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Trinity Lutheran Church
Decatur, Illinois
5th Sunday In Lent
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“The Day Jesus Cried”

God’s PEACE is ALWAYS YOURS in Jesus.

Hear the Word of God from Hebrews 5,

“Jesus, during the days of His flesh on earth, even though He offered up prayers and heartfelt beseechings, with loud cries of anguish and with tears, to Him Who is able to save Him from death, and even though He was heard, and even though He was a Son; yet, He learned obedience through the things He suffered. And once made perfect, He became the source of eternal salvation for all who obey Him.”

DEAR FRIENDS IN CHRIST,

The God for Whom nothing is impossible is crying. Today, we’re going to look at: The Day Jesus Cried!

God’s Word tells us there were at least three (3) times that Jesus cried. There were probably more from all of the sufferings and death Jesus saw, and endured. But we know of at least three events that caused Jesus to cry. In John 11, Jesus cries over the death of His dear friend, Lazarus. John 11 says, ‘*Jesus wept.*’ He’s not crying because He has no power over death. He does. He will soon bring Lazarus’ body back to life. But He’s crying because He never wanted death to touch our lives. Yet, in His weeping, we find a welcoming shoulder on which we can lay our tears, when we face the death of a loved one, or even our own. For no matter how wounded we may be, you and I cry to the Savior Who has been wounded too. Yet, even when we cry, the Lord reminds us in 1st Thessalonians 4, “*We do not sorrow like those who have no hope, for Christ is risen!*” And now that Jesus has risen, our sorrows are neither hopeless, nor endless.

Secondly, we also see Jesus crying on Palm Sunday. But unlike Lazarus, who was a believer, this time Jesus is weeping over those who are lost in their sins. As Jesus approached Jerusalem on Palm Sunday, Luke 19 says, ***“When Jesus saw the city, He wept over it, and said, ‘If you, even you, had only known Who would bring you peace, but now it is hidden from your eyes....for you did not recognize the time of God’s coming to you.”*** These are real tears for those who are lost in their sins. God will not force His kingdom on anyone. You can refuse it and lose it. And yet, it breaks Jesus’ heart for anyone to go to that place of “weeping and gnashing of teeth” called hell. May we, like Jesus, wet our pillows with tears, praying fervently for the salvation of those lost in our circles of influence.

And thirdly, we see Jesus crying in Hebrews 5, which says, ***“Jesus, during the days of His flesh on earth, offered up prayers and heartfelt beseechings with loud cries and tears, to Him Who could save Him from death,”*** which, at the very least, refers to Jesus’ agony in the Garden of Gethsemane, and on His way to Golgotha.

So what’s our sin? Perhaps we don’t cry enough, over sin and its’ consequences. Our world, and maybe we, laugh at sin, praise sin, flaunt sin, and Romans 1 says, ***“we even invent ways of sinning”***. Perhaps we should be weeping over our sin, and the sin of others, since ***‘the wages of sin is death’***? Paul says in Philippians 3:18-19, ***“For, as I have often told you before, and now tell you again, EVEN WITH TEARS, many live as enemies of the cross of Christ. Their god is their stomach, their glory is in their shame, their mind is set on earthly things and their destiny is destruction.”*** We live in a world where it’s ‘bad’ to be ‘good’, and it’s ‘good’ to be ‘bad’. People now announce on Facebook who they’re shacking up with, or how many people they’ve become one-flesh with, rather than sorrowing over our sins that killed God’s Son, and without repentance and faith will kill us. Jeremiah 6:15 says, ***“My people have no shame at all. They don’t even know how to blush (over their sin). So, they will fall with the fallen.”*** 2nd Corinthians 7 says, ***“Godly sorrow, brings repentance, that leads to salvation.”*** When God’s word says in Joel 2, ***“Rend your hearts, and not your garments,”*** the point is, without heart-rending repentance there’s hell to pay. Perhaps we don’t cry enough over our sin.

But then there are other times, we weep for the wrong reasons. We listen to the devil's lie that God could never love us or forgive us. And it leads many to despair. But it's a lie. The devil's shooting blanks. He's all out of AMMO. Not only can God forgive you. He already has, 2000 years ago, when the Son of God bled to death on a cross, one Good Friday. And not only does God love you, He never stopped loving you. Rather than despairing, in repentant sorrow turn to the Savior, Who already turned to you, to forgive you, even before you ever turned to Him

As Jesus heads to Golgotha, He's crying over the suffering, death, and hell that our sins have brought upon us. He's weeping over those who are rejecting the grace of God that is already theirs'. And He cries in anguish, as He prepares to be forsaken by His Father, for the first time in eternity. Jesus knows, as Hebrews 10 says, "***It is a dreadful thing to fall into the hands of the living God.***" Jesus is anguishing as He realizes He will be forsaken by His Father to that hellish place of tears. In Mark 14 Jesus says, "***My soul is overwhelmed to the point of death.***" Which leads us into what is happening in Hebrews 5, "***He, Jesus,.....offered up prayers and heartfelt beseechings, with loud cries and tears, to Him Who could save Him from death,***"

Jesus is crying, because He knows the betrayal, the kiss, and the denials that are coming. Michael Card delves into Jesus' agony when he writes:

*Why did it have to be a friend, who chose to betray the Lord?
And why did he use a kiss to show them? That's not what a kiss is for!
Only a friend can betray a friend. A stranger has nothing to gain.
And only a friend comes close enough, to ever cause this much pain!*

Jesus is crying because He knows the mocking, the laughing, the crown, and thorns. Again Michael Card writes:

*And why did it have to be a crown of thorns pressed upon His head?
It should have been a royal crown, made of jewels and gold instead.
It had to be a crown of thorns, because in this world that we live.
Those who reject the love of Christ, a thorn is all that they have to give!*

Jesus is crying because He knows the nailing, the railing, the wailing and the cross. Finally, Michael Card writes:

*And why did it have to be a heavy cross, Christ was made to bear?
And why did they nail His hands and feet? His love would have held him there
It was a cross, for on a cross, a thief was supposed to pay.
And Jesus came into the world, to steal every heart away!*

And so Jesus goes with His disciples to Gethsemane and Golgotha to cry and to die! You see, either Jesus cries in Gethsemane dies Golgotha's cross, or we cry and die in that place of weeping and gnashing of teeth, called hell. Knowing this, Jesus willingly goes to Gethsemane – which means: 'the Place Of Crushing' – to cry, and to die. This is now ZERO HOUR! So let the crying and the dying begin.

Hebrews 5 says, "***Jesus offered up prayers and heartfelt beseechings, with loud cries and tears,***" the greek word for Jesus' tears does NOT mean a single tear running down Jesus' cheek. The greek word means to "sob profusely". The Gospel of Mark adds, "***Jesus kept on falling on His face in prayer.***" The first word off of Jesus' lips is "ABBA", which is often the first word off of the stammering lips of a frightened child. "***Abba***" is the most tender form of affection from the heart of a little child, screaming to His daddy, in the darkness, for help; as if he were having a nightmare. Only this was no dream! One of my seminary professors, on a trip to the Holy Land, saw a little Jewish boy get in trouble, and he was about to receive a spanking from his father, and the little boy was crying: "***Abba, Abba, Abba, Abba, Abba***". Jesus is now crying out "***Abba***", because of the full blown judgment He is about to receive for our sins. So He cries out, with loud cries and tears, "***Abba, if it be possible, take this cup from me. Nevertheless, not My will, but Thine be done!***"

Those are the words of a frightened child, crying and pleading, "***Abba, Daddy, Papa, Father***". Normally, when a Father hears those kind of cries, he takes his child into His arms to rescue or save Him from the pain. NOT THIS TIME!

Luke 22 adds, “*And being in anguish, Jesus prayed more earnestly; and His sweat became like drops of blood.*” Sweating blood is actually a real medical condition called HEMATADROSIS. It’s a very rare event – and takes place under the most extreme anguish. What happens is that the blood vessels around their sweat glands rupture, causing its’ victim to literally sweat blood. This rare condition is at times observed in war, when a soldier is going into fierce battle, or before their execution. Jesus is now sweating drops of blood, on the front lines of the war, to save sinners, and on the night before His execution, for our war crimes.

If you never thought about it before, Jesus is ALREADY BLOODY by His anguish in Gethsemane, before anyone lays a hand on Him. In this battle, before the battle of the cross, Jesus cries out, with tears, “*Father, if it be possible, take this cup from Me. Nevertheless, not My will, but Thine be done!*” And our text adds, “*And He was heard, because of His reverent submission!*” But the Father’s answer to Jesus’ prayer was: “*Son, You have to die!*” We know that Jesus is sobbing profusely. And I’ve always wondered if the Father is now crying too! And so, with blood, sweat, and tears rolling down Jesus’ face, He now resolves in Hebrews 10, “*I have come to do Your will, O God, and by that will we have been made holy, through the sacrifice of the body of Christ, once and for all.*” At this point, having resolved to do the Father’s will and die, the Father sends an angel from heaven to strengthen Jesus for the battle of the cross. Michael Card puts it like this this:

*The angels appear. They come to the Garden.
Clothed with sighs, for they realize.
That the One they’ve adored from the start, must now be broken apart!
By the ones that He came to save!
So they’re here, simply now to be near.
So He’s no longer alone. They sit with Christ and groan!*

In a sense, Gethsemane was the “*Battle Before The Battle*” of Golgotha. And if Jesus lost the battle in Gethsemane, there would be no cross, no forgiveness, and you and I would forever go to that place of weeping called HELL.

In other words, the blood, sweat, and tears that flowed from Christ’s wounds on the cross, were preceded by the blood, sweat, and tears that flowed down Christ’s face in Gethsemane, as Jesus suffered the agony of a death every bit as painful as physical death. Already in Gethsemane, Jesus died the agonizing, emotional, and heart-wrenching death of His will to live, so that we sinners would be able to live off of His death.

The next day, Jesus cried out again, “*My God, My God, why have You forsaken Me?*” And because He did, you and I need never cry those words. Since Jesus cried out, “*Abba, not my will, but thine be done*”, we can now call God, our “Father” with delight. Isaiah 53 declares, “*It was God’s Will to crush Him, and to cause Him to suffer, and to make His life a guilt offering for sinners.*” And now that Jesus’ frightened, stammering lips already cried out “*Abba, Abba, Abba, Abba, Abba*” before He was judged for our sins, you and I can call God, “*Abba, Daddy, Papa, Father*” with no fear at all, as we have been given total access into the Father’s family through the blood of the lamb, with the promise of living forever in heaven, where God will wipe away every tear from our eyes, forever. The Good News is so good, it almost makes you want to cry, tears of joy! AMEN!