

“The Man’s Man: Why Would Jesus Ever Cry?”

Advent Midweek #3 – 12/15/21 – Mt. Calvary Luth.
Text: Luke 19:41-44 & John 11:30-36

Introduction

- ⊗ As most of you know by now, our focus this Advent is to offer “*Advent Answers to Hard Questions Hardly Anybody Is Asking*”.
 - ➔ Some people in our culture today may look at that theme and say, “You know, the reason no one’s asking the questions is because you Christians are out of step with today’s world; you’re faith and your God are irrelevant and immaterial.” They look at us sort of like we are the proverbial Maytag serviceman who spends his days twiddling his thumbs, while the rest of the world passes us by. “After all,” they would say to us, “while you’re talking about trivial things like your God and your Bible and your faith, we are the ones who are busy addressing far more pressing issues.”
 - ➔ And what are those “more pressing issues” that they are thinking about? Oh, they’re things like warfare and conflict almost everywhere around the globe; the mounting national debt that we’re going to end up passing on to our grandchildren and great-grandchildren; and a whole host of moral and societal issues that they think we Christians are unwilling to change and grow with society about. Our problem, they say is that “You seem to think that your old, dusty Bible written by old dusty men still somehow addresses our lives today. But we; we non-Christians know better than that”.
- ⊗ “Who cares about the question you asked the first week of your series, ‘How can God take on human flesh, and why?’ Or last week’s question, ‘When Jesus was a boy, did He know that He was God?’ No one really cares about those things,” they say. And to be fair I’m not so naïve as to pretend that most of the people in our neighborhoods and communities actually do care about those matters. I know that those questions will never be the hot topic on social media or network news.
 - ➔ But, I will tell you that we Christians; we had better care about such questions. Why? because they provide the footing for our faith; the framework for our confession; the foundation for our eternal destiny.
 - ➔ To those questions, we need to know the answer; the Advent answer, because those truths set the stage for the later, even more crucial understanding of Jesus when He comes in Lent and Easter to win our salvation.
- ⊗ The first week we focused on the baby Jesus; last week it was, Jesus the child; today, we consider the adult Jesus, *the Man’s Man*. And we ask, “*Why Would Jesus Ever Cry?*”

I. A Heart Filled With Sadness & Compassion

- ⊗ Often Jesus is portrayed as a gentle man who cared for the weak and fragile in society; as a sweet person who loved to hold children in His lap. And all of that is true.
 - ➔ Though Hollywood and others often miss this point, those qualities of course don’t necessarily negate or minimize one’s masculinity, because Jesus was also filled with great courage and strength. He didn’t hesitate to confront evil. And more than once He showed that He would not put up with those who presented themselves as pious believers but were only doing it for show. In Matthew 23:29,33 Jesus said, “Woe to you, scribes and Pharisees,

hypocrites! ... You serpents, you brood of vipers, how are you to escape being sentenced to hell? (see also Mat. 12:34). That's pretty straight forward, "manly" talk right there.

- ✘ Many of us males heard these kinds of things from our fathers or older brothers or other male figures growing up, "Big boys and grown men don't cry", "Keep a stiff upper lip", "Hang tough", "Whimpering and tears are only for wimps", "Just rub some dirt on it and get up and keep on going".

→ But as we know from our two Gospel Readings this evening, Jesus, the Son of God did cry. We only have two references that give witness to Him shedding tears, but I'm sure there were more than those.

- ✘ In our first Gospel, amid the Palm Sunday procession and before He went into the temple to do His spiritual housecleaning, Jesus wept as He approached Jerusalem (Lk 19:41).

→ What brought those tears from our Savior? Well, the people had failed time and again to heed the call to repentance and they still continued in their sinful ways.

→ Jesus came to address that sin; to help His people avoid the punishment of death and eternal torment in hell which unrepentant sin requires. And so His heart was filled with such sadness when He looked out over Jerusalem and saw all of those lost souls – like when you and I see someone go astray whom we deeply love and we know that they will have to suffer so much even though it could have been avoided.

→ In fact, I wonder if Jesus still cries when He sees His people; people who call Him Lord, but behave or think in ways that are clearly the opposite of what it means to be a follower of Christ.

- ✘ Our second Gospel tonight tells us of the time that Jesus also wept when His good friend Lazarus died (Jn. 11:35). It wasn't just the fact that Lazarus died that brought the tears, because Jesus knew that He had the power to revive and raise him. But four days later when He saw His dear friend, Mary of Bethany weeping in deep sorrow and grief over her brother's death, that's when we're told, "Jesus wept".

→ Certainly His heart was filled with compassion and care for the pain and distress that these people whom He loved so much were going through; these people for whom He would soon sacrifice His own life to save. And all of that suffering came as the result of sin.

→ Paul says this of the Father in 2 Corinthians 1:3-4, but I'm confident it describes Jesus as well. He says, "Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of mercies and God of all comfort, who comforts us in all our affliction". Oh, how wonderful it is to know that Jesus is with us during our most sorrowful times; that He is our compassionate and loving Lord.

II. Characteristics of the Man's Man

- ✘ And yes, even with the tears and weeping, Jesus is clearly the Man's Man. Nowhere in Scripture is His strength and courage more dramatic than when He is nailed to the cross. Beaten and battered; physically and verbally abused, Jesus never once relinquished His single-minded resolve to come and fulfill His mission of redemption for the world; to willingly suffer and give His life as the only full and final payment for all of our sins!

→ It wouldn't surprise me one bit if a tear didn't come to Jesus' eye when He looked down from that cross and beheld His mother. Old Simeon had been right when Mary and Joseph brought the infant Jesus to the temple for the first time and said of Jesus, "Behold, this child is appointed for the fall and rising of many in Israel, and for a sign that is opposed" and then he looked directly at Mary and said, "and a sword will pierce through your own soul also" (Lk. 2:34-35).

- Certainly that happened as Jesus looked down upon Mary from the cross. Despite His own pain and imminent death, Jesus had to ensure Mary that she, as far as we know a widow at that time, would be cared for through His best friend, John.
- ⊗ Webster's Dictionary says that a "Man's Man" is "a man noted or admired for traditionally masculine interests and activities. But here's my definition of a Man's Man: "someone who shows unbridled concern and compassion; someone who identifies with those who grieve; someone who is not afraid to call evil by its right name; someone who is totally selfless and willing to sacrifice His own life for another; someone who isn't afraid to cry."

Conclusion

- ⊗ This Advent series we've talked about "*When Heaven Met Earth*". But actually, every Advent is about that, for this is the time and season that tells us the miraculous story of God becoming flesh and blood through a baby named Jesus; about that child's obedience to the will of His heavenly Father; about the Son of God who is our Savior and Lord.
- Whatever else is going on in and around our lives right now friends, this is the one story that must lead all other stories and news and activities in our lives. For this story is the only one that prepares us for the final Advent; for the final coming of our Lord Jesus. This is the story that takes us from earth into heaven for all eternity, because it is through Jesus' birth that *Heaven Met Earth*.
- In the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit. Amen.