

EASTER SUNDAY

FERINTOSH PARISH CHURCH

WORSHIP AT HOME



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*If Christ had not accomplished victory at the cross and the grave, then all we would be able to say today on Easter Sunday is that weeping endures for a night, **and what a long night that would be.** But through Christ's victory at the cross and over the grave we can say that weeping has endured for a night, but **JOY COMES IN THE MORNING!***

In John 11 when Lazarus is raised from the dead, he comes forth out of the grave with the grave clothes on and needs help to remove them from his body. But when Christ is raised from the dead his grave clothes remain in the grave. Why? Because Lazarus didn't defeat death, he only postponed it. Jesus conquered death. It would never again have any claim over Him. The grave clothes are left behind in the tomb because they would never again be needed.

Our faith today rests on the Saviour who emerged from the tomb; because when doubts and fears come; and troubles come, we run back even as the disciples did to see for themselves that
'He is not there, He has Risen!'

HYMN

Thine be the glory,
Risen, conquering Son;
Endless is the victory,
Thou o'er death hast won;
Angels in bright raiment
Rolled the stone away,
Kept the folded grave clothes
Where Thy body lay.

Thine be the glory,
Risen conquering Son,
Endless is the victory,
Thou o'er death hast won.

Lo! Jesus meets us,
Risen from the tomb;
Lovingly He greets us,
Scatters fear and gloom;
Let the church with gladness,
Hymns of triumph sing;
For her Lord now liveth,
Death hath lost its sting.

Thine be the glory,
Risen conquering Son,
Endless is the victory,
Thou o'er death hast won.

No more we doubt Thee,
Glorious Prince of life;
Life is naught without Thee;
Aid us in our strife;
Make us more than conquerors,
Through Thy deathless love:
Bring us safe through Jordan
To Thy home above.

Thine is the glory,
Risen conquering Son,
Endless is the victory,
Thou o'er death hast won.

SCRIPTURE READINGS EXODUS 25: 17 - 22

17 "You shall make a mercy seat of pure gold; two and a half cubits shall be its length and a cubit and a half its width.

18 And you shall make two cherubim of gold; of hammered work you shall make them at the two ends of the mercy seat.

19 Make one cherub at one end, and the other cherub at the other end; you shall make the cherubim at the two ends of it of one piece with the mercy seat.

20 And the cherubim shall stretch out their wings above, covering the mercy seat with their wings, and they shall face one another; the faces of the cherubim shall be toward the mercy seat.

21 You shall put the mercy seat on top of the ark, and in the ark you shall put the Testimony that I will give you.

22 And there I will meet with you, and I will speak with you from above the mercy seat, from between the two cherubim which are on the ark of the Testimony, about everything which I will give you in commandment to the children of Israel.

JOHN 20: 9 - 15

9 For as yet they did not know the Scripture, that He must rise again from the dead.

10 Then the disciples went away again to their own homes.

11 But Mary stood outside by the tomb weeping, and as she wept she stooped down and looked into the tomb.

12 And she saw two angels in white sitting, one at the head and the other at the feet, where the body of Jesus had lain.

13 Then they said to her, "Woman, why are you weeping?" She said to them, "Because they have taken away my Lord, and I do not know where they have laid Him."

14 Now when she had said this, she turned around and saw Jesus standing there, and did not know that it was Jesus.

15 Jesus said to her, "Woman, why are you weeping? Whom are you seeking?" She, supposing Him to be the gardener, said to Him, "Sir, if You have carried Him away, tell me where You have laid Him, and I will take Him away."

ROMANS 3: 20 - 26

20 Therefore by the deeds of the law no flesh will be justified in His sight, for by the law is the knowledge of sin.

21 But now the righteousness of God apart from the law is revealed, being witnessed by the Law and the Prophets,

22 even the righteousness of God, through faith in Jesus Christ, to all and on all who believe. For there is no difference;

23 for all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God,

24 being justified freely by His grace through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus,

25 whom God set forth as a propitiation by His blood, through faith, to demonstrate His righteousness, because in His forbearance God had passed over the sins that were previously committed,

26 to demonstrate at the present time His righteousness, that He might be just and the justifier of the one who has faith in Jesus.

LORD'S PRAYER

Our Father, who art in heaven,
hallowed be thy Name,
thy kingdom come,
thy will be done,
on earth as it is in heaven.
Give us this day our daily bread.
And forgive us our debts,
as we forgive our debtors
who trespass against us.
And lead us not into temptation,
but deliver us from evil.
For thine is the kingdom,
and the power, and the glory,
for ever and ever. Amen.


SERMON

On Maundy Thursday we were in awe of the joy of Christ on the evening before He was crucified. We were amazed that the cross for Christ was the joy set before Him. It was the joy set before Him because He was going to the cross to save sinners. God's people are the rescued lamb laid across the Good Shepherd's shoulders, we are the lost coin found, we are the Prodigal Son embraced.

On Good Friday we then considered the significance of the scapegoat of Leviticus 16 where the high priest laid the sins of the people on the head of the scapegoat which was then **led away** far from the camp. And it's interesting to notice that the Lord Jesus Christ became our great scapegoat at the cross on Calvary. And we noticed as well that it's not the high priest who lays hold of Jesus but its Someone Greater. Listen to this, *God has laid on Him the iniquity of us all (Isaiah 53)*. God had laid hold of His precious Son, Christ Jesus, and He was made sin for us. Christ became the substitute for our sin and guilt, bearing our sin upon His shoulders represented by the cross. Therefore, we see in Christ the New Testament Great Scapegoat carrying our confessed sin far away from us. The bible tells us, *as far as the east is from the west, So far has He removed our transgressions from us (Psalm 103)*.

On this Easter Sunday we come to one of the most significant paragraphs in the Bible from Romans 3: 20-26. We find in it a wonderful and glorious truth that offers a thorough and magnificent discussion of justification by faith. Not surprisingly, this paragraph plays a crucial role in the history of doctrine and the church. Also, the roots of this paragraph extend throughout the Bible itself. Two key places deserve notice. The first takes us back to Exodus, while the second is found at the end of John's Gospel.

First, consider Exodus 25:22. The context of this verse concerns the description of the tabernacle and specifically the key piece of furniture in the tabernacle, the ark of the covenant. We remember that the lid of the ark was known as the 'place of propitiation' or the 'mercy seat'.



The lid was flanked on either side by two cherubim (Exodus 25:19). At this very place, at the 'place of propitiation' or 'the mercy seat', God meets His people, that's what we read in Exodus 25:22 "There I will meet with you."

This lid, then, was the place of propitiation through the blood of sacrifice and this 'mercy seat' became the place where the wrath of God was turned away from His people.

The connection with Exodus 25 and Romans 3 concerns the word "propitiation" in the New Testament. We find the word "Propitiation" only a handful of times in the New Testament. One of those times is here in Romans 3:25. Propitiation refers to Christ and His work of redemption. Paul makes clear that God put forward Christ "as a propitiation" for His people because Christ is the acceptable, wrath-satisfying sacrifice on our behalf. When Jesus gave His life as a sacrifice for our sins, He also satisfied the righteous wrath of God against our sin (propitiation), which means that He provided for us reconciliation and peace with God, HALLELUJAH!!

Secondly, consider John 20:12. Mary Magdalene had come to the tomb of Christ only to find it empty. As she stooped down to look in, "She saw two angels in white, sitting where the body of Jesus had lain, one at the head and one at the feet." Back in Exodus 25, two carved angels took their places at either end of the mercy seat. What wonderful significance we see here at Christ's empty tomb with two angels, one at either end pointing to the Old Testament mercy seat of propitiation being fulfilled in and through the Lord Jesus Christ.

How can we say this? Well, God's wrath is propitiated by Christ. Christ by His blood, His life and death, has taken God's wrath and punishment for His people. When Christ was on the cross, He not only took the punishment due for our sin, He took the wrath of God associated with the punishment. If you are a Christian, the blood of Christ is your propitiation. God is not angry with you, nor will He be again. This is the amazing propitiating power of the blood of Christ. Therefore, we can come to God without fear of condemnation (Romans 8:1) but instead we come with the imputed righteousness and the joy of Christ.

Therefore, we can come to God without fear of condemnation (Romans 8:1) but instead we come with the imputed righteousness and the joy of Christ. **It's worth noting here that the purpose of God's wrath is to demonstrate the awfulness of sin but more to magnify the glory of His grace that is ours by faith in Jesus Christ.**

As in the Old Testament God desires to meet with His people, and the blood of the spotless lamb is the only means by which that meeting is made possible. The mercy seat of the Old Testament, and the blood sprinkled upon it by the high priest, prefigured Christ to come.

Christ did come, and Christ as The Spotless Lamb of God did make the sacrifice, and Christ was raised from the dead. Make no mistake about it, these are historical realities. The tabernacle was real. The ark of the covenant was real. The mercy seat was real. The cross was real. The empty tomb was real. And a real woman stooped to look at real angels.

In Exodus 25 The Lord provided the Israelites a place of propitiation on the ark's lid (mercy seat), and He still provides a place today. That "place" is Jesus Christ. He offers Himself to us. He turns away the wrath of God from us. He cleanses us of our sins. He cancels them out. He nullifies their power. He brings us into the presence of God blameless and acceptable. In turn we are compelled by the leading of the Holy Spirit to confess our sins to Him and believe that Jesus Christ propitious to us. Only through this way, can we be saved.

My friends, Christ is our mercy seat, He is our joy, He is our Scapegoat, He is our propitiation, He is the Lamb of God, and we're thankful that we don't need to find the mercy seat of the Old Testament Ark of the covenant to have sins forgiven. We rejoice on this Easter Sunday that we are justified by faith alone in the finished work of Christ by His death and Resurrection. Because of this, in and through Christ, God meets us today. Had Christ not been raised, we would have a mediator whose redeeming work on our behalf was not acceptable to God. **However, Christ is risen indeed!** It's no wonder the roof of our beautiful Ferintosh Parish Church nearly comes off when our precious congregation sing with endless thankfulness and joy, ***Thine be the glory, Risen conquering Son, Endless is the victory, Thou o'er death hast won!***

HYMN

1 Man of sorrows what a name
for the Son of God, who came
ruined sinners to reclaim:
Hallelujah, what a Saviour!

2 Bearing shame and scoffing rude,
in my place condemned he stood,
sealed my pardon with his blood:
Hallelujah, what a Saviour!

3 Guilty, helpless, lost were we;
blameless Lamb of God was he,
sacrificed to set us free:
Hallelujah, what a Saviour!

4 He was lifted up to die;
"It is finished" was his cry;
now in heaven exalted high:
Hallelujah, what a Saviour!

5 When he comes, our glorious King,
all his ransomed home to bring,
then anew this song we'll sing:
Hallelujah, what a Saviour!

PRAYER

Heavenly Father, you have freely given your Son,
Divine Son, you have freely paid our debt in full,
Eternal Spirit, you have freely bid us come,
O Triune God, you did freely grace us with
salvation.

We marvel that the finite can know the infinite,
here a little, afterwards in full-orbed truth; now I
know but a small portion of what I shall know,
here in part, there in perfection, here a glimpse,
there a glory, to enjoy God is life eternal, and to
enjoy is to know. Keep us in the freedom of
experiencing your salvation continually.

O Lord, we marvel that you should become
incarnate, be crucified, dead, and buried. The
sepulchre calls forth our adoring wonder, for it is
empty and you are risen; the four-fold gospel
attests it, the living witnesses prove it, our
heart's experience knows it.

Help us to be resolute and Christ-contained.
Never let us wander from the path of obedience
to your will. Strengthen us for what is ahead,
give us courage for all the trials, and grace for
all the joys.

Grant to us more and more the resurrection life:
may it rule us, may we walk in its power, and be
strengthened through its influence. We pray in
Jesus precious Name, Amen

(Prayer from 'A collection of puritan prayers')

BENEDICTION

**And now may the grace of the Lord
Jesus Christ, the Love of God and the
fellowship of the Holy Spirit, be with us
all this day and forevermore, Amen.**