

# Welcome To

Malvern Bible Chapel



# **God's Masterpiece – Created by Grace**

**Part of the Heart-to-Heart Series**

**Psalm 22; Eph. 2:1-10; 2 Cor. 5:17-21**

Robert L. Watt  
July 29, 2018

# God's Masterpiece – Created by Grace

## Introduction:

- Emergency replacement for Justin (again).
- Another message on grace—sorry (but not really)!
- This masterpiece by God was created on the canvas backdrop of the crucifixion of Jesus Christ on Calvary, so we'll start there.
- I've been thinking a lot recently about the events that took place there, and particularly the “seven words” or statements spoken by Jesus from the cross.
- When we look at who these words were addressed to, we can learn some interesting insights into grace and what was on Jesus' mind as he died speaking these words.
- Finally we will look at how this masterpiece of God's grace relates to my life.

# God's Masterpiece – Created by Grace

## Body of Lesson:

### A. Quick review of the background events leading up to the crucifixion of Jesus Christ:

- Passover supper with disciples (Thursday)
- Agony in the Garden; Jesus prayed 3 times; disciples slept
- Betrayal by Judas Iscariot; arrest by the Roman soldiers
- Illegal trials (6) before Roman & Jewish authorities (Friday)
- Sentenced to be crucified; mocked; beaten; carried cross to Calvary (Golgotha)
- Stripped; nailed by hands and feet; refused analgesic; soldiers gambled for His clothing
- Crucified starting at 9AM (the 3<sup>rd</sup> hour); many of the events graphically described in Psalm 22, 1000 years earlier

# God's Masterpiece – Created by Grace

## B. Who was there with Jesus at Calvary?

- Two thieves on either side
- Soldiers (professional executioners) with Centurion as their leader
- Jesus' mother, Mary Magdalene, Mary the mother of James and Joses, the mother of Zebedee's sons (Salome), the disciples (only John is named) and those women who followed Him from Galilee (**Matt. 27:55-56; Mark 15:40-41; Lk. 23:48-49**)
- Chief priest, scribes and elders (**Matt. 27:41**)
- The crowd of spectators

# God's Masterpiece – Created by Grace

**C. What were the 7 “words” uttered by Jesus on the cross, in the order that they were spoken, and how do they illustrate the grace of God?**

1. To the soldiers who had no choice but to carry out the orders of their commander, He said, “Father forgive them, for they do not know what they do.” (Lk. 23:34)
2. To the robber crucified beside Him who pleaded for help, He said, “Assuredly, I say to you, today you will be with me in Paradise.” (Lk. 23:43)
3. To His mother and the disciple whom He loved (John) as they were overcome by grief, He graciously redirected their thoughts, purpose and mission, “Woman, behold your son! Behold your mother.” (Jn. 19:26-27)

# God's Masterpiece – Created by Grace

All of this took place in the 3 hours before noon (6<sup>th</sup> hour). Then at noon some significant changes took place. There was darkness over all the land from the 6<sup>th</sup> hour until the 9<sup>th</sup> hour (3PM). (Matt. 27:45; Mk. 15:33; Lk. 23:44) The temple veil was torn in two from top to bottom. (Lk. 23:44; Mk. 15:38)

4. To fulfill the words of prophecy so that there would be no question in our minds, Jesus said, “I thirst.” (Jn. 19:28) It was not an expression of desire for Himself, because when something was offered to drink He refused it. It was merely to fulfill Scripture (and to satisfy the curiosity of those who might question some day why this word was not fulfilled).

# God's Masterpiece – Created by Grace

5. Then when the 9<sup>th</sup> hour had come and light was beginning to return, Jesus in a loud voice makes this statement in the Aramaic present tense, “My God, My God, why have You forsaken Me? (Matt. 27:46; Mk. 15:34; Lk. 23:46 without the translation of the words)

The standard explanation for this statement is that when Jesus took on Himself the sins and guilt of the world, the Father could not tolerate such un-holiness and turned away from His Son. Christ was then left to bear sin’s burden alone, and in this desperate state, He cried out and asked God the reason for His abandonment. This however leaves some very unsettling questions (Can the Trinity be divided? Can Jesus as all-knowing God sincerely ask the question “Why”?). Isn’t there a better explanation?



# God's Masterpiece – Created by Grace

There is (and I'm grateful to Bob Cullen for his insights)! As darkness came signifying the beginning of Passover, it also found the High Priest and the elders at the cross, instead of in the temple for the evening sacrifice. Christ the Passover lamb was slain before their eyes (1 Cor. 5:7), no doubt causing them much anxiety and questioning.

# God's Masterpiece – Created by Grace

Only this statement of all the seven was spoken in a loud voice, even though twice before He spoke using “My Father” instead of “My God”. Why? This was spoken as the title or first words of Psalm 22, the Crucifixion Psalm. He was calling out a hymn to the disciples and followers of Jesus who were far away or who stood at a distance (Lk. 23:48-49). He wanted them to know that all that was transpiring was not about David, written 1000 years earlier, but about His sacrificial death for them right now! This was a Psalm of victory, not of His defeat and death. They should take courage!

[see Psa. 22: 1, 6-8,12-18,22,25,27]

# God's Masterpiece – Created by Grace

6. Next, to all mankind He declares, “It is finished.” (Jn. 19:30) This was not a sigh of relief. It was, however, a profound statement proclaiming for us to know that our salvation was finished once and for all. There was now nothing left to do. It had been fully accomplished on our behalf by grace.

Psalm 22:31 says, “They will come and declare His righteousness to a people who will be born [us—we were on Christ’s mind], That He has done *this* [or “it is finished”].

7. And finally, with His last breath Jesus said, “Into Your hands I commit My Spirit.” (Lk. 23:46) Earlier He had said, “I am going to the Father” (Jn. 14:28), and this is now the fulfillment. There was to be no question for us as to where Jesus was going! He graciously removed any doubt for us!

# God's Masterpiece – Created by Grace

**D. Why are the gospel accounts different? It is interesting to see which of the 7 statements are recorded in which Gospel account and why?**

- **Matthew and Mark** (believed to be Peter's account with Mark as his writer) were standing at a great distance and would only have heard what was spoken in a loud voice and only record that one statement, "My God, My God, why have you forsaken Me?" They record that Jesus cried out before He died, but did not hear the words.
- By contrast **John** may have arrived soon after Jesus was put up on the cross, and then standing at the foot of the cross recorded three additional statements unique to him.

# God's Masterpiece – Created by Grace

**D. Why are the gospel accounts different? It is interesting to see which of the 7 statements are recorded in which Gospel account and why? (cont.)**

- **Luke** compiled the statements of eyewitnesses to the crucifixion, including the women who followed closely behind Jesus as He moved towards Calvary (**Lk. 23:27**). He was the only one to report the first two sayings of Jesus from the cross to the soldiers and the dying thief (**Lk. 23:34; 23:43**). Each writer records exactly what he saw or heard.

# God's Masterpiece – Created by Grace

E. Why is all this a masterpiece of God's grace?

- It was for us! (Eph. 2:1-10)

# God's Masterpiece – Created by Grace

**Text: Eph. 2:1-10 (NLT)**

**2** Once you were dead because of your disobedience and your many sins. <sup>2</sup> You used to live in sin, just like the rest of the world, obeying the devil—the commander of the powers in the unseen world. He is the spirit at work in the hearts of those who refuse to obey God. <sup>3</sup> All of us used to live that way, following the passionate desires and inclinations of our sinful nature. By our very nature we were subject to God's anger, just like everyone else.

# God's Masterpiece – Created by Grace

**Text: Eph. 2:1-10 (NLT) (cont.)**

<sup>4</sup> But God is so rich in mercy, and he loved us so much, <sup>5</sup> that even though we were dead because of our sins, he gave us life when he raised Christ from the dead. (It is only by God's grace that you have been saved!) <sup>6</sup> For he raised us from the dead along with Christ and seated us with him in the heavenly realms because we are united with Christ Jesus. <sup>7</sup> So God can point to us in all future ages as examples of the incredible wealth of his grace and kindness toward us, as shown in all he has done for us who are united with Christ Jesus.



# God's Masterpiece – Created by Grace

**Text: Eph. 2:1-10 (NLT) (cont.)**

<sup>8</sup> God saved you by his grace when you believed. And you can't take credit for this; it is a gift from God. <sup>9</sup> Salvation is not a reward for the good things we have done, so none of us can boast about it. <sup>10</sup> For we are **God's masterpiece**. He has created us anew in Christ Jesus, so we can do the good things he planned for us long ago.

# God's Masterpiece – Created by Grace

## E. Why is all this a masterpiece of God's grace?

- It was for us! (**Eph. 2:1-10**) We were dead, but now have been made alive in Christ! We are His masterpiece, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand that we should walk in them. Paul's powerful perception from prison! Paul might be in prison humanly speaking, but more importantly he is in Jesus Christ! God is in the process of transforming a dead person into the likeness of His Son—that is His masterpiece for all to see!
- It motivates me to display God's grace! (**2 Cor. 5:17-21**)

# God's Masterpiece – Created by Grace

**Text: 2 Cor. 5:17-21 (NKJV)**

<sup>17</sup> Therefore, if anyone *is* in Christ, *he is* a new creation; old things have passed away; behold, all things have become new. <sup>18</sup> Now all things *are* of God, who has reconciled us to Himself through Jesus Christ, and has given us the ministry of reconciliation, <sup>19</sup> that is, that God was in Christ reconciling the world to Himself, not imputing their trespasses to them, and has committed to us the word of reconciliation.

<sup>20</sup> Now then, we are ambassadors for Christ, as though God were pleading through us: we implore *you* on Christ's behalf, be reconciled to God. <sup>21</sup> For He made Him who knew no sin *to be* sin for us, that we might become the righteousness of God in Him.

# God's Masterpiece – Created by Grace

## E. Why is all this a masterpiece of God's grace?

- It was for us! (**Eph. 2:1-10**) We were dead, but now have been made alive in Christ! We are His masterpiece, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand that we should walk in them. Paul's powerful perception from prison! Paul might be in prison humanly speaking, but more importantly he is in Jesus Christ! God is in the process of transforming a dead person into the likeness of His Son—that is His masterpiece for all to see!
- It motivates me to display God's grace! (**2 Cor. 5:17-21**)  
Note: God was in Christ, reconciling the world to Himself (v.19). God did not forsake Jesus at the cross! He does not forsake us either! He goes on to say (v.21) "For He made Him who knew no sin to be sin for us, that we might become the righteousness of God (**display Christ**) in Him."

# **God's Masterpiece – Created by Grace**

## **Application:**

- 1. Am I displaying God's grace to a needy world, or am I keeping all this grace for myself?**
- 2. When people see me, do they see that I am becoming the righteousness of God in Him?**
- 3. Am I displaying Christ as I become God's masterpiece created by grace?**

# Brief Update on Upcoming CMMML Trip #8 to the DRC

- **Visa** – Monday? PRAY!
- **Travel plans** – Leave Thursday August 2<sup>nd</sup>; return September 4<sup>th</sup>
- **Work plans** – Start oversight of restarted malaria clinical trial at Rwanguba, DRC, but possibly stay in Bunagana, Uganda for security; ministry on weekends at Kabale, Uganda; trip to Kampala, Uganda by road to get new TNT medicines; flight by MAF to Bunia, DRC for ministry, follow-up of AIDS research, church medical work, future HPI pharmacy plans
- **Glenda** – At home