

SAVIOUR – WEEK 6 - JESUS GIVES YOU THE VICTORY

(With acknowledgements to “Saviour” by Magrey R. DeVega)

MONDAY – Jesus Gives you Victory



1 Peter 3-18: *For Christ also suffered once for sins, the righteous for the unrighteous, to bring you to God. He was put to death in the body but made alive in the Spirit.*

I am sure that over the period of this series you will have noted that the common thread among all the approaches to understanding Christ's death, is that we cannot save ourselves. No matter how each metaphor defines sin, we are helpless to overcome it on our own.

We cannot on our own break free from sin, we cannot pay its penalty, we cannot alone restore our relationship with God and we cannot alone cleanse ourselves of the stain of sin.

Our inability to save ourselves is most pronounced in this final image (Christus Victor) to understand Christ's work on the cross. We cannot defeat sin on its

own, but in Jesus, we can be victorious.

The idea of “Christ the Victor”, is joyous and causes us to want to celebrate. It conjures up the feelings of triumph that is embedded in our competitive and sporting culture. Phrases like “the thrill of victory” and “the agony of defeat” come to mind. Our understanding of the concept of “Christ Victorious” is then built on the two premises that even though sin has defeated us and filled us with agony, Jesus, through His death on the cross, raises us up in glorious victory.

Reflection: Are there circumstances in your life that make you feel as if you have been defeated by sin?



Prayer: Lord, the resurrection of Your Son has given us new life and renewed hope. Grant us wisdom to know what we must do, the will to want to do it, the courage to undertake it, the perseverance to continue to do it, and the strength to complete it. AMEN

TUESDAY – Who will Roll Away the Stone (Part 1)?



Mark 16: 2 & 3 *Very early on the first day of the week, just after sunrise, they were on their way to the tomb and they asked each other, “Who will roll the stone away from the entrance of the tomb?”*

After the death of Jesus, we read in Mark’s Gospel of the women who made their way to His tomb with spices to anoint His body. They were beside themselves with grief for this Jesus, the carpenter from Bethlehem, who had been their friend, their teacher and their spiritual leader.

I believe that their anguish was symbolized in the large stone that was at the entrance of Jesus’s tomb. In **Mark 16: 3 (NIV)**, the women, on their way to the tomb to anoint the body “.... *asked each other, Who will roll the stone away from the entrance of the tomb?*”. This powerful question was asked literally and metaphorically. They believed that when they arrived at the tomb they would need the rock to be rolled away to allow them

access to the body of their dear friend.

However, on a deeper level, I believe they were struggling with how to overcome the grief and despair that had set into their hearts at the death of Jesus. The reality of His death must have left them with a sense of bitterness and utter defeat. They were faced with the very real problem of what were they going to do?

Reflection: Let’s for a moment try comparing the situation they found themselves in with our own lives. What are the stones that are blocking your pathway to a free and full life in Jesus? What gigantic boulders do you get up to every morning that need to be pushed out of your life?



Prayer: Dear Lord Jesus, may the promise of Your spirit light up our lives. May the love You revealed to us shape our giving. May the truth in Your word guide our journeys and may the joy of Your kingdom fill our homes. AMEN

WEDNESDAY – Who will Roll Away the Stone (Part 2)?



Luke 24: 2-3 *They found the stone rolled away from the tomb, but when they entered, they did not find the body of the Lord Jesus.*

When the women arrived at the tomb, they found that the stone had been rolled away. How surprised they must have been. Their concerns as to how they were going to open the tomb had proved groundless. Let's pause a second and look a little closer at the significance of the open tomb.

In the reality of the open tomb, I believe we need to remember that irrespective of the obstacles we face each day, it was God who rolls away the "stone" for the women. And God, with the death of His son Jesus on the cross, has rolled away our "stone" (sins) as well. This "stone", that we as humans cannot budge by our own efforts, God continues to move for us, just as He did for the women so long ago.

It was to move our personal "stone" and rescue sinful humanity that Jesus sacrificed His life on the cross. Through His death and resurrection, Satan was defeated, and all creation freed to be restored to a loving relationship with God. This makes the Resurrection a story of victory. It is a story of how we are victorious against the forces of evil, not through our own actions, but through what God has done. It is a story of what God has done that we cannot do for ourselves.

Reflection: Do we claim this victory for ourselves and perhaps more importantly, do we act victorious?



Prayer: Dear Lord and Heavenly Father, thank you for sending Jesus to save me from my sins. Thank you that You loved me enough to send a perfect sacrifice, so that we could live together eternally. AMEN

THURSDAY – One More Surprise

In Matthew's Gospel we get one final surprise. After the women had received the "good news" from the angels at the tomb, they started walking away, wondering if this was really good news or not. In the midst of their uncertainty Jesus appeared among them. Imagine how they must have felt – as if the sight of the open and empty tomb wasn't shocking enough, they were now confronted by the risen Christ.

We believe that Matthew takes the Easter story one step further than any of the other Gospels, because he wants to remind us, that no matter what we are dealing with, Jesus is always with us as we travel through life. He will never leave us. That is why Matthew ends his Gospel saying to his disciples:

"and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you. And surely I am with you always, to the very end of the age." (Matthew 28: 20 NIV).

Matthew's Easter message is clear. No matter what you are facing, no matter how much sin is complicating your life, Jesus will always be right by your side and give you victory over all that weighs you down. The moment we realise this, everything is changed. God has given us the victory and nothing will ever be the same. The way we live, the way we face hardship and fight temptation, even the way we live when all is going well, will be different. And as we read in Hebrews, because of what Jesus has done on the cross and what God has done in the Resurrection, we have been set free of all our sins.



Prayer: Dear Lord, may I realize afresh today what Your death and resurrection mean for me. May I always find my satisfaction in You and Your willingness to offer Yourself to me. AMEN

FRIDAY – Jesus Christ our Saviour



John 14: 6 *Jesus answered, "I am the way and the truth and the life. No one comes to the Father except through Me.*

Throughout this series, we have looked at some of the most prevalent and popular understandings of the cross. It has become clear that there is no universal agreement as to which of the theories is best and we have been encouraged to come to our own prayerful discernment regarding how Jesus's work on the cross is most meaningful for us. Whatever our conclusions, we need to understand what the cross means to us and discover what it calls us to do.

The image of substitution calls us to thanksgiving and praise of Jesus, who did for us what we couldn't do for ourselves. Ransom imagery calls us to a life worthy of the freedom Jesus provided for

us. Moral influence calls us to fully reflect the image of God in the way we share His love with others. Reconciliation calls us to repair broken relationships and bring healing to the divisions that separate us. The image of cleansing calls us to repent and confess our sins and finally Christus Victor calls us to live triumphantly over sin.

As we come to the conclusion of this series, I believe that it is important to remember that no matter which image (or images) we ultimately claim for ourselves, we need to remember that having been freed from our sin, we are not saved by our works, but are saved to do good works.



Prayer: Dear Lord, irrespective of which these theories capture my imagination, thank you that You are a loving, gracious God. Thank you that You've offered us forgiveness and the gift of new life in You. Thank you that nothing can separate us from Your love. AMEN