Mark 15:16-32

The Messy Side of God's Love

I. Slide#1 Announce:
   A. Women’s Xmas Celebration - Kelly wants to thank all the ladies who helped in any way to make yesterday possible. Whether you decorated, baked, cleaned, or prayed Thank You. And special thanks to the team of men who worked all day to help the ladies. We couldn't have done it without you.
   B. Children at Risk - Next Sun 3-5pm. Planning Conf.
   C. Prayer: Jesus, 1st You left it all. Then gave it all & paid it all. So You can now offer it all.

II. Intro:
   A. Slide#2 Title: The Messy Side of God's Love
   B. Outline: The Pavement That Preaches; The Baby Shower Gift That Now Makes Sense; The Magi’s Title Now Used.

III. Slide#3 THE PAVEMENT THAT PREACHES (16-20)
   A. This is where it all got messy. This is the bloody Pavement in The Passion of the Christ where Jesus was wiped almost to death.
   B. The Roman ritual of condemnation went like this.
      1. Slide#4 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]¹
         a) It was when the cross was being prepared that Jesus was in the hands of the soldiers.
   C. Slide#5 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.
      2. Here they play the Comic King [A game of cat & mouse]
         a) Remember He had already went through the scourging before this horse-play began.
         b) 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.
            (1) No, the malice comes later…from His own. :
            (2) The Crown - preaches a message…Here stands Jesus wearing the consequences of Adam’s sin (Adam’s fall brought the thorns).

¹ William Barclay, pg.358,359.
c) All in a day’s 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 entertainment at Jesus’ expense.

3. Struck him on the head - most likely to drive the sharp thorns onto His brow.
   a) Show thorns from Israel.
   b) The crown of thorns a cruel *caricature* of the wreath worn by the emperor.
      (1) Slide#6 The **physical sufferings of Christ** have always been, and will remain, *a window through which we see…the heart of God*.

D. Our Lord quietly suffered & never fought back.
   1. A lesson **Mark’s readers** would need to learn as **they** faced official persecution.

E. Slide#7 This place, this Pavement **still** preaches:
   1. **Our Jewish Tour guide** - *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 had asked Greg G What struck you? The cost; the value of **me**. [It’s the messy side of God’s love]
   3. I had asked Zach, What struck you? It sunk in, not only where we were but what He did.

IV. Slide#8 **THE BABY SHOWER GIFT THAT NOW MAKES SENSE** (21-23)
   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. Slide#9 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; and he took the fire in his hand, and a knife, and the two of them went together.
      2. And so, Jesus is off to **Jerusalem’s killing fields**.
   C. Slide#10 (21) Simon of Cyrene - [Cyrene = N. Africa, between Carthage & Egypt]
      1. 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**.
   D. Slide#11 (23) Wine mingled w/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) It was 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.”
   *But Jesus refused it...*

3. He would not have His senses dulled.

4. He wanted to be in full possession of His faculties as He did the Fathers will.

5. He would accomplish the work of Redemption.

6. He would enter fully into His sufferings, on our behalf.

7. He would take no shortcuts.

8. He refused the *cup of sympathy* so that He might better drink the *cup of iniquity*.

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**E. Slide#12** At Christmas time we’re reminded of the gifts of *gold, frankincense, myrrh* [king/priest/prophet]

1. **Myrrh** was *received* at His birth, *denied* at His death. [simply pointed to His death]
   a) Finally, that *strange baby shower gift* makes sense.

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**V. Slide#13 THE MAGIS TITLE NOW USED (24-32)**

**A. Slide#14 The King of the Jews (26)**

1. The Jews repeatedly asked Pilate to change the sign (Jn.19:21,22). Finally Pilate stands for something & says, “What I have written I have written” or “what I have written will always remain 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.
      (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**.
   d) A **King** - (1) at His **crib** (2) on His **cross** (3) definitely on that day of His **coronation**.

**B. Slide#15 9am...**and they crucified Him. (25)

1. **So brief** - Mark’s readers knew what a crucifixion entailed…they saw them all the time. (no reason to explain)

**C. Slide#16** Lewis Bayly’s 17th century devotional handbook, *Practice of Piety*. (ends w/a dialogue in which Christ explains to a soul the meaning of the cross) [I modernized it]

1. **Soul:** Lord, why did you allow Yourself to be taken, when You might have escaped Your enemies?
2. **Christ:** So your enemies wouldn’t take you, & cast you into the prison of utter darkness.

3. **Soul:** Lord, why did you allow Yourself to be bound?

4. **Christ:** So that I might loose the chains of your iniquities.

5. **Soul:** Lord, why did you allow Yourself to be lifted up on a cross?

6. **Christ:** So that I might lift you up with Me to heaven.

7. **Soul:** Lord, why were Your **hands** nailed to the cross?

8. **Christ:** To enlarge your hands to do works of righteousness.

9. **Soul:** Lord, why were Your **feet** nailed to the cross?

10. **Christ:** To set your feet free to walk in the ways of peace.

11. **Soul:** Lord, why were Your **arms** nailed stretched out wide?

12. **Christ:** That I might embrace you more lovingly, My sweet soul.

13. **Soul:** Lord, why were Your **side** opened with a spear?

14. **Christ:** That you might have a way to come near to My heart.

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D. **Slide#17** (27,28) Numbered w/the transgressors - This was a symbol of His whole life, even in His death He still companied Himself w/sinners. :)

E. (29) Thomas Carlyle called *ridicule...the language of the devil.* Here, it was so true.

1. They mocked Him as **Prophet** (29); as **Savior** (31); as **King** (32).

F. (30) **Save Yourself** - And be careful of the worlds whispers:

1. **Slide#18** 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 (1-5).

5. The world said, **pamper Yourself** but Jesus refused the drug (23).

6. The crowd at Calvary said, **save Yourself** but Jesus remained on the cross & finished the work the Father gave him to do (v.30). [Adapted from Warren Wiersbe pg.664,665]

   a) **Slide#19** 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.**

G. (31) **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.

H. (32) 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.

I. Slide#20 While man was doing his worse...God was doing His best.

J. 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 take your sins for you).

1. 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.*


L. Communion:

1. Philip Yancey said, “No cell, lies more than a hair’s breath, from a blood capillary.”
   a) Therefore, your blood is quick to cleanse any & every cell.
   b) Christ’s blood is even quicker to cleanse and drive out any and every sin.