



Opening

Many of us walk through daily living as if the world is upon our shoulders. Like Atlas. Where do we get that idea from? When it comes to Easter is not on you, its upon him. Once I was in a sports store, where there was a guy being convinced by his girlfriend to buy expensive weightlifting equipment. What most amused me was that after the purchase, I heard him complaining that he had to carry it out to his car on his own!

Introduction

Isaiah is foundational for us this year at Renewal. One of the Servant Songs that Isaiah writes describes what Jesus goes through on the cross in vivid detail. This Easter we make Isaiah 53 our reflection, that all was laid UPON HIM, as he carried the sin of the world. And, we make it our celebration, as UPON HIM is our salvation.

4 Yet it was our weaknesses he carried; it was our sorrows that weighed him down. And we thought his troubles were a punishment from God, a punishment for his own sins!
5 But he was pierced **for our** rebellion, crushed **for our** sins. He was beaten so we could be whole. He was whipped so we could be healed. 11 When he sees all that is accomplished by his anguish, he will be satisfied. And because of his experience, my righteous servant will make it possible for **many** to be counted righteous, for he will **bear** all their sins. 12 I will give him the honours of a victorious soldier, because he exposed himself to death. He was counted among the rebels. He **bore** the sins of **many** and interceded for rebels. **Isaiah 53:4-5,11-12 NLT**

Upon him

God is not a kindly old grandfather, or neither, a disciplinarian, looking to punish those who step out of line. He is holy, He is righteous and He loves us. Because of our sin, we were alienated from God and God hasn't overlooked that hostility. He never has, and he never will. We are described as Gods enemies, rebelling against him, making clear that it is our sin that separates us from God. Not very palatable in our current world.

How can we ever be reconciled to God? How can God deal with sin yet love us? The Cross. To the world, it looked like Jesus, and still looks like Jesus is being punished by God, that God has written Jesus off. He is forsaken, stricken, abandoned. The servant of God does not look majestic, magnified, or powerful in anyway, quite the opposite he looks appalling. Crucifixion was reserved for the worst kind, those the Roman Empire wanted, humiliated and tortured to the extreme.

> To the Jews, to die upon the cross was a curse, one had been rejected by God. Presuming, that if Jesus has got himself there, surely he deserved it? How can a condemned man take away the sin of the world?

> To the Greek world it was also foolishness. If God was so powerful, surely he wouldn't end up in a position like this. How can a defeated man bring any victory?

> To a modern world this is barbaric, unnecessary and secular culture often says the meaning of life is to gain happiness. If that's true then suffering destroys meaning. How can a dying man bring life? My own life is self made anyway.

Upon HIM ... is our Sin

It's not for him, Jesus is on the cross for us. Isaiah describes the servant dying in the place of others, enduring pain, rejection and suffering on behalf of others.

You get this amazing idea, right at the heart of the saviour, of substitution. Jesus dies in our place. It was not on you. It was upon him. Four times in verse five is this seen as a substitutionary sacrifice: pierced, crushed, beaten, whipped — so we could be healed.

23 When they hurled their insults at him, he did not retaliate; when he suffered, he made no threats. Instead, he entrusted himself to him who judges justly. **24** “He himself bore our sins” in his body on the cross, so that we might die to sins and live for righteousness; “by his wounds you have been healed.” **1 Peter 2:23-24 NLT**

The penal code, the penalty, meant somebody had to pay the price in the place of another. The punishment was upon him. It was what someone else deserved, not Jesus. Even today our pride tells us it's someone else that's bad not you.

But it is because of us, we put Jesus there, it is our sin. And God is satisfied.

Upon Him is our salvation

The world wants to play off characteristics you are this, or you are that, it makes judgements. If you believe this, then you must be that. But the cross takes every aspect of God to be true at the same time. Holy, righteous, loving, gracious, forgiving, truthful. We struggle to be more than one of those at any one point, but God does not. So the result is salvation, because it was all upon him. Jesus could've defended his innocence, but he did not, and it worked. Carried: Nasa to bear, carry, lift up, from the base word of elevation. When it comes to forgiveness, you are carried away, carried off, carried along, you are elevated above yourself.

You do not have to live your life burdened by your sin, or crushed because you feel like there is little progress. Jesus sacrifice and love was never based upon your performance or promises to do much better. He took it all UPON HIM.

Conclusion

When you see the cross as pure love, and grace, and judgement, and holiness, in equal measures and the one that is hanging there, is the chosen servant of God freely and willingly. Perhaps, you will open your eyes and see it's for me, Jesus died.

First person: he took up my pain, bore my suffering, was pierced for my transgressions, and crushed for my iniquity, so that by his wounds I might be healed. It's not on us anymore. You cannot fix this. Come to Jesus because he carries it all.

Application and Prayer

Have you been forgiven because of what Jesus has done?

Pray • Dance • Communion