

Isaiah 53:7-9 “The Silent Servant”\*\*\*

Series: *In the Shadow of the Cross (an exposition of Isaiah 53)*<sup>1</sup>

Main Idea: When the Silent Servant died, He experienced three painful realities, as revealed in Isaiah 53:7-9.

I. We see submission (7).

A. Here’s what happened to Him.

1. He was oppressed.
2. He was afflicted.
3. He was led to His death.

B. Here’s how He responded.

1. He didn’t protest.
2. He accepted the injustice.

II. We see separation (8).

A. Here’s what happened to Him.

1. He was taken away.
2. He was cut off.

B. Here’s what it meant for Him.

1. He died alone.
2. He died for the sin of others.

III. We see sadness (9).

A. He was treated with disdain.

1. They intended to bury Him with the wicked.
2. They ended up burying Him with the rich.

B. He deserves to be treated with devotion.

1. He didn’t receive what He deserved.
2. He received what we deserve.

Take Inventory: How should we respond to the Silent Servant?

1. We should accept His sacrifice.
2. We should follow His example.
3. We should proclaim His accomplishment.

*Before sermon:* Redeemed people...SING THE WORD (April Scripture – Hebrews 10:14 NIV 1984 “Because by one sacrifice, He has made perfect forever those who are being made holy.”)

*Cross Shadow* gift: Today is a special day! As you leave, every family will receive a special gift called “The Cross Shadow”. Special thanks to a team of about a dozen individuals who participated in making about 175 of these gifts. There are two main purposes for this gift.

First, this is a tool for you to use in your personal and family devotions to help you, as did Elizabeth Clephane who said, “I take O cross thy shadow for my abiding place.” God has given us Scriptures and songs to help us think and respond rightly to the cross. The Cross Shadow is intended to help you, as the acrostic on the card says, constantly remember our Savior’s suffering, by continually reminating on Scripture songs. Use this tool to memorize and meditate on cross-centered Scripture passages and songs.

The second reason is to create conversations about the cross of Jesus and why He died. We are encouraging you to invite people to your home for a Bible study on Good Friday and/or for a sunrise service on Easter morning (sunrise is at 6:50 this year). If you would like to give someone the Cross Shadow as a gift, use the sign up sheet.

To place ourselves once again in the shadow of the cross, we’ll be reading and then expounding the next section in Isaiah 53. What stands out in today’s passage is not what

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\*\*\* Note: This is an unedited manuscript of a message preached at Wheelersburg Baptist Church. It is provided to prompt your continued reflection on the practical truths of the Word of God.

<sup>1</sup> For a previous look at this passage, see the Isaiah 53 series in 2011.

we see at the cross, but *hear* from the cross (actually what we *don't* hear). At the conclusion of this message, we'll come to the Lord's Table and worship the One we meet in this passage. *The silent Servant*.

*Scripture Reading: Isaiah 53:7-9*

Charles Haddon Spurgeon, the well-known Baptist preacher in London in the 1800s, attracted such huge crowds that they constructed a large, new facility to accommodate the assembly. It's recorded that the following were some of Spurgeon's first words spoken from the pulpit of the Metropolitan Tabernacle:

"I would propose that the subject of the ministry of this house, as long as this platform shall stand, and as long as this house shall be frequented by worshipers, shall be the *person of Jesus Christ*. I am never ashamed to avow myself a Calvinist; I do not hesitate to take the name of Baptist; but if I am asked what is my creed, I reply, 'It is Jesus Christ.' ... The [legacy] to which I would pin and bind myself forever, God helping me,...is Jesus Christ, who is the arm and substance of the gospel, who is in Himself all theology, the incarnation of every precious truth."

Dear brothers and sisters, may it be said of us as well, that the subject of the ministry of this house shall be the *person of Jesus Christ*. In the following moments, we're going to invite Isaiah the prophet to teach us about the Savior, particularly how He died.

It's interesting to consider what people have said as they're preparing to leave this world. It's said that when Martin Luther was dying his final words were, "Our God is the God from whom cometh salvation: God is the Lord by whom we escape death."

John Knox said, "Live in Christ, live in Christ, and the flesh need not fear death."

When John Calvin came to his moment of parting he is said to have prayed, "Thou, Lord, bruise me; but I am abundantly satisfied, since it is from Thy hand."

Charles Wesley declared, "I shall be satisfied with Thy likeness--satisfied, satisfied!"

A person's final words are often indicative. So, what did the Servant say when He died? We know from the four gospel accounts that He uttered seven sayings from the cross. Yet in Isaiah's prophecy, what's striking about His death isn't what He *said*, but what He *didn't* say. He is *the silent Servant* in Isaiah 53. Silent to the last breath. And His silence speaks volumes, as we'll see.

Silence is so counter-intuitive. When people wrong you (I mean severely wrong you), you're supposed to speak up and defend yourself, aren't you? Yet the Servant in Isaiah 53 doesn't speak up. He is a silent victim (intentionally so). He chooses to communicate, not with words, but through His silence.

It's called halo data in counseling. Non-verbal communication. When the Silent Servant dies, Isaiah 53 predicts that He will speak to us in three non-verbal ways. He will speak in His submission (7), in His separation (8), and in His sadness (9).

#### I. We see submission (7).

"He was oppressed, and he was afflicted, yet he opened not his mouth; like a lamb that is led to the slaughter, and like a sheep that before its shearers is silent, so he opened not his mouth."

It was in the eighth century BC when Isaiah predicted that the Messiah was coming. The prophecy of Isaiah 52:13-53:12 is comprised of five sections with three verses in each section. In section one (52:13-15) Isaiah describes the *honor* of The Servant. In section five (53:10-12) he returns to the subject of the Servant's *honor*. But in between, in sections two, three, and four, Isaiah presents the *humiliation* of the *Suffering Servant*.

He begins with a description of the treatment the Servant receives. “He was despised and rejected by men,” says Isaiah in verse 3. Then in verses 4-6 the prophet tells us *why* the Servant will endure such treatment. He says it was for “our transgressions” and for “our iniquities,” as we saw last time.

In the section before us today, verses 7-9, Isaiah gives the pathos for how He *died*. If you take a pen and circle the verbs in this section, you’ll quickly notice something. It’s full of *passive* verbs that communicate activity performed by someone else against the Servant. He *was oppressed*. He *was afflicted*. He *was led*. He *was taken away*. He *was cut off*. He *was stricken*. He *was assigned* a grave. These aren’t activities the Servant did but are activities that others did to Him.

**A. Here’s what happened to Him.** Ponder the first three verbs, as stated in verse 7.

1. *He was oppressed*. The Hebrew term means “to press, to drive, to exact, or to treat harshly.” We live in a world filled of oppression, where people are forced to do and endure things against their will. Even now in many Middle-Eastern countries women are often treated like property. In North Korea believers can’t meet publicly to worship Jesus. This is the world in which we live. People are being *oppressed*.

So was He, says Isaiah. The Servant was oppressed.

2. *He was afflicted*. The word means “to be bowed down, to put down, to become low.” This of course is precisely what was done to Jesus. Read the gospel accounts. He was ridiculed by Jewish leaders, mocked by civil authorities, and scourged by Roman soldiers. They smashed a thorny crown on His head and forced Him to carry His own cross through the streets in public humiliation. Then they drove spikes through His hands and feet. Indeed, He was afflicted.

3. *He was led to His death*. The NIV says, “He was led like a lamb to the slaughter.” Ponder that image. What’s true of a lamb being taken to slaughter? It’s helpless, defenseless. It may be aware that danger is coming, but it’s powerless to stop it.

Isaiah says this is what the Servant will experience. Though He’s powerful (so powerful in fact that kings will later shut their mouths before Him), He will demonstrate His power in a most unusual way. He will become like a lamb heading to the altar.

Furthermore, Isaiah says He will be like a sheep before its shearers. What part does a sheep have in the shearing process? Sheep don’t clip their own wool, do they? The act of shearing is done to the sheep by another. Again, the activity is passive.

Interestingly, in verse 6 Isaiah says *we* are like sheep. How so? We are wayward. We’re prone to go our own way and get lost in the process. Now in verse 7 he says the Servant is also like a sheep, not because He is wayward for He certainly is not. The Servant is like a sheep in that He willingly became defenseless.

In Psalm 22:12-18 we read this description of the unjust treatment to which He subjected Himself. As you listen, keep in mind these words were written nearly one thousand years before Good Friday occurred.

“Many bulls surround me; strong bulls of Bashan encircle me. <sup>13</sup> Roaring lions tearing their prey open their mouths wide against me. <sup>14</sup> I am poured out like water, and all my bones are out of joint. My heart has turned to wax; it has melted away within me. <sup>15</sup> My strength is dried up like a potsherd, and my tongue sticks to the roof of my mouth; you lay me in the dust of death. <sup>16</sup> Dogs have surrounded me; a band of evil men has encircled me, they have pierced my hands and my feet. <sup>17</sup> I can count all my bones; people stare and gloat over me. <sup>18</sup> They divide my garments among them and cast lots for my clothing (NIV).”

This is what happened to the Servant. He was oppressed, afflicted, and led to death.

**B. Here's how He responded.** In two ways, according to Isaiah.

1. *He didn't protest.* "He opened not His mouth," the text says. In fact, Isaiah repeats that statement twice in verse 7. Though subjected to horrendous abuse, *He opened not His mouth!* He didn't say, "Stop the oppression!" He didn't cry out, "It's not fair!" He didn't call on His Father, "Please, Abba, intervene!"

He could have. As the song says, He could have called 10,000 angels. And who could have blamed Him had He opened His mouth and objected to such abuse? It would have been a natural reaction.

But the Servant never reacted. Never. He always *responded* with the full knowledge that what He would experience was predicted and necessary. For this reason, when cruel men tortured Him, He endured it in silence.

2. *He accepted the injustice.* The Israelites were agrarian people. They were well aware of the submissive nature of sheep. This is how He will die, says Isaiah. In quiet submission.

I've never shorn sheep. I have sat in a barber's chair, and I learned early on as a child a simple lesson that makes the experience more pleasurable. When a person is coming at you with sharp scissors, it's best to be quiet and sit still. It's almost instinctive.

Here's how verse 7 reads in the *New Century Version*, "He was quiet, as a sheep is quiet while its wool is being cut."

In the New Testament, all four gospel writers emphasize Jesus' silence.

**Matthew 27:12-14** "When he was accused by the chief priests and the elders, *he gave no answer.* <sup>13</sup> Then Pilate asked him, "Don't you hear the testimony they are bringing against you?" <sup>14</sup> But *Jesus made no reply*, not even to a single charge—to the great amazement of the governor."

**Mark 14:60-61** "Then the high priest stood up before them and asked Jesus, "Are you not going to answer? What is this testimony that these men are bringing against you?" <sup>61</sup> But *Jesus remained silent and gave no answer.* Again the high priest asked him, "Are you the Christ, the Son of the Blessed One?"

**Luke 23:8-9** "When Herod saw Jesus, he was greatly pleased, because for a long time he had been wanting to see him. From what he had heard about him, he hoped to see him perform some miracle. <sup>9</sup> He plied him with many questions, but *Jesus gave him no answer.*"

**John 19:8-11** "When Pilate heard this, he was even more afraid, <sup>9</sup> and he went back inside the palace. "Where do you come from?" he asked Jesus, but *Jesus gave him no answer.* <sup>10</sup> "Do you refuse to speak to me?" Pilate said. "Don't you realize I have power either to free you or to crucify you?" <sup>11</sup> Jesus answered, "You would have no power over me if it were not given to you from above. Therefore the one who handed me over to you is guilty of a greater sin."

Have you ever wondered, "Why didn't Jesus say something? Why didn't He defend Himself before Pilate, Herod, and the others?" If we're honest, we would have, and we do. When people slight us or hurt us or injure us, we make noise. We insist we have a right to make noise, and that it's the right thing to do in the face of injustice.

And sometimes speaking up is the right thing to do. Psalm 82:3-4 says, "Give justice to the weak and the fatherless; maintain the right of the afflicted and the destitute. Rescue the weak and the needy; deliver them from the hand of the wicked."<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>2</sup> See also Isaiah 1:17, "Learn to do good; seek justice, correct oppression; bring justice to the fatherless, plead the widow's cause."

But He didn't speak up. He certainly could have. He was innocent, something Isaiah will make perfectly clear in verse 9. So, if He had no guilt, why the silence?

Here's the reason. There was guilt. No, it wasn't His guilt. It was *ours*. John Calvin explains, "This was the reason of his silence at the judgment seat of Pilate, though he had a just defense to offer; for, having become answerable for our guilt, he wished to submit silently to the sentence, that we might loudly glory in the righteousness of faith obtained through free grace."<sup>3</sup>

He did not open His mouth. He in no way tried to stop the crime being committed. To the contrary, as Philippians 2:8 explains, "He humbled himself and became obedient to death—even death on a cross!"

Perhaps you've been violated in this life, my friend. Sadly, many have been. He understands. He truly understands. This is His first non-verbal message, His submission.

## II. We see separation (8).

"By oppression and judgment he was taken away; and as for his generation<sup>4</sup>, who considered that he was cut off out of the land of the living, stricken for the transgression of my people?"

In what sense did Jesus experience *separation* in His death? Isaiah tells us in verse 8. The prophet once again utilizes two more passive verbs.

### **A. Here's what happened to Him.**

1. *He was taken away.* The term refers to the act of taking life. It can be translated "to take away so as to deprive," or even "to take away life." The KJV puts it this way, "He was taken from prison and from judgment."

This of course is what happened to the Servant. After a rigged trial He was escorted by Roman soldiers (in reality, he was *taken away*) and executed on a hill called Golgotha outside the city of Jerusalem.

2. *He was cut off.* Specifically, "He was cut off out of the land of the living." The Hebrew word is revealing. It refers elsewhere to cutting something in two. It's the word Moses used to depict the parting of the Red Sea.

Symbolically, to be "cut off" means to be *excluded* or *separated from* something. It's what happened to a person with leprosy. A leper was not allowed to have contact with people. He was ostracized. He was isolated. He was *cut off* from society.

Isaiah says this is what will happen to the Servant. And this is exactly what did happen to Jesus. He was taken away and cut off. He experienced *separation*.

How did this separation affect Him? Isaiah tells us. You'll notice that verse 8 is actually a question that Isaiah asks and answers. He wants us to know.

**B. Here's what it meant for Him.** Here's the question again in verse 8 (which is hard to translate, hence the differences in the translations).

ESV "By oppression and judgment he was taken away; and as for his generation, who considered that he was cut off out of the land of the living, stricken for the transgression of my people?"

NIV84 "By oppression and judgment he was taken away. And who can speak of his descendants? For he was cut off from the land of the living; for the transgression of my people he was stricken."

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<sup>3</sup> John Calvin, *Isaiah*, Vol. 4, p. 119.

<sup>4</sup> The NIV says, "And who can speak of his descendants?"

KJV 1900 “He was taken from prison and from judgment: And who shall declare his generation? For he was cut off out of the land of the living: For the transgression of my people was he stricken.”

Who considered? Who can speak? Who shall declare? Why does Isaiah raise this question? Who is “his generation” (ESV) and why aren’t they considering what really happened to Him? The point seems to be this. When The Servant died...

1. *He died alone.* Jesus never married and thus had no biological children to carry on his name. No descendants (NIV). He truly died *alone*.

I mean *all alone*. It’s a terrible thing to be alone, but no one has ever experienced *aloneness* like the Servant did. Listen again to His cry from the cross. “My God, my God, why have you *forsaken* Me?”

Think about those verbs. He was “taken away” and “cut off.” Those terms speak not only of a death that was violent and premature (which the Servant’s death certainly was), but also of something much worse. There is something far worse than dying a premature death. It’s dying under the judgment of God.<sup>5</sup>

Where do we hear the phrase, “Take him away”? It comes from the courtroom. Right after the judge renders the verdict, *Guilty!*, He gives the order, “Take him away!”

Why did He die alone? This is why, according to Isaiah.

2. *He died for the sin of others.* Isaiah concludes verse 8 with the staggering phrase, “Stricken for the transgression of my people.” Why was He stricken? Here’s why. *For the transgression of my people.* He died a vicarious death, a substitutionary death.

The human eye could not see the transfer that occurred when the Servant hung on that tree, but it was real. The Lord placed on His dear Son the transgressions of His people. Though the perfect Servant had committed no sin, the Lord treated Him as though He had. As we saw in verse 5, He was pierced *for our transgressions* and crushed *for our iniquities*. God judged the Servant with the penalty we had coming to us. This is why He died alone, and this is why He made no objection to dying alone.

Do you know what hell is? It’s a real place of torment where people will be *alone forever*, totally cut off from God and each other. That’s what God’s servant, Jesus the Christ, endured. He died *alone* so that we would never have to be alone again!

This too is what we hear when we place ourselves in the shadow of His cross. Through His silence, we see submission, but also *separation*.

### III. We see sadness (9).

“And they made his grave with the wicked and with a rich man in his death, although he had done no violence, and there was no deceit in his mouth.”

There’s incredible sadness in these words. The One beloved of His Father and adored by angel hosts was not only sentenced unjustly, and treated mercilessly, and killed brutally, but beyond all that was subjected to injustice in His burial.

**A. He was treated with disdain.** In this way, according to Isaiah’s prediction.

1. *They intended to bury Him with the wicked.* “He made his grave with the wicked,” is how the KJV puts it (NIV, “He was assigned a grave with the wicked”).

In the first century, the bodies of executed criminals were sometimes thrown into the valley of Hinnom (Gehenna) on the outskirts of Jerusalem to burn. But that didn’t

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<sup>5</sup> G. Grogan, *Isaiah*, p. 303.

happen to the Servant. His body was not tossed on a trash heap. His body was *buried*, just like Isaiah predicted.

But buried with whom? They intended to bury Him with the wicked.

2. *They ended up burying Him with the rich.* “He was assigned a grave with the wicked,” reads the CSB in verse 9, “but he was with a rich man at his death, because he had done no violence and had not spoken deceitfully.”

Just as Isaiah predicted, though Jesus was assigned a grave with the wicked (perhaps He was supposed to be buried with the other two criminals), they ended up burying Him with the rich.

There’s an interesting feature in the Hebrew text. Commentator Herbert Wolf explains, “The word ‘wicked’ is plural (which fits the two thieves who died with Christ), but the word ‘rich’ is singular. This is an unexpected change in number because the words are in parallel lines. An interesting confirmation of the change from plural to singular is seen in the Saint Mark’s Isaiah Scroll, one of the Dead Sea Scrolls. The scribe started to write the plural form of the word ‘rich,’ *‘asirim*, realized that he made a mistake, and scratched out the last two letters, leaving the singular *‘asir*.”<sup>6</sup>

As Warren Wiersbe remarks, “Were it not for Nicodemus and Joseph, the body of Jesus would have been buried in a “potter’s field” or thrown on a garbage heap.”<sup>7</sup>

Do you see the sadness in all of this? He was *assigned* a grave. The author of life subjected Himself to creatures He had made and allowed them to take His life and then decide where He would be buried. It happened as Isaiah predicted. He was placed in the tomb of a rich man.

By the way, let’s not miss an important sidenote. The *rich* die too, my friend. You can have a bank account of a billion dollars, but you can’t escape this. You will need a tomb, a burial place, for you will die just like the beggar does. And there’s no buying your way out of this scheduled appointment.

So He was treated with disdain. Isaiah emphasizes something else.

**B. He deserves to be treated with devotion.** At the end of verse 9 Isaiah offers this clarifying point about the One who was assigned a grave with the rich. “Although he had done no violence, and there was no deceit in his mouth.” In other words, He was sinless. He didn’t deserve this.

Hebrews 4:15 tells us, “For we do not have a high priest who is unable to sympathize with our weaknesses, but we have one who has been tempted in every way, just as we are—*yet was without sin*.” The apostle John makes the same point in 1 John 3:5, “But you know that he appeared so that he might take away our sins. *And in him is no sin*.”

He didn’t deserve this. What did He deserve? What does a person who lived a perfect, generous, loving, giving life deserve? That person deserves honor and respect. And this is the gospel at its core.

1. *He didn’t receive what He deserved.*

2. *He received what we deserve.* My friend, because of the Servant’s perfect life and death as our substitute, He now deserves our total trust and lifelong devotion.

Let that work sink in. Devotion. Does the Servant have our devotion? Before answering that too quickly, let’s consider an example of what devotion means.

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<sup>6</sup> Herbert Wolf, *Interpreting Isaiah*, p. 275.

<sup>7</sup> Warren W. Wiersbe, *Wiersbe’s Expository Outlines on the Old Testament*, (Victor Books: Wiersbe’s Expository Outlines on the New Testament) Wheaton, Illinois.

Have you heard of the Moravians?<sup>8</sup> The Moravian Church began over five hundred years ago in what is the modern day Czech Republic. The seal of their church contains a picture of a lamb with these words, “Our Lamb has conquered. Let us follow Him.”

And that’s what they have done. Since He died for them, they were willing to die for Him. I read about some Moravian believers who went to Africa back in the eighteenth century and found a leper colony secluded inside of a set of huge walls. There was only one gate, and once a person went in, he never came out. Two Moravians looked over the wall and saw two men, one whose arms had rotted off who was carrying the other, whose legs were gone. The two lepers were working together to make holes in the ground to plant seeds.

The sight broke the hearts of the two Moravians. They saw people who were not only suffering from a terrible disease but also dying by the hundreds and entering eternal suffering without Christ. *We must take the gospel to them*, they concluded. And so they went through the gate, knowing they would never leave until they too died of leprosy.

That’s devotion. Being willing to die for the love of Jesus. Other Moravians went to the West Indies. Why? Because there were slaves there who needed to hear about Christ. But it was illegal to preach to the slaves unless the preacher was a slave. So they sold themselves into slavery and worked and toiled in the fields to earn the opportunity to tell their fellow slaves about the One who died so they could be free from sin.

You say, “I don’t have to go to such extremes to show Jesus I love Him, do I?”

My friend, you don’t have to do anything for the salvation He offers you. It’s His free gift to you. But if you truly receive His gift, will you not want to show Him your appreciation? And if so, how? How do you show the One who died in your place and endured the hell you deserve that you appreciate Him?

By giving Him an hour and a half on Sunday morning once in a while? By throwing a few bills in the offering box? By reading the Bible every now and then? How?

I’m not saying this for shock value. I’m serious about this question. How do we show Him we appreciate what He’s done for us? Here’s where the Cross Shadow provides me with help, and I recommend you do the same this week. Begin your day by reading Scriptures and singing songs about the cross. I’ll demonstrate this more fully this evening, but here’s an example of a song that’s helped me greatly.

*I gave My life for thee,  
My precious blood I shed,  
That thou mightst ransomed be,  
And quickened from the dead;  
I gave, I gave My life for thee,  
What hast thou done for Me?  
I gave, I gave My life for thee,  
What hast thou done for Me?*

*My Father's house of light,  
My glory-circled throne  
I left for earthly night,  
For wanderings sad and lone;  
I left, I left it all for thee,*

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<sup>8</sup> Thank you Spurgeon for these illustrations. *Twelve Sermons on the Passion and Death of Christ*, p. 90.



*Hast thou left aught for Me?  
I left, I left it all for thee,  
Hast thou left aught for Me?*

*I suffered much for thee,  
More than thy tongue can tell,  
Of bitterest agony,  
To rescue thee from hell;  
I've borne, I've borne it all for thee,  
What hast thou borne for Me?  
I've borne, I've borne it all for thee,  
What hast thou borne for Me?*

*And I have brought to thee,  
Down from My home above,  
Salvation full and free,  
My pardon and My love;  
I bring, I bring rich gifts to thee,  
What hast thou brought to Me?  
I bring, I bring rich gifts to thee,  
What hast thou brought to Me?*

As we've listened to the Silent Servant this morning, we have heard Him speak to us. Through His *submission*—He subjected Himself to horrid abuse. Through His *separation*—He experienced aloneness so we can enjoy God's fellowship. And through His *sadness*—He didn't get what He deserved, but what we deserve.

#### Take Inventory: How should we respond to the Silent Servant?

Three responses are in order.

1. *We should accept His sacrifice.* He who died on the cross then triumphed over the grave three days later and now offers forgiveness and eternal life to all who call upon Him. But you must *call*. You must repent of your sins and accept His sacrifice. You must accept *Him*.

There's a fictitious story about a meeting the devil had with his cohorts to devise a plan to get people to reject the Gospel. "Let's go to them and say there is no God," proposed one. Silence prevailed. Every devil knew that most people believe in a supreme being.

"Let's tell them there is no hell, no future punishment for the wicked," offered another. That was turned down, because men obviously have consciences which tell them that sin must be punished.

The concave was going to end in failure when there came a voice from the rear: "Tell them there is a God, there is a hell and that the Bible is the Word of God. But tell them there is plenty of time to decide the question. Let them 'neglect' the Gospel, until it is too late." All hell erupted with ghoulish glee, for they knew that if a person procrastinated on Christ, they usually never accept Him.<sup>9</sup>

Have you *accepted* the sacrifice of Jesus? Oswald Chambers is right, "We trample the blood of the Son of God if we think we are forgiven because we are sorry for our sins.

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<sup>9</sup> Resource, July/August, 1990.

The only explanation for the forgiveness of God and for the unfathomable depth of His forgetting is the death of Jesus Christ. Our repentance is merely the outcome of our personal realization of the atonement which He has worked out for us. It does not matter who or what we are; there is absolute reinstatement into God by the death of Jesus Christ and by no other way, not because Jesus Christ pleads, but because He died. It is not earned, but accepted. All the pleading which deliberately refuses to recognize the Cross is of no avail; it is battering at a door other than the one that Jesus has opened. Our Lord does not pretend we are all right when we are all wrong. The atonement is a propitiation whereby God, through the death of Jesus, makes an unholy man holy.”

Friend, do you want to be right with God? Then you must *accept* His sacrifice.

2. *We should follow His example.* In 1 Peter 2:20-22, Peter quotes Isaiah 53:9 and applies Jesus’ example to us. There Peter encourages believers who were suffering unjustly by reminding them what the Savior did: “But if you suffer for doing good and you endure it, this is commendable before God. To this you were called, because Christ suffered for you, leaving you an example, that you should follow in his steps. ‘He committed no sin, and no deceit was found in his mouth.’”

If we want to live a life that pleases God, we must be willing to follow Jesus’ example. We must be willing to suffer injustice without retaliating. We must reject the world’s notion of responding to evil with evil.

Are you willing? Are you following His example in the way you treat your family members? How about your boss or the person who wrongs you at work or school?

Will you join the Moravians today? If we had the spirit of the Moravians in our midst, what great things could happen for our Savior in Wheelersburg and beyond!

Which brings us to one more response.

3. *We should proclaim His accomplishment.* We must not keep this good news to ourselves! There is a Redeemer, a Savior, a Silent Servant, and the world needs to hear of Him! Let’s speak of Him to all who will listen.

**Closing Song:** #183 “*Beneath the Cross of Jesus*” (all three verses to new tune with new ending)

**Communion** - After last Sunday’s message our brother Alan Gibson sent me a quote that I’d like to share with you. It’s the testimony of Charles Simeon.

“In Passion week as I was reading Bishop Wilson on the Lord’s Supper, I met with an expression to this effect: “That the Jews knew what they did when they transferred their sin to the head of their offering”. The thought rushed into my mind, What! May I transfer all my guilt to another? Has God provided an offering for me, that I may lay my sins on his head? Then, God willing, I will not bear them on my own soul one moment longer. Accordingly I sought to lay my sins on the sacred head of Jesus; and on the Wednesday began to have a hope of mercy; on the Thursday that hope increased; on the Friday and Saturday it became more strong; and on the Sunday morning (Easter Day, April 4) I awoke early with those words upon my heart and lips, “Jesus Christ is risen to-day! Hallelujah! Hallelujah!” From that hour peace flowed in rich abundance into my soul; and at the Lord’s table in our chapel I had the sweetest access to God through my blessed Saviour.”<sup>10</sup>

Have you experienced what Charles Simeon is describing? If so, join us at the table in worship of the One who took our sin and guilt upon Himself.

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<sup>10</sup> <https://www.christianstudylibrary.org/article/charles-simeon-cambridge>