



Rethinking Religion

Rethinking Suffering under the Cross

Second Sunday in Lent

February 25, 2024

RETHINKING RELIGION

Everyone has assumptions about God. Likewise, everyone has assumptions about religion. Increasingly, those assumptions are negative. Americans are walking away from Christianity in breathtaking numbers. It raises the question. How do those people know if their assumptions about religion are correct? Do they really understand Christianity at all? Do we? Do we truly understand this religion?

In the season of Lent, as much as any other, Jesus teaches things that turns the world's assumptions about religion completely upside down. We call it "Christianity." So, in this holy season, let us go straight to Christ and let him replace assumptions with truth. Jesus, help us to rethink religion!

RETHINKING SUFFERING UNDER THE CROSS

We know that the cross was an instrument of torture and execution. However, Scripture also uses the term "cross" to refer to any suffering that one endures because he is believer: the painful denial of the desires of the flesh; ridicule and persecution from unbelievers; etc. This is one reason people reject religion. They see Christians struggling in life with these crosses, while non-Christians often seem perfectly happy. Even the prophet Jeremiah asked, "Why do all the faithless live at ease?" (12:1).

Today, Jesus asks us to rethink suffering under the cross. It is not pointless pain. Our crosses are not how we pay for sin. Jesus already did that on his cross. Our crosses are not redemptive, but they are constructive. Any suffering unbelievers face is only bad, a foretaste of worse to come. But the suffering believers face under the cross is only good, a way Christ connects us tightly to himself with fire-tested faith.

God bless your worship.

OFFERING

You may place your offering in the one of the plates located in the church entryway. Or to give electronically, go to redeemertucson.com/offerings.

SERVING IN WORSHIP

Presiding Minister	8:00am: Pastor John Hartmann	10:45am: Pastor Adam Mueller
Preacher		Pastor David Clark
Organist/Pianist		Rachel Casmer
Musicians		Charlene Vatterrodt
Choir		<i>Directed by:</i> Nathan Reich
Usher Teams	8:00am: Ian & Jon Follendorf, Charlie Weinstein	10:45am: Patrick & Gabe Learned, Clyde Brumfield
Flowers	The flowers on the altar this morning were given to the Glory of God by Connie Daugherty, in thanks to the entire kitchen staff.	

† ORDER OF SERVICE †

Greeting and welcome

OPENING HYMN

Afflicted Saint, to Christ Draw Near | 867

Choir: verses 1-2 **Congregation:** verses 3-4

Stand

INVOCATION

In the name of the Father and of the † Son and of the Holy Spirit.

Amen.

CONFESSION

If we claim to be without sin, we deceive ourselves and the truth is not in us.

**If we confess our sins, God is faithful and just
and will forgive us our sins
and purify us from all unrighteousness.**

Let us confess our sins to the Lord.

Holy God, gracious Father,

I am sinful by nature

and have sinned against you in my thoughts, words, and actions.

I have not loved you with my whole heart;

I have not loved others as I should.

I deserve your punishment both now and forever.

But Jesus, my Savior, paid for my sins

with his innocent suffering and death.

Trusting in him, I pray: God, have mercy on me, a sinner.

Silence for meditation and reflection

Our gracious Father in heaven has been merciful to us. He sent his only Son, Jesus Christ, who gave his life as the atoning sacrifice for the sins of the whole world. Therefore, as a called servant of Christ and by his authority, I forgive you all your sins in the name of the Father and of the † Son and of the Holy Spirit.

Amen.

The Word

SALUTATION

The Lord be with you.

And also with you.

PRAYER OF THE DAY

Let us pray.

Almighty God, you see that we have no power to defend ourselves. Guard and keep us both outwardly and inwardly from all adversities that may happen to the body and all evil thoughts that may assault and hurt the soul; through your Son, Jesus Christ our Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

Amen.

Be seated

CHILDREN'S MESSAGE

The children's devotion is a shortened version of the sermon intended to communicate God's truths in a simplified way. Children age 12 and under are encouraged to come forward.

FIRST READING

Job 1:13-22

Job handles extreme suffering with faith.

¹³ One day when Job's sons and daughters were feasting and drinking wine at the oldest brother's house, ¹⁴ a messenger came to Job and said, "The oxen were plowing and the donkeys were grazing nearby, ¹⁵ and the Sabeans attacked and carried them off. They put the servants to the sword, and I am the only one who has escaped to tell you!"

¹⁶ While he was still speaking, another messenger came and said, "The fire of God fell from the sky and burned up the sheep and the servants, and I am the only one who has escaped to tell you!"

¹⁷ While he was still speaking, another messenger came and said, "The Chaldeans formed three raiding parties and swept down on your camels and carried them off. They put the servants to the sword, and I am the only one who has escaped to tell you!"

¹⁸ While he was still speaking, yet another messenger came and said, "Your sons and daughters were feasting and drinking wine at the oldest brother's house, ¹⁹ when suddenly

a mighty wind swept in from the desert and struck the four corners of the house. It collapsed on them and they are dead, and I am the only one who has escaped to tell you!”

²⁰ At this, Job got up and tore his robe and shaved his head. Then he fell to the ground in worship ²¹ and said:

“Naked I came from my mother’s womb,
and naked I will depart.
The Lord gave and the Lord has taken away;
may the name of the Lord be praised.”

²² In all this, Job did not sin by charging God with wrongdoing.

The Word of the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

PSALM OF THE DAY

O Sacred Head, Now Wounded | **Psalm 22(A)**

Choir: 1st refrain, verses **Congregation:** remaining refrains

Alternate Refrain



O sa-cred head, now wound-ed, with grief and shame weighed down.

My God, my God, why have you for- / saken me?

Why are you so far from saving me, so far from my cries of / anguish?

I am a worm and / not a man,

scorned by everyone, despised by the / people.

All who see me / mock me;

they hurl insults, shaking / their heads.

“He trusts in the / LORD,” they say,

“let the LORD / rescue him.” **Refrain**

All my bones are / on display;

you lay me in the / dust of death.

A pack of villains en- / circles me;

they pierce my hands / and my feet.

They divide my clothes a- / mong them

and cast lots for my / garment.

But you, LORD, do not be / far from me.

You are my strength; come quickly to / help me. **Refrain**

Text: The Lutheran Hymnal, 1941; German version Paul Gerhardt; attr. Bernard of Clairvaux

Tune: Hans Leo Hassler Setting: Paul G. Bunjes Tune: Public domain

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SECOND READING

Romans 5:1-11

God uses suffering to mature us spiritually.

¹ Therefore, since we have been justified through faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ, ² through whom we have gained access by faith into this grace in which we now stand. And we rejoice in the hope of the glory of God. ³ Not only so, but we also rejoice in our sufferings, because we know that suffering produces perseverance; ⁴ perseverance, character; and character, hope. ⁵ And hope does not disappoint us, because God has poured out his love into our hearts by the Holy Spirit, whom he has given us.

⁶ You see, at just the right time, when we were still powerless, Christ died for the ungodly.

⁷ Very rarely will anyone die for a righteous man, though for a good man someone might possibly dare to die. ⁸ But God demonstrates his own love for us in this: While we were still sinners, Christ died for us.

⁹ Since we have now been justified by his blood, how much more shall we be saved from God's wrath through him! ¹⁰ For if, when we were God's enemies, we were reconciled to him through the death of his Son, how much more, having been reconciled, shall we be saved through his life! ¹¹ Not only is this so, but we also rejoice in God through our Lord Jesus Christ, through whom we have now received reconciliation.

The Word of the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

Stand

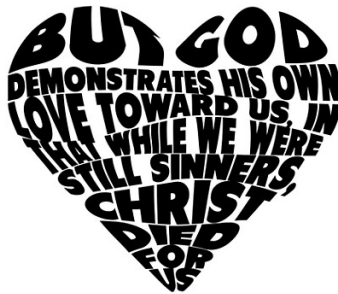
GOSPEL ACCLAMATION

Mark 8:34

Glory to you, Lord Jesus Christ, Son of the living God.

Whoever wants to be my disciple must deny themselves
and take up their cross and follow me.

Glory to you, Lord Jesus Christ, Son of the living God.



GOSPEL

Mark 8:31-38

Jesus teaches the necessity of the cross, both his and ours.

³¹ He then began to teach them that the Son of Man must suffer many things and be rejected by the elders, chief priests and teachers of the law, and that he must be killed and after three days rise again. ³² He spoke plainly about this, and Peter took him aside and began to rebuke him.

³³ But when Jesus turned and looked at his disciples, he rebuked Peter. "Get behind me, Satan!" he said. "You do not have in mind the things of God, but the things of men."

³⁴ Then he called the crowd to him along with his disciples and said: "If anyone would come after me, he must deny himself and take up his cross and follow me. ³⁵ For whoever wants to save his life will lose it, but whoever loses his life for me and for the gospel will save it.

³⁶ What good is it for a man to gain the whole world, yet forfeit his soul? ³⁷ Or what can a man give in exchange for his soul? ³⁸ If anyone is ashamed of me and my words in this adulterous and sinful generation, the Son of Man will be ashamed of him when he comes in his Father's glory with the holy angels."

The Gospel of the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

Be seated

HYMN OF THE DAY

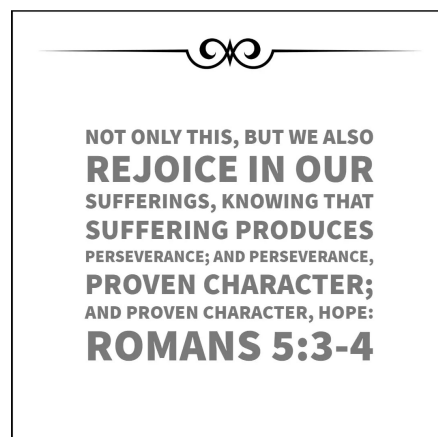
Lord, Thee I Love with All My Heart | **817:1-2**

SERMON

"Our Lenten Boast!"

- We have peace.
- We have hope.

Romans 5:1-5



Stand

APOSTLES' CREED

**I believe in God, the Father Almighty,
maker of heaven and earth.**

**I believe in Jesus Christ, his only Son, our Lord,
who was conceived by the Holy Spirit,
born of the Virgin Mary,
suffered under Pontius Pilate,
was crucified, died, and was buried.**

He descended into hell.

The third day he rose again from the dead.

He ascended into heaven

and is seated at the right hand of God the Father Almighty.

From there he will come to judge the living and the dead.

**I believe in the Holy Spirit,
the holy Christian Church,
the communion of saints,
the forgiveness of sins,
the resurrection of the body,
and the life everlasting. Amen.**



Be seated

FRIENDSHIP REGISTER AND MUSICAL OFFERTORY

PRAYER OF THE CHURCH

In peace, let us pray to the Lord:

Lord, have mercy.

For the enemies of Christ's Church doomed for destruction, that God would cause them to repent and make them citizens of heaven, let us pray to the Lord:

Lord, have mercy.

For us Christians, that he would protect us from the evil intentions of the world and lead us after the pattern of the apostles who willingly suffered wrong to make Jesus known, let us pray to the Lord:

Lord, have mercy.

For our homes, that they would not be places to worship our bellies, glory in shame or set our minds on earthly things, but following God's pattern, be a refuge of love here and a foretaste of our heavenly home, let us pray to the Lord:

Lord, have mercy.

For our nation and its officials, that the Lord would give them wisdom and integrity, and that neither they nor the citizens of our land would hinder his Church or despise repentance, let us pray to the Lord:

Lord, have mercy.

For those who are sick and afflicted, [*especially*] that he who cast out demons and cured many on the way to his cross would strengthen their faith and deliver them from suffering, let us pray to the Lord:

Lord, have mercy.

For faith that acknowledges both God's wrath and kindness, that delivered from the judgment and disaster we deserve for our sins, we would strive to mend our ways and deeds, let us pray to the Lord:

Lord, have mercy.

Special prayers and intercessions may follow

Almighty God, Jesus suffered the criticism of mankind even as he bore all of our sins on the cross. Strengthen us to gladly bear criticism for your name and boldly declare your salvation; through the same Jesus Christ, our Lord.

Amen.

SERMON HYMN

Jesus, I My Cross Have Taken | **694**



Stand

Blessed Lord, you have given us your Holy Scriptures for our learning. May we so hear them, read, learn, and take them to heart that, being strengthened and comforted by your holy Word, we may cling to the blessed hope of everlasting life; through Jesus Christ our Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

Amen.

LORD'S PRAYER

**Our Father in heaven,
hallowed be your name,
your kingdom come,
your will be done
on earth as in heaven.
Give us today our daily bread.
Forgive us our sins,
as we forgive those
who sin against us.
Lead us not into temptation,
but deliver us from evil.
For the kingdom, the power,
and the glory are yours
now and forever. Amen.**

*The Lord's
Prayer*

BLESSING

The Lord bless you and keep you.
The Lord make his face shine on you and be gracious to you.
The Lord look on you with favor and + give you peace.

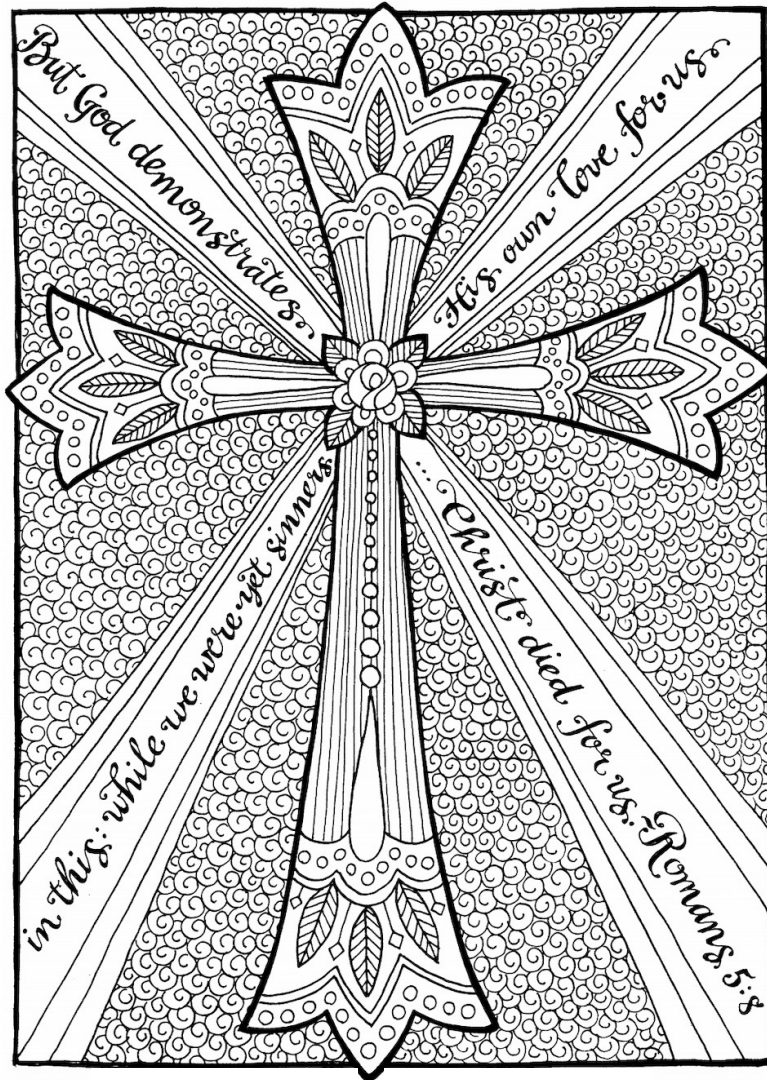
Amen.

Be seated

CLOSING HYMN

I Leave All Things to God's Direction | 799:2,4

The February WELS Connection will be viewed immediately following the closing hymn.



ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

Setting Four from Christian Worship

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- ❖ *Restrooms are located in the entrance area of the church. A changing table is available in the women's restroom.*
- ❖ *A quiet room with a window is available in the entrance area of the church and offers live audio of the service. Parents may use this room to calm a restless child.*
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