood
 - ❖ It's not surprising that a Pontius Pilate wouldn't understand – nor Herod
 - They were powerful men of the world – everything is force & power
 - III: William Bennet when rebuked by Howard Phillips
 - “Where you stand depends upon where you sit.”
 - ❖ Religious leaders didn't see because they were spiritually dead
 - They'd sold their birthright for a pot of stew just as Esau had
 - ❖ Mass of people saw only Roman tyranny and wanted rid of it – former glory
 - ❖ Disciples / Apostles were growing in knowledge but kept unaware to the end
- ❖ Jesus carried out the Great plan to perfection
 - ❖ He kept His disciples safe to the very end

We Must Be Given Eyes to See

- ❖ At the tomb, Mary didn't recognize Jesus – She thought He was the gardener
- ❖ On the Road to Emmaus, the disciples didn't recognize Jesus – walked for miles
 - ❖ The text says that “their eyes were restrained, so that they did not know Him”
 - ❖ But when they ate with Him, “their eyes were opened and they knew Him”
- ❖ Listen to what Angel at tomb said
 - ❖ **Read Luke 24.4-8** ~ “And it happened .. remembered His words.”
- ❖ Look at what Jesus said later in Luke
 - ❖ **Read Luke 24.44-45** “Then He said to them .. comprehend the Scriptures”

A Most Unusual Passion Week

- ❖ This is a most unusual Passion Week
- ❖ Easter is the High Holy Day in Christianity
 - ❖ Some fair weather Christians only go to Church on Easter weekend
 - ❖ But God changed that this year all over the world
- ❖ Whether you think it wise to sequester or foolish
 - ❖ It's obvious that God has done a work – He's intervened in our world
- ❖ Yet this intervention pales in comparison to what was done in Jerusalem

Xition: Jesus was not . . .

- ❑ Jesus was not the Hero the Jews wanted
- ❑ Jesus was not the Villain the authorities condemned
- ❑ Just was not the defenseless Victim many perceived as they watched Him die
- ❑ But Jesus is the Savior – the only Savior available to rescue mankind from hell
 - Every human born on this earth deserves hell and is headed there
 - Only Jesus can and does offer to take our place in that awful place
 - He's been to hell
 - He endured hell for those who place their faith and trust in Him
 - We must cast aside all distractions that restrain us from embracing Him
- ❑ The sequestration of millions of people over Passion Week can work much good
 - People's salvation is not protection from COVID-19
 - People's salvation is rescue from sin and the condemnation due us because of it
 - Let's pray that people would turn to the only Savior available to them

➤ **Closing Prayer**

➤ **Please rise and sing to God our Savior**

Now to Him who is able to keep you from stumbling,
And to present you faultless before the presence of His glory with exceeding joy,
To God our Savior, who alone is wise,
Be glory and majesty, dominion and power, both now and forever.
Amen ***pause*** Go in peace . . .

From Villain to Savior

April 12, 2020 ~ Sermon Outline ~ John 19.17-22, Luke 24.1-8, 44-48

- ✚ **Jesus was hailed as a Hero in the Triumphal Entry**
- ✚ **Jesus was treated as a Villain by Roman and Jewish authorities**
- ✚ **Jesus was viewed as a Victim by those who saw Him abused and executed**
- ✚ **Jesus was a Savior – yet even His own apostles couldn't see that**
- ✚ **Jesus' Crime ~ “This is Jesus of Nazareth, the King of the Jews”**

- ✚ **Jesus was not the Hero anyone wanted**
- ✚ **Jesus was not a Villain and everyone knew it**
- ✚ **Jesus was not a Victim but a willing Sacrifice**
- ✚ **Jesus “delivered up” His spirit at death – It was not taken from Him**
- ✚ **Jesus is the only Savior available to all mankind**
- ✚ **Jesus endured hell so His adopted brethren could escape it**

From Victim to Savior

April 12, 2020 ~ Sermon Handout ~ John 19.17-22, Luke 24.1-8, 44-48

1. Which of the 4 roles in the two sermon titles is actually true? _____
2. What are the faulty perceptions connected with the others?
Hero _____
Villain _____
Victim _____
3. Why do skeptics of Christianity love the Gospel accounts? _____

4. Why is it that variability in the gospel accounts is not evidence of error? _____

5. What did Caiphus say concerning Jesus that John regarded as prophetic? _____

6. What did Pontius Pilate write that was more true than he realized? _____

7. Why do some police officers “blame” the victim for what happens to them? _____

8. How is Matthew’s account of Jesus’ last words and death remarkable? _____

9. Why didn’t Mary and disciples walking to Emmaus recognize Jesus? Did He look different?

10. Do you think Anna, Audrey, Becky, or Jessica’s babies should be named Corona? _____