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'THE MAN OF SORROWS'

By the late: C. D. Cole

"He is despised and rejected of men; a man of sorrows, and acquainted with grief: and we hid as it were our faces from him; he was despised, and we esteemed him not" (Isa. 53:3).

"Is it nothing to you, all ye that pass by? behold, and see if there be any sorrow like unto my sorrow, which is done unto me, wherewith the Lord hath afflicted me in the day of his fierce anger. From above hath he sent fire into my bones, and it prevail-eth against them: he hath spread a net for my feet, he hath turned me back: he hath made me desolate and faint all the day" (Lam. 1:12,13).

This is a sick and sinful world. Humanity is head-dizzy, body weary, soul-hungry and heart-faint. The world is sin-soaked, blood-bathed, and hell-bent. Man has traded the government of God for the bondage of sin. In seeking freedom from God, he has bound himself with the cords of sin.

This old world is full of sorrow and suffering. Sorrow is real in spite of the philosophy that pain is only an imagination of mortal mind. The mother with her dead baby in her lap is in real sorrow. The wife waiting for her drunken husband to come home in a rage is in real sorrow. Parents whose children have gone to the dogs, and whose path is in the way of the godless, are in real sorrow.

But the sorrows of Him who is the man of sorrows are in a class to themselves. The sorrows of Him who needed to have no sorrows were the most amazing of all sorrows. Of what did the sorrows of the Son of Man consist? What were the ingredients in the cup of sorrow that belonged to Him? We find Jesus Christ speaking of His cup—the cup which the Father had given Him to drink. What was in that cup?

Christ's sorrows consisted of:

1. The sorrow of homesickness. Anybody who has ever been homesick knows it is a bad sickness. When as a boy I left home to go five miles to school, the first few nights away from home were almost unbearable. But think of the long distance the Son of God came to undertake our redemption. He came from the heights of glory to the depths of earth. He came from the praise of angels to the persecutions of men. He left the air of purity for the stench of earth. He left the place where everybody loved God for the earth where everybody hated God. "I have given them thy word; and the world hath hated them, because they are not of the world, even as I am not of the world. I pray not that thou shouldest take them out of the world, but that thou shouldest keep them from the evil" (John 17:14,15). "If the world hate you, ye know that it hated me before it hated you" (John 15:18).

2. The sorrow of poverty. There is sorrow in poverty. Poverty is not an ideal to be sought after. There is no virtue in being poor unless it

is for righteousness' sake. Heaven is going to be a place of plenty. But our Saviour who was rich became poor for our sakes that we through His poverty might become rich. His poverty was voluntary and self-assumed. He who made angel's wings was weary and footsore as He sat on Jacob's well to save a fallen woman. He was so poor that He had not where to lay His head. He was poorer than any creature He had made. And remember that Jesus Christ had all the attributes of man apart from sin. He could get hungry, and the pangs of hunger were as real to Him as to any of us. He could get tired. He could get sleepy. He could weep.

3. The sorrow of human hatred and misunderstanding. He came to the world He had made and the world knew Him not. The world could not recognize goodness. He was the light shining in a dark place, and the world could not comprehend it. He came unto His own and His own people, His kinsmen after the flesh, would not receive Him. His relatives were ashamed of Him. They thought He was crazy, but they were the crazy ones.

Nobody was so badly misunderstood as the Lord Jesus Christ. The people could not understand His teachings. When He said, "Destroy this temple, and in three days I will raise it up," they misunderstood and misquoted Him. They thought and said He claimed that He would destroy the buildings of the temple and raise them in three days. But He spake of the temple of His body. When He said, "Except ye eat the flesh of the Son of man, and drink his blood, ye have no life in you," they said, "How can this man give us His flesh to eat?"

And even His own disciples could not understand Him. When He said to them that He must go and awake Lazarus out of sleep, they said, "Lord, if he sleep, he shall do well." He had to say to them, "Lazarus is dead."

Some of us know how painful it is to be misunderstood. Wives wish their husbands could understand them. And husbands wish their wives could understand them. And parents wish their children could understand them. And preachers wish their people could understand them. Much of the friction in human relationships is the result of misunderstanding.

4. The sorrow of the cross. Who can estimate it? In the cross He exchanged the Father's love for the Father's hatred. He was being made sin and God hates sin. He exchanged the Father's blessing for the Father's curse. In redeeming us from the curse of the law He had to be a curse for us. At the cross He exchanged the place of nearness with the Father for the place of separation from the Father. At the cross He could not even say "Father," for at the cross God was not showing the love of a Father but the justice of a Judge against sin.

What is your response to the sorrows of Christ? "Is it nothing to you, all ye that pass by? behold, and see if there be any sorrows like unto my sorrow, which is done unto me, wherewith the Lord hath afflicted me in the day of his fierce anger" (Lam. 1:12). We fear many people are hoping in the general mercy of God apart from Christ. They reason that a merciful God will not send anybody to Hell. This was once the best hope the author had, but he came to see that it was a vain hope. A minister once visited a sick man and sought to interest him in Christ. But the man was indifferent, telling the minister that he had no fear, that he was depending on a merciful God and did not believe such a God would send him to Hell. The preacher left with a sad heart. But a few days later the same sick man sent for the minister who, when he came, found the sick man greatly disturbed. Said the sick man: "I have been depending on the mercy of God, but it has just occurred to me that God is just as well as merciful, and if He should deal with me in justice instead of showing mercy, I would certainly be damned for my sins. Oh, tell me how I can be sure He will deal with me in mercy?" Then the minister presented Christ crucified as the one and only way for salvation.

Is it nothing to you, my sinner friend—nothing to you that the Son of God suffered as He did to save sinners like you from an endless Hell?

Is it nothing to you, my believing friend—does it not move you to please Him? Does not such love constrain you to faithful service? Does it not move you to keep His commandments? "And be not conformed to this world." World here means the inhabitants of the world morally considered. The world is bad; it lies in the lap of the Wicked One (I John 5:19). The devil is its god. He has dominion over it. The world is self-centered and Satan-controlled. The believer is not to agree with it, or be like it. He must not fall in with the world in its thinking and doing. He must think and do according to the Word of God. What the believer hopes for is laid up for him in heaven (Col. 1:5). Our inheritance is reserved for us in heaven. "To an inheritance incorruptible, and undefiled, and that fadeth not away, reserved in heaven for you" (I Peter 1:4). Christ did not die to guarantee an easy time down here, but to assure us of a glorious time throughout eternity.

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We make bold to name three simple things which may have something to do with the failure of the churches today: (1) The failure in prayer; (2) The failure in proclaiming sound doctrine; (3) The failure to bear witness.

PRAYING AGAINST PEOPLE

Once upon a time, in a period of great public anxiety and distress, I preached a sermon as to our deliverance from out-crying evils and from outstanding enemies, and read the passage containing the message to King Hezekiah from the Lord: "That which thou hast prayed to me against Sennacherib, King of Assyria, I have heard."

At the close of the service, a bouyant young woman came to me with radiant face to say: "I am so glad I came here this morning. This is the first time I ever knew it was right to pray against people." I assured her that it is perfectly right to do so if we pray not from a spirit of revenge, but from a longing for protection and deliverance. We are often called on to make such prayers, and God who gave His comforting assurances to Hezekiah, still is the Refuge and Strength of those who call upon Him in time of trouble. Christ Himself taught us that God is still ready to "avenge His own elect."

It is right to pray against people who are doing great injury to the cause of the moral and public welfare of the community. There are such people. We are not true to ourselves, nor our fellows, nor to God if we do not pray against such persons. There seems no effective method of completely destroying their work. We may have good laws, but these people defy them. We may try to reform and convert them, but their hearts are hard. But God reigns. He is opposed to them and they fight against Him. Let us make it one of the steadfast matters in life to pray that God will break down such evils and bring to defeat such evil-doers. We ought to pray against them and teach others to pray against them. It is good and right and holy to pray against them.

And it is right to pray against people who are using their time and strength and influence against the Truth of God. If our world is to be rescued from the power of error and sin, it must be by the acceptance of the Gospel of Jesus Christ. We are to preach the Gospel, and preach it until it shall become known to every creature. But if, while we are preaching and teaching it, others are deadening its influence, it is our right and duty to pray that they may be restrained and hindered in their evil and wicked efforts. Thus, we may believe the early disciples prayed against Saul of Tarsus until God brought his opposition to an end. Thus, Christians have prayed against such enemies of the Gospel as Celsus and Voltaire and Raine and Ingersoll. Thus, may we pray against those who are founding atheist clubs today, and teaching infidelity, and propagating heathenism in our very midst. We are to pray, not in hatred of these people, but with a sense of the evil they

are doing, pray to have it ended. Saul of Tarsus became Paul the inspired Apostle. Thus, our praying in reference to many of God's enemies may be a real praying for them, over the results of which we and they, as well as angels in heaven, may rejoice with eternal gladness.

But when they harden their hearts and defy God, and continue to oppose the Gospel, it is right for us to pray to God that they may be stopped in the way that seems best to Him.

This teaching applies to the unionists and modernists and lodge and club worldlings in our local churches. Elijah prayed against Ahab and Jezebel. God did a plenty. He is still God. I Kings 21:20-25; 22:38; II Kings 9.

James said Elijah was a man of like passions with us. James 5:17. Big funerals are often God's answers to the prayers of His saints. Selah!

—NEWS AND TRUTHS

IS ABORTION MURDER

A mother stepped into the doctor's office carrying a bright and beautiful baby a year old. Seating herself near the family physician, she said, "Doctor, I want you to help me out of trouble. My baby is only one year old, and I have conceived again; and I do not want to have children so close together."

"What do you expect me to do?" asked the physician. "Oh, anything to get rid of it for me," she replied. After thinking seriously for a moment, the doctor said, "I think I can suggest a better method of helping you out. If you object to having two children so near together, the best way would be to kill the one on your lap, and it makes no difference to me which one I kill for you. Besides, it might be dangerous for you if I undertook to kill the younger one."

As the doctor finished speaking he reached for a knife, and continued by asking the mother to lay the baby on her lap, and turn her head the other way. The woman almost fainted away as she jumped from her chair and uttered one word, "MURDERER!" A few words of explanation from the doctor soon convinced the mother that his offer to commit murder was no worse than her request for the destruction of the unborn child.

In either case it would be murder. The only difference would be in the age of the victim. Surely, no one can read this true story and not agree with this doctor.

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Logic:

Mother: "What are you children playing?"

Children: "Church."

Mother: "But worshippers shouldn't whisper in church."

Children: "We know, but we're in the choir."