

Jesus' Love Brings Deliverance

by Ernest O'Neill

Jesus' love brings deliverance from our sinful nature, and we can overcome sin and live a new life in Him through faith and obedience.

Duration: 29:50

Scripture: Psalm 22:1, Isaiah 53:12, Matthew 6:33, Luke 23:46, Romans 6:6, Romans 7:15, Romans 7:24-25

Topics: "Christian Freedom", "Victory Over Sin"

Description

In this sermon, the speaker reflects on the inner conflict that many Christians experience, as described in Romans 7:15. He challenges the common interpretation that this passage represents the normal Christian life, arguing that it is actually a description of Paul's life before he was delivered by Jesus. The speaker emphasizes that through Jesus, believers are delivered from a life of moral struggle and sin. He encourages listeners to recognize the power of Christ's crucifixion and resurrection, and to choose to live in the victory and freedom that Easter Sunday represents.

Transcript

Some week I'll get to real affection, but I thought that maybe, this being Palm Sunday, we should look at what Jesus did for us on this day. So, you remember, last Sunday, we talked about the inner conflict that most Christians in the world experience. It's the conflict expressed by those words, you remember, in Romans 7, 15.

I do not understand my own actions, for I do not do what I want, but I do the evil that I hate. And you remember, we looked at that famous Romans 7, that is regarded as the standard for the normal Christian life. And we looked at the cry towards the end of it, that expresses the experience of so many of us.

Wretched man that I am, who shall deliver me from this body of death? And then you remember, we said that that is an utterly wrong interpretation of Romans 7, to regard it as the standard of the normal Christian life. And you remember, we pointed out to each other that it isn't at all a description of Paul's life after he had been delivered by Jesus. It is a flashback description of his life as a Jew, living under the law, and unable to do what he knew he should do.

And that in fact, Romans 7 does not end at that verse 24, Wretched man that I am, who shall deliver me from this body of death? It ends at Romans 7 and 25, the next verse, where Paul says, Thanks be to God, through Jesus Christ our Lord. And he points out that we are delivered from this miserable, impotent,

moral life that so many of us are caught in. And you remember, he said that we are delivered from it because of the fact that is stated in Romans 6 and verse 6. And that fact is that our old self, our old self-righteous, self-seeking, self-asserting self, our old sinful nature, our old carnal ego, was destroyed and crucified with Christ, so that the body of sin might be destroyed and we might no longer be enslaved to sin.

And that we are in fact delivered from that. And it's because of that victory that is described in Romans 6, over the defeat that is described in Romans 7, as a Jew under the law, it's because of that that Paul, in summarizing the whole thing, says in Romans 7, 25, Ara un autos. Ara un autos.

So then, of myself, that's what autos means, and that's the order of the Greek words. Ara un autos. So then, of myself, if I'm left to myself, on my own, without Jesus, without his death, without my death with him, on my own, with my mind I serve God's law and with my flesh I serve sin's law.

And that's what we shared, you remember, last day. That in fact Romans 7, 25 is a flashback description to the old powerless life of a Jew living under the law. And that we who are God's children are through Jesus delivered into a life of victory that is above that.

And of course, I don't think you need me to tell you how unmanageable that miserable old self is. I mean, we all know it. We all know how we've wanted to do certain things that we know to be good, and up from within us seems to surge from almost primeval, savage depths of our being, there seems to surge a monster that we cannot recognize, that wants to strike out at a loved one, or uses a cutting word to slice into some heart of someone that we really love, or uproots all our best resolutions to be clean and pure, and seems to release in us a lion of lust and grotesque hatred that we cannot ever think is part of us.

And isn't that what we all feel? We all feel that. We feel, oh, this can't be me. It can't be me.

This is not me. It's like another self I have. It's like another person inside me.

And that's why we talk about it as our old man, our old self. It's an old sinful nature that we don't seem to even regard as part of ourselves. And loved ones, that's what God's Word tells us was crucified with Christ.

That old sinful nature of ours that wants its own way, that asserts itself and defends itself, that wants to stand up for its own rights, that wants to make all the rest of us submit to it, that was crucified with Christ. That whole attitude in us was destroyed in Jesus. And the amazing thing is, you see, when Jesus was born in Mary's womb, as His body formed around Him in Mary's womb, He also began to inherit the tendencies of our race.

He did. He began to inherit the tendencies of our race that does not trust its Maker as its Father, of a race that at times pretends that it doesn't even have a Maker, it doesn't even have a Creator. He began to inherit all those tendencies, except that from the very moment He was born, He exercised His will to reject those.

And so He rejected this feeling that we have, that we have a right to our way. He rejected this feeling that you and I have, that we want everybody to look up to us and respect us and acknowledge us and praise us. Every time He exercised His own will, He resisted that sinful nature that in fact He inherited as we did.

Those tendencies, only tendencies, except that He rejected them. He didn't go with them. And then the incredible thing is this.

After He had formed around Himself a human nature that obeyed the good desires that His Father had put in His heart, after He did that, He began to take upon Himself your carnal nature and my carnal nature. And you know that's our problem. Before we're born of God, we are sometimes kind to people, sometimes unkind, but it's all a kind of natural thing that we inherit from our parents or from our environment.

But after we're born of Jesus and born of the Spirit, there begins to be felt within us a real love of God and a real love of other people. And then it's not long before we find that our personality equipment that we have to express this seems to have a law of its own. And it doesn't want to express that kind of love.

And it seems to work against that. And that's the sinful nature. And we find that we're working against something all the time, trying to get it out to other people.

Now, you see, when Jesus was born of God in this womb of Mary, He not only resisted this coat of mortality or carnality, but He transformed it into a personality that would express the love that He has in His heart. And when He had done that, He then went a further step and He took upon Himself your carnal nature and mine, your desire for your own way, your desire to stand up for your own rights, my desire to be respected, your desire to be proud or to boast or to want what you want. And He began to take that in upon Himself.

And He allowed that to be burned out of existence in Himself. See, that's what that verse means. 2 Corinthians 5, you remember, and I think it's 17.

God made Him to be sin who knew no sin. He didn't have a carnality of His own, but He was made to bear our carnality in Himself. It had to be burned out in some human being, and He took it into Himself.

And He was made sin who knew no sin. It's the same truth, loved ones, as is in Isaiah. If you want to look at it, in that famous chapter that we all know, Isaiah 53.

And that's about page 634. 634. Isaiah 53 and verse 5. And the first two, you know, are well known.

He was wounded for our transgressions. He was bruised for our iniquities. But do you see the next line? Upon Him was the chastisement that made us whole.

In other words, what God did to His Son Jesus actually made us whole. In fact, God burned out in Jesus that old self of yours. And so, the Word of God says, Upon Him was the chastisement that made us whole, and with His stripes we are healed.

And you and I, you know, have a tendency to think, Oh, Jesus died so that God could forgive us. God had forgiven us long before Jesus died. God had forgiven us the very first moment He saw us straying from Him.

But what God did in Jesus was not simply to forgive us, but to take this old self of ours that will not obey Him, and to destroy it in His Son. And that's why the Bible says, With the chastisement that He suffered, we were made whole. And, you know, there's another verse at the end of 53.

You see, verse 12. Isaiah 53 and 12. Therefore I will divide Him a portion with the great, and He shall divide the spoil with the strong, because He poured out His soul to death and was numbered with the

transgressors, yet He bore the sin of many.

We have a tendency to say, You know, I bore my sins. I steal something, that's a sin. I steal something else, those are two sins.

So Jesus bore the punishment for those sins so that I wouldn't have to bear them. That's not the heart of it. The heart of it is the sin that produces those sins.

The way you and I don't trust God, the way we trust ourselves, the way we want to make ourselves God, the way we want to stand up on our own hind legs and have everybody worship us, that's what Jesus bore on Calvary. He bore our sin. He bore us ourselves.

So really, every one of us, loved ones, have a personal interest in this day because this is the first day of the worst week that the earth ever saw. We call it Holy Week. We call it Holy Week because it's the week in which the highest act of love was ever done.

But really, it was an unholy week. It was the week when the sin of God became the sewer for the sin of the world. It was the unholy week that Jesus ever met.

It was the week when He bore all of us in Himself and destroyed us and remade us. I don't know if you've ever thought of it, but when He came into Jerusalem on this day, this Palm Sunday, and all the crowds shouted Hosanna to the King, and threw palm branches in front of Him, His own inner being had no trouble with that. His own inner being bowed down to God and said, Lord, I know this is foolishness.

I know I am no national king nor meant to be, nor will I have the victory that a national king would have. He had no trouble with that, but loved ones, you and I were inside Him. And every wish that you have had for people to look up to you, every desire you have had to be acknowledged and respected, every desire you have had for people not to criticize you, but to regard you as wonderful, every desire that you have ever had was in Jesus and put upon Him at that moment.

And the most wretched, selfish ambition of Napoleon and of Hitler and of Nero rose up in our dear Savior's heart to grab the attention and grab the acknowledgement. And the desire of every little cheerleader and every quarterback for attention and adulation, he felt inside his own heart at that moment. And that's the strain he bore when he bent that carnal nature of everybody that has ever lived in the universe under the sweetness of his own submissive love.

And so, don't ask for whom the bell tolls for a moment. Don't ask what happened on Palm Sunday. You and I were there on Palm Sunday.

We were part of the burden that that dear man bore. And it's the same, you know. When he looked at Judas at the Last Supper, you see the old eyes, the old evasiveness, and the old sliding of the eyes away from the Master's face as he prepared to go out into the night to prepare the betrayal.

Jesus had no trouble with his own inner being. He had no trouble with his own inner nature, loving Judas with all his heart at that moment. But inside him, loved ones, dwelt all your sense of indignation against those who have treated you unjustly.

Inside his heart dwelt all that kind of righteous resentment that you have felt against people who have lied to you when you have often lied yourself to them. But do you know how uppity we get? How dare they to

deceive us or to lie to us when we have lied to other people a thousand times? And yet you know that stiff-necked, self-righteous indignation that we have. And then that mixture of self-pity when we feel how could they eat supper with us and then go out and laugh behind our backs or betray us.

And, loved ones, all the resentment that we have ever experienced and all the resentment of any man or woman that has ever lived grows in Jesus' heart at that moment and strain to make him resent Judas. And at that moment he bent that unbendable self of ours under his own sweet love. So you and I were actually there.

And then, you know, the way they took him from the garden and took him to the high priest's house, then trailed him off, you remember, to Pilate's, then trailed him to Herod and then back to Pilate, and then pushed him onto that Via Dolorosa. He had no trouble with his own inner heart. He embraced whatever his father had for him to bear.

But inside his dear heart he bore all of us. And all of us who have resented people who have hurt us and all the feeling that you or I have ever had that we want to strike back at people who are insulting us or treating us in an undignified way. And all of that rose inside him, the cry of every little heart that has ever been in a Siberian prison, the cry of every one of us who have ever screamed because someone didn't treat us right.

All of that raged in his dear breast. And, loved ones, that's what he carried down the Via Dolorosa. The cross was nothing.

It was the burden of all of us that he took while he bent us over into the same attitude of acceptance that he himself had. And, you know, that cry of dereliction, My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me? Inside his dear heart there was acceptance of what his father had for him. But inside him on the cross we raged and we joined with all the people on the outside and said, This thing is coming apart.

Evil is winning. God is losing. This is not working right.

The thing is falling apart. This is an impossible tragedy that you cannot escape from. And at that moment on the cross all of us were yelling that in his ears.

All of us who have never been able to hold to faith because of the outward appearance of tragedy around us. All of that raged in his dear heart. And it was all of us who called out, My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me? And at that moment when all the wrath of God burst upon our old sinful natures and at last wiped them out and sent them into oblivion, at that moment despite all of us crying and yelling, Why have you forsaken me? He bent his head towards his father and said, Father, into thy hands I commend my spirit.

And he took us with him into the father's arms. So, loved ones, you cannot say, I can't keep my temper. You can't.

All you can say is, I won't. But you can't say, I can't. Because that is what Jesus bent inside himself on Calvary, your temper.

And you can't say, I can't control these feelings of resentment. I can't control these feelings of pride. You don't need to control them.

You just need to want to with your whole heart. They have already been controlled in Jesus. They have already been destroyed and remade in him.

There's no such thing as can't. Our dear old parents and grandparents were right. There isn't.

There's only, I won't. Because ever since Jesus died, nobody in this room has had a sinful nature that is really in existence. They have simply had the lie that they have believed from Satan that that nature is still in existence and still exerts its power.

And in fact, it's a lie. That's what the father of lies is about. Let me give you proof of it.

How many of you know somebody who has struggled against some impossible overwhelming habit for years? And then, when they became really persuaded that cancer would result, or they became really persuaded that this was it, they changed in a moment. Don't we all know people like that? And don't we all realize and have a sneaking suspicion they could have changed any time? At any moment, they could have changed. And that's the truth.

In Jesus, all of us were crucified. All of our old sinful natures were destroyed in him. And the amazing fact is, loved ones, I can do all things through Christ to strengthen me.

You can actually stop this moment. You can. And you know the logic of it.

You remember the dear guy? You remember on Perry Mason? You remember he was the defender? And he smoked and smoked and smoked. Finally, you remember, he stopped smoking. And he began to do the commercials on TV against smoking.

But there's only one example. There are probably dozens of us here in this room who have struggled and struggled against something that we said we could not overcome. And in a moment, we overcame it.

And how many of us have said, I could have done this 20 years ago. And so you could. You can actually do it today.

Because the power that you keep claiming is overwhelming you was crucified with Christ on Calvary. And you and I were there on Palm Sunday. And you and I were there on Good Friday.

You have to decide, are you going to take advantage of the fact that you were there on Easter Sunday morning? You have to decide that. Are you going to live the lie that all you've experienced with Christ has been up to Good Friday? Or are you going this morning to say, no, I believe that. I believe that I was crucified with Christ.

And I believe that if I've been united with Him in a death like His, I'm also resurrected in a resurrection like His. I believe it. Today, that's the end of that habit.

That's the end of that attitude that has crippled me for years in my relationships with others. That's the end, Lord. I believe it was destroyed with you.

I'm going to have faith in that. Loved ones, that's what it takes. It takes a definite step of faith.

Otherwise, anything that the Godhead has done for you will remain up there in heaven until you actually exercise faith and receive it into your own life. Lord God, we would apologize to you for the way we have

treated your Son, our Savior's death, as a simple admission ticket into heaven, as a kind of bribe to persuade you to forgive us our sins. Lord, we see that it is way beyond that.

We recognize, Lord Jesus, that you were braver than any man and that the agony and pain that you bore was not your own but was ours. And that you bore it in order to bend us and change us. And, Lord Jesus, we believe that.

And we believe it about this particular habit that we have, this particular attitude of our whole mind and our old feelings. We believe that all that was changed in you and that we've been dragging about here a body of death that is unreal and is a lie of Satan's. And that this very moment we can be changed in a moment and the twinkling of an eye.

Lord, we would believe that now. We would see that all that we have been up to this moment has been crucified with you and is finished and dead and buried and blown into oblivion. And, Lord, at this moment we would thank you.

And we intend to live like people who have been resurrected. People who have even forgotten what they once were. Lord, we intend to lead a new life this day and live above in that realm where you yourself are and where we have always been meant to live.

Lord, we put now far from us not only the thing or the attitude that we have, but we put even the memory of it out of our minds. And we thank you, Lord Jesus, that as we dwelt with you on the cross on Calvary, so you now dwell with us here on earth. And, Lord, we ask you now to live in us and lead us from this day forward.

Lord Jesus, will you speak what you want to speak? And we're going to rise above it and live above self and live in your spirit. For your glory. Amen.

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