

## Love is Messy

### I. Slide1 Announce:

- A. Slide2-6 Larry: Being Mortal. Ramadan. Summer Volunteers. 3-5th Camp. HS Camp.
- B. Slide7 Baby Dedication - Noah/Kassie Denny. Evelyn Grace. Ezra.
- C. Slide8 Israel Info Mtg - today after 3rd service, Mercy Rm, 1:30pm.
- D. Children at Risk - Today. 3-5pm in Agape room. Debbie Martis from Rebirth Homes.
- E. Prayer: Jesus 1st You left it all. Then gave it all & paid it all. So You can now offer it all

### II. Slide9 Intro: Love is Messy

- A. Slide10,11 Spurgeon, *Leave out **the cross**, & you have killed the religion of Jesus. Atonement by the blood of Jesus is not an **arm** of Christian truth it is the **Heart** of it.*
- B. As *the **Tree** of good/evil* introduced *the curse* into the world; **so** God ordained a Tree, *the **Cross*** as the means of *the curses* removal.
  1. **953 chapters** after the Tree of Gen.3, we find another Tree in which we may finally **rest** in its shade. *It's wondrous branches stretching far & wide, where we still go to gather the fruit of eternal reconciliation to God the Father.*
  2. I like the reminder that, *God made a **grace garden** with 1 law tree, **not**, a law garden with 1 **grace tree**.*
- C. Slide11b Outline: Preaching Pavement. Baby Shower Gift. God's Tract.

### III. Slide12 PREACHING PAVEMENT (27-31)

- A. **This is** where it all got messy. **This is** the bloody Pavement in *The Passion of the Christ* where Jesus was whipped almost to death.
- B. The Roman ritual of condemnation went like this...
  1. The judge would say ***illum duci ad crucem placet*** [this man should be taken to a cross]
  2. **Then**, he turned to the guard & said, ***I miles expedi crucem*** [Go soldier, prepare the cross]<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> William Barclay, pg.358,359.

a) While the cross was being prepared, Jesus was in the hands of the soldiers.

C. Slide13 Praetorium – The governor’s headquarters. In the courtyard.

1. NW corner of the Temple area, at **the Tower of Antonia**, on the east side of the city. They discovered in excavations a large pavement area.

a) Jn.19:13 When Pilate therefore heard that saying, he brought Jesus out and sat down in the judgment seat in a place that is called **The Pavement**, but in Hebrew, **Gabbatha**.

b) When you visit, you can even see a game chipped into one of the Paving stones.

D. Here they play *the Comic King* [A game of cat & mouse]

1. Remember He had already went through **the scourging** before this horse-play began.

2. To them Jesus was only another man for a cross, & they carried their barrack-room pantomime of royalty & worship, not w/any malice, but as a coarse jest.

a) No, the malice comes later...*from His own*. :(

b) The Crown preaches a message...*here stands Jesus wearing the consequences of Adam’s sin* (Adam’s fall brought the thorns).

3. All in a days work for the soldiers. But not every day did they have one that claimed to be King. So to relieve some boredom, a few minutes of entertainment at Jesus’ expense.

E. Sin should be slapped. Covetousness should be crucified. Wickedness should be whipped. Bad decisions should be beat. Shortcomings should be scourged...*not Jesus!*

F. Struck him on the head - most likely to *drive the sharp thorns* onto His brow.

1. Show thorns from Israel.

2. Struck is in the *imperfect tense* indicating, *they repeatedly struck him on the head*. \* this affected me more than anything here. Over & over. Stop it! (yet, each blow is exactly like just 1 of our sins. That same voice yells, Stop it!)

3. The crown of thorns a cruel *caricature* of the wreath worn by the emperor.

a) The physical sufferings of Christ have always been, and will remain, a window through which we see...*the heart of God*.

G. Our Lord quietly suffered & never fought back.

1. A lesson *Matt's readers* would need to learn as they faced **official persecution**.

H. This Pavement **still preaches**: [it's a *powerful, somber, sobering, overwhelming* spot]

1. Our Jewish Tour guide said, *I never heard that it wasn't the Jews fault or the soldiers, but that we EACH put Jesus on the cross. WE are to blame.*
2. I asked 1 who taught a this site, **What struck you?** The cost; the value of me.  
[It's the messy side of God's love]
3. I had asked another, **What struck you?** It sunk in, not only **where** we were **but what** He did.

#### IV. Slide14 **BABY SHOWER GIFT (32-36)**

A. According to law, the guilty victim had to **carry his cross**, **or** at least **the cross beam**, to the place of execution, & Jesus was no exception.

1. He left **Pilate's hall** bearing His cross.

B. Here we have the long walk down the **Via Dolorosa**, *i.e. road of sorrows*.

1. **Slide15** Chrysostom saw prophetic fulfillment in this, seeing it as parallel to **Isaac's bearing the wood** for his own sacrifice to Mt. Moriah.

a) Gen.22:6 **So Abraham took the wood of the burnt offering and laid it on Isaac his son; & he took the fire in his hand, and a knife, and the two of them went together.**

2. **Slide16** **And so**, Jesus is off to **Jerusalem's killing fields**.

C. **Slide17a** (32) **Simon of Cyrene** - [CyreneAlca was in Eastern Libya today, near Benghazi]

1. **Slide17b** Simon came to Jerusalem to **celebrate the Passover**; **and** ended up **meeting the Passover...Lamb**.

2. The next time **your plans** are interrupted & you have to *carry another's cross*, remember what **Simon** did for **Jesus** **AND** what **Jesus** did for **Simon**.

3. In Lk.23:26 **He bears it after Jesus**. That either can mean Jesus took the front & Simon carried the rear (lighter side). **Or**, Jesus took it from Antonia Fortress to the Damascus Gate (which He did) then Simon carried it from the gate to Calvary.

- D. **Slide18** My children received *US Savings Bonds* at their birth. It meant nothing to them as a baby **or** even a child **but** later in adulthood it would be useful. [\$25 - \$75 after yrs of accruing interest, to help pay for the U.S. government's borrowing needs]
1. And so here with Jesus, at His birth he received the *gold, frankincense, myrrh*.
- E. **Slide19** (34) **Wine mingled w/gall** (in Marks account *Myrrh*) (resin/powder)
1. **To drug w/Myrrh**. In accordance w/Jewish customs based on Prov 31:6, this was given to *dull the senses*. **Give strong drink to him who is perishing, And wine to those who are bitter of heart.**
    - a) An **acceptable anesthetic** to deaden physical pain, **or** deep emotional bitterness.
  2. The Babylonian Talmud says that, **respected women appointed themselves to provide condemned victims w/a narcotic, pain-reducing drink before execution.**
- F. *But Jesus refused it...*
1. **He would not** have His senses dulled.
  2. **He wanted** to be in full possession of His faculties **as** He did the Fathers will.
  3. **He would** accomplish the work of Redemption.
  4. **He would** enter fully into His sufferings, on our behalf.
  5. **He would** take no shortcuts.
  6. **He refused the cup of sympathy** so that He might better drink *the cup of iniquity*.
- G. **Myrrh** was **received** at His birth, **yet denied** at His death. [simply pointed to His death]
1. Finally, that **strange baby shower gift** makes sense.
- H. (35) **Then they crucified Him** - Crucifixion was a barbaric form of capital punishment invented by the **Persians**. [They believed the earth was sacred to Ahura Mazda, the earth god]
1. They felt that **death** should *not contaminate the earth*; **thus** hung them **above** the earth.
 

[Ahura Mazda=Lord Wisdom]
- I. **Slide20,21** Remember later on, Jesus showing the **scars** from His nails?
1. He didn't pretend his **holes/scars/wounds** weren't there. *The nails were there.*
  2. **And admitting it** doesn't take scars away...scars remain.
  3. **What/who has wounded you?** What scars do you bear in your body/mind/soul?

- a) **Know that God will** release *the greatest power in your life* from **where the nails were**. [just like when He showed His scars]
4. **It takes faith to believe, the same place where the nails were, is the same place where the healing is.**
5. Oh your scars happened, and they hurt...*but don't stay wounded*...when there is healing in His hands.

## V. Slide22 **GOD'S TRACT (37-44)** [Hebrew. Gk. Lt.]

- A. **The King of the Jews (37)** [read His placard as **truth**. God speaking **truth** through unbel's]
  1. The Jews *repeatedly* asked Pilate to **change the sign** (Jn.19:21,22). Finally Pilate stands for something & says, **Do not write The King of the Jews, but that he said that he was...what I have written I have written.**
    - a) *Oh, an eternal truth* Mr. Pilate...for He is a **King**.
    - b) During Jesus' infancy **the Magi** came from the East heralding Him as **King**.
    - c) **Now**, His **royal title** is fixed to His cross. [some call it *God's 1st tract*]
      - (1) **And 1 day** when He returns it will be emblazoned on **His robe and on His thigh** a name written: **KING OF KINGS AND LORD OF LORDS.**
  2. **Slide23 A King** - 1st at His **crib**. 2nd on His **cross**. 3rd to be on the day of His **coronation**. [remember from Christmas]
- B. (39) Thomas Carlyle called **ridicule...the language of the devil**. Here, it was so true.
  1. **Murder of the tongue** is a weapon of mass destruction, causing **emotional bloodshed** and **psychological warfare** that only **God's grace** can heal.
- C. **Slide24 (40) Come down from the cross - How about come up from the grave in 3?**
  1. Salvador Dali, *Christ of Saint John of the Cross*.
- D. **Save Yourself - Be careful** of the worlds whispers...
  1. The devil told Jesus, **serve Yourself** (Mt.4:3,4)
  2. Peter said, **pity Yourself** (Mt.16:21-23)
  3. His unsaved relatives said, **show Yourself** (Jn.7:4)
  4. The world said, **defend Yourself** but Jesus was silent (Mt.27:14).
  5. The world said, **pamper Yourself** but Jesus refused the drug (34).

6. The crowd at Calvary said, **save Yourself** but Jesus remained on the cross & finished the work the Father gave him to do (42). Adapted, Warren Wiersbe pg.664,665.
- E. Jesus was deaf to all those appeals & ***gave Himself***.
1. Starting as a **baby...*He gave Himself***. Continuing w/a **perfect life...*He gave Himself***. Culminating on **His cross...*He gave Himself***. Today, as our mediator & interceder...***He still gives Himself***.
- F. (42) **He saved others; Himself He could not save** –
1. It is precisely because He **did not save Himself**, that He was able to save **others**.
  2. **It is possible that their sarcastic...*He saved others***, may have encouraged ***the one thief*** to **trust** Him.
- G. (42) One last challenge, **Come down from the cross & we will believe in You**.
1. General Booth said long ago, ***It is because Jesus did not come down from the Cross that we believe in him***.
- H. **Slide25 While man was doing his **worse**...God was doing His **best****.
- I. **1st see Jesus as Sufferer** - observe **His great love for you**.  
**2nd see Jesus as Sovereign** - behold the King & **His demands...*Repent & Believe***.  
**3rd see Jesus as your Substitute** - **ask** Jesus to place your sins *in His paper shredder* **for you**, for He has taken your place. 1 Pet.2:24 ***He bore our sins in His own body on the tree, that we, having died to sins, might live for righteousness; by whose stripes you were healed***.
- J. At the **Pavement...*Love was Messy***. On the **Cross...*Love was Messy***.  
**Today**, when you **try to love others in Jesus' name**, you'll find...***Love is Messy***.
- K. **Illustration about Faith**: A thirsty man sees a water pump in the middle of the desert. His water bottles are empty and he comes upon this pump. Tied to it is a hand written note put there by someone before him. The note reads ***"I have buried a bottle of water to prime the pump. Don't drink any of it. Pour in half of it to wet the leather. Wait, and then pour in the rest. Then pump. The well has never gone dry, but the pump must be primed to bring the water up. When you are through drawing water, refill the bottle and bury it in the sand for the next traveler."*** **Warning!** ***"You are going to be tempted to not believe this***



*note, & want to just consume the bottle. If you do, you'll soon be thirsty again, & so will be everyone else that follows you."*

1. *That's the choice that we all have. We can empty it all on ourselves, but then we'll be empty again. Or, we empty it on onto God's hands. If we do so He promises that He will give us living water that will become in us a fountain, springing up into everlasting life.*