The Passion Of Our Lord Jesus Christ: *Calvary* **Trinity Lutheran Church – Kearney, Missouri** 

March 21, 2018 - Wednesday of Lent V

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In the name of the Father, and † of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit. Amen. It *all* depends on Jesus, doesn't it? – "it," of course, meaning salvation – the *all* of your salvation – the *entire* "It Is Finished" of the world's deliverance from sin. If lost and condemned sinners are to have any hope of being redeemed, it has to be all up to Jesus. If all the sin of the entire world is to be covered, if all the damnation sin has earned is to be satisfied, if all the Father's fury against all sin and every sinner is to be stopped in its tracks, Jesus had to step up to the salvation plate – and He did, hitting a grand slam.

This Jesus, you see, is not just a man. Rather He is true God – the very Son of God begotten from eternity. Hidden in this brutally beaten, appalling, nailed-to-the-tree body of Jesus is all the fullness of the deity dwelling bodily, True God incarnate, pulling off a full-scale redemption for lost, condemned sinners such as we are. The signs were all there. The curtain of the Temple was ripped in two. The earth violently wobbled, shivered, shook and quaked. Boulders were split into pieces. Tombs burst open and many "holy people who had died were raised to life."

The book of Hebrews teaches that Jesus' body is the very curtain by which we enter the Holy of Holies – that through His flesh we have total access to God, heaven, and salvation. No wonder the curtain of the Temple tore at Jesus' death. After all, God was physically at work in the world to save the world in the death of His Son. Richter Scale tremors are frequent indicators in the Bible that God is appearing or revealing Himself on the earth to judge. So when Jesus prayed: "Father into

Your hands I commend My spirit," then bowed His head and died, you can be sure the Almighty "arm of the Lord" was showing itself in the sacrificed body of Jesus. The earth quaked and the rocks split because God's Last Day judgment against sin and sinners had now finally been given to Jesus.

And what about all those believers who came out of their tombs alive at Jesus' death? No, they weren't zombies. They were raised from the dead to show themselves all around Jerusalem and prove that Jesus' Golgotha death was the ultimate victory over the power of death itself – and also that Jesus truly is the firstfruits of those who have fallen asleep. In the crucified, broken, unresponsive body of Jesus, God was present, graciously giving Himself into death to redeem you, a lost and condemned sinner. In Christ, God was reconciling the world to Himself for you and for your salvation.

So Jesus, the Christ, died alone, fully taking the payment upon Himself which the sin of the world earned and deserved. He was "numbered with the transgressors" and hung between two criminals. But, there's more. Now, your sin is His – all of it – so that it no longer belongs to you. Why? Because the Lord laid on Him "the iniquity of us all." "He who knew no sin was made to be sin." He completely drank the enormous cup of God's wrath which every sin and an entire world of sinners rightly deserve. And so, with all that sin on Him, He was cursed and treated as the worst of all sinners – damned in your place. And so He cried out: "Eli, Eli, lama sabach-

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In the name of the Father, and † of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit. Amen. It *all* depends on Jesus, doesn't it? – "it," of course, meaning salvation – the *all* of your salvation – the *entire* "It Is Finished" of the world's deliverance from sin. If lost and condemned sinners are to have any hope of being redeemed, it has to be all up to Jesus. If all the sin of the entire world is to be covered, if all the damnation sin has earned is to be satisfied, if all the Father's fury against all sin and every sinner is to be stopped in its tracks, Jesus had to step up to the salvation plate – and He did, hitting a grand slam.

This Jesus, you see, is not just a man. Rather He is true God – the very Son of God begotten from eternity. Hidden in this brutally beaten, appalling, nailed-to-the-tree body of Jesus is all the fullness of the deity dwelling bodily, True God incarnate, pulling off a full-scale redemption for lost, condemned sinners such as we are. The signs were all there. The curtain of the Temple was ripped in two. The earth violently wobbled, shivered, shook and quaked. Boulders were split into pieces. Tombs burst open and many "holy people who had died were raised to life."

The book of Hebrews teaches that Jesus' body is the very curtain by which we enter the Holy of Holies – that through His flesh we have total access to God, heaven, and salvation. No wonder the curtain of the Temple tore at Jesus' death. After all, God was physically at work in the world to save the world in the death of His Son. Richter Scale tremors are frequent indicators in the Bible that God is appearing or revealing Himself on the earth to judge. So when Jesus prayed: "Father into

Your hands I commend My spirit," then bowed His head and died, you can be sure the Almighty "arm of the Lord" was showing itself in the sacrificed body of Jesus. The earth quaked and the rocks split because God's Last Day judgment against sin and sinners had now finally been given to Jesus.

And what about all those believers who came out of their tombs alive at Jesus' death? No, they weren't zombies. They were raised from the dead to show themselves all around Jerusalem and prove that Jesus' Golgotha death was the ultimate victory over the power of death itself – and also that Jesus truly is the firstfruits of those who have fallen asleep. In the crucified, broken, unresponsive body of Jesus, God was present, graciously giving Himself into death to redeem you, a lost and condemned sinner. In Christ, God was reconciling the world to Himself for you and for your salvation.

So Jesus, the Christ, died alone, fully taking the payment upon Himself which the sin of the world earned and deserved. He was "numbered with the transgressors" and hung between two criminals. But, there's more. Now, your sin is His – all of it – so that it no longer belongs to you. Why? Because the Lord laid on Him "the iniquity of us all." "He who knew no sin was made to be sin." He completely drank the enormous cup of God's wrath which every sin and an entire world of sinners rightly deserve. And so, with all that sin on Him, He was cursed and treated as the worst of all sinners – damned in your place. And so He cried out: "Eli, Eli, lama sabach-

thani?' which means, 'My God, My God, why have You forsaken Me?'"

This is precisely why, "from the sixth hour to the ninth hour darkness came over all the land." The prophet Amos wrote about how the Lord would "make the sun go down at noon and darken the earth in broad daylight" on the day He judged Israel for her sin. And now that day had come, in full, on Jesus. As Israel reduced to one, He bore Israel's sin, your sin, yes, the world's sin. The full-blown judgment day of the wrath of God was laid upon Him. The deep catastrophic darkness of being forsaken by God He suffered because He was carrying on His own shoulders all of our sin.

Jesus suffered all this for the world's sinners – for you. He forgives and absolves you - yes, even though you are the same sinners who killed Him. He now refuses to count any of this against you because He chose to answer for all of it Himself. What Lenten joy is yours, then, dear Christian, for you know that there is no God other than this Man, Jesus Christ, who bore the cross willingly and conquered sin and death for you. Now all your sin has been laid on Him - no longer does it lie on you. Therefore He died and buried with Him all that sin in the black hole of His own sealed but soon-to-be-burst-open tomb, never to be remembered again. That's the joy you now have, in the name of Jesus. Amen.

The Passion Of Our Lord Jesus Christ: *Calvary* **Trinity Lutheran Church – Kearney, Missouri** 

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