

The Sovereign Who Suffered – Part 1

Philippians 2:5-11

Pastor John Miller

I'm going to read verse five to 11. I want you to follow me. This is what is known by theologians as the kenosis passage, and I'll explain why, but beginning in verse five. Although our focus is verse five to eight, we're going to read verse five to 11. Paul says, "Let this mind be in you, which was also in Christ Jesus, who, that is referring to Christ, being in the form of God thought of not robbery, notice this phrase, to be equal with God." That's a clear statement that Jesus Christ is divine, that He's equal with God, but made himself verse seven of no reputation. This is where we get the doctrine of the kenosis. "He emptied himself, and he took on him the form of a servant and was made in the likeness of men, and being found in the fashion as a man, he humbled himself and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross."

"Wherefore, verse nine, God also has highly exalted him, given him a name which is above every name, that the name of Jesus, every knee should bow of things in heaven and things in earth and things under the earth, and that every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is, what, Lord to the glory of God the Father." Every time I come to this amazing passage, I feel like Moses at the burning bush. When the Lord spoke audibly to Moses and said, "Take off your shoes for the ground you're standing on is holy," so we are treading on holy ground. Anytime you open the Bible, anywhere you open the Bible and you read, you're hearing the word of the Lord. All scripture's given by inspiration of God.

Though the Bible is all equally inspired, there are portions of the Bible that are more important for us as God's people, especially in the church today. Now, that's not to diminish the importance of anywhere in scripture, all scriptures by inspiration, but there are verses that are very important for us to grasp and understand, and I can't think of any passage more important for us to grasp and understand than this passage on the doctrine of Christ. Jay Vernon McGee, we're all aware of who he is. He said this is the greatest theological statement in the scriptures. That's quite a statement himself. Some consider it to be the greatest doctrinal statement in the New Testament relative to the person of Christ.

A great scholar by the name of Howard Voss, he said, "This passage is one of the most significant doctrinal passages in all scripture, one which shows the essential nature of the mind of Christ." One of my favorite Bible scholars gone to heaven, his name's James Montgomery Boice. He said, "This passage is among the most glorious sections of the New Testament." In these few verses, we see the great sweep of Christ's life from eternity past to eternity future. Now, those quotes could go on and on. That's the first time I've quoted all those individuals. I have a list of all these great Bible scholars and their praise for this passage from Philippians. But the question I want to ask before we start to unpack the passage is why is this text, verse five to 11, found at this time in the book of Philippians?

Whenever you look at a passage, you should also look at the book that it's appeared in. When you look at the context of a verse of scripture, you should ask yourself, "What kind of book is it

in? Where is it in the Bible, Old Testament, New Testament, prophecy, history, poetry? What kind of text am I dealing with, and what's the context of the verse so that we can properly interpret it?" Now in Philippians chapter two, if you go back with me to verse one, Paul says, "There's now therefore no constellation in Christ if there's any constellation in Christ, comfort of his love, any fellowship of the spirit, any tender mercies and compassions." Look at verse two of chapter two, "Fulfill you my joy, that you be like-minded." Catch that phrase. He wants us to have love and compassion and mercy and kindness toward one another.

So, it's a plea for unity and humility. He says, "Fulfill my joy, that you be like-minded, having the same love being of one accord, and here it is, verse two, and of one mind." So when you come to verse five, he says, "Let this same mind being you, which was also in Christ Jesus." But notice verse three, "That nothing be done through strife or vain glory, but with loneliness of mind." There's the word again. "Let each esteem others better than themselves or more important than themselves. Look not every man on his own things or interests or concerns, but every man also on the things or the interest and concerns of others."

I read all that just to basically say in the context, and this is an amazing thought, Paul is going to take doctrine to apply his exhortation to humility and unity. He's going to take deep theological doctrine to illustrate his exhortation to be humble, to be loving and considerate of others. It's interesting that many times today, preachers want to know how they can make doctrine practical. I don't ever try to make doctrine practical. It is practical, and we've actually abandoned in the church today doctrinal preaching for life situational, applicational preaching, and that's a big mistake. The reason why the church is weak, and then effective in impacting the culture around it is because it doesn't know the Bible.

We're biblically illiterate, and I blame the pulpits of America for not preaching God's word, and educating people in his word. One of the reasons why, and I didn't know if I would mention this, but one of the reasons why I wanted to preach this passage again, I saw a very prominent television preacher on TBN recently saying that Jesus laid aside his deity to take on humanity. That's absolutely heresy. That's not what this passage is teaching. He was preaching the passage before us, and preaching heresy on Trinity Broadcast Network. I just thought, "This is insane. This is crazy." Very large church from Dallas, Texas, and I just couldn't believe it. You probably want me to tell you who it was, right? See me after church.

I actually said right then and there, "I'm going to preach from Philippians, and make sure that my people understand that that's heretical, and that's not what this passage teaches," so very important. But the point I wanted to make, which actually just blew my mind this time through, is that he uses doctrine to apply practical Christian living, or to illustrate practical Christian living. Usually, people take doctrine, and illustrate it with practical Christian living. Paul turns it around, and he says, "Look at the scriptures in this doctrine, which has implication for how we live." So, it's a call, verses one to four, to unity and humility.

Then when you get to verse five, "Jesus is our pattern. Let this mind, this attitude, this outlook that he just described in verses one to four, be in you, which was also in Christ Jesus." So, Paul

pictures the Lord Jesus as our pattern, verse five, or an example, and it's a powerful incentive to unity and humility. So as we study the Bible, and we break the bread and drink the cup, and we remember the cross, it should cause us to be humble and considerate of others. This could transform your marriage, can transform your relationships, transform your love for Jesus Christ. It has practical implication. So, we're going to look deeply at this passage this morning.

Now, I want to outline the whole passage, verses five to 11, just quickly, and not get sidetracked, so you can see the whole picture. The first section is just verse five. It's an illustration of Christ's humility. Then in verses six to eight is the humiliation of Christ, and then verses nine to 11 is the exaltation of Christ. So, verses first five, Christ's illustration and application, verse six, seven, and eight, the humiliation of Christ, and verses nine, 10 and 11, the exaltation of Christ, how important that is. Now today, we want to look together at the first two divisions, verse five to eight, the illustration of Christ and the humiliation of Christ.

So if you're taking notes, our first point is verse five, Christ our example or the illustration of Christ. Go back with me to verse five. Let this mind be in you, which was also in Christ Jesus. Now, Paul does two things in verse five. He first issues the command, "Let this mind be in you," and it's in the present imperative. That means it's a command. It's an imperative. It's not an option. Whenever the Bible commands us, what does it mean? It means we must obey, right? Somebody say, "Well, it depends upon what he's commanding us to do." If he says, "Husbands love your wife's," I don't know about that one, especially if he says, "Wife, submit to your husbands, right?" Let's not go there.

But whenever God commands, we must, what, obey. Amen. So, you are commanded in this passage, and it's in the present tense. It means continually, ongoingly, habitually live with a humble attitude or heart as you walk with the Lord in relationship to others. Then he says in verse five that it was also in Christ Jesus. That's the example. So in verse five, he issues an command or an exhortation, and then he gives the illustration which was also in Christ Jesus. Now, Jesus is always our example. Amen? But he's more than an example. He's our savior. He's our redeemer. There's a drift in the church today in a liberal direction. It's called progressive Christianity, to take Jesus, and make him just a man, a great man, a man we should model and emulate, but just a man, just a good human being with great qualities that we should follow.

They forget the fact that Jesus Christ is God who became a man in order to die on a cross for the sins of the world. Amen? Jesus died on the cross to atone for our sins. Now, what do Paul mean by the mind of Christ in this exhortation or command in verse five? Well, it's a call to be humble in our attitude, to be unselfish in our devotion toward others. It's a disposition of the eternal son of God that even before he came to earth regarded, "No sacrifice is too great. No humiliation is too painful in accomplishing his redeeming work." So, it's a picture of a humble heart which puts others first. As we read earlier in the chapter, look not on your own interest, but everyone on the interest or concerns of others.

So, the mind of Christ is not having his intellect or his knowledge. He was omniscient, but it

means our attitude or outlook should be, "My wife's more important than me. My kids are more important than me. My husband's more important than me. My other coworkers and friends and family, their interests are more important than mine. It's dying to self and living for God and service of others." That's what it means. Charles Aidman said that Christ stooped from heaven to earth, and that he might secure our redemption, so as followers would be willing to make sacrifices to undertake lowly sacrificial service, self forgetful task in the service of others. One of the benefits of communion is to remember how Christ left heaven, and came down to earth for us.

It's going to be real hard to leave church today, and go home and be selfish. Ladies, if your husband acts up at home, just say, "Did you not hear the pastor's sermon? Did you not read Philippians two?" It's going to be real hard to listen to these sermons the next two Sundays, and be selfish or self-centered or self-absorbed or not considerate of others, because Christ is our supreme example. Jesus is always our supreme example. Write down 1 John 2:6, where John says, "he that saith he abideth in him ought himself also to walk, even as he walked." Remember the bracelets? What would Jesus do? Now, it's not just in your own strength emulating Christ's behavior, it's having Christ born in you by regeneration, and the filling of the Holy Spirit, and living out through your life.

Matter of fact, this Wednesday night in our series on marriage, we're going to start to talk about how God corrects marriage in our fallen world by giving us the Holy Spirit. We're going to talk about the spirit-filled marriage before we talk about submission and love of the husband and wife. Now, go to the second point with me in our text verse six to eight only have two main points, but I got a whole bunch of subpoints, so hang with me. We have the humiliation of Christ. So, we have the illustration of Christ, verse five, and then verse six, seven and eight, three verses, we have the humiliation of Christ. Let's read them again, "Who, being in the form of God, thought it not robbery to be equal with God, but made himself of no reputation, but took on him the form of a servant, and was made in the likeness of men. And being found in the fashion as a man, he humbled himself, and he became obedient unto death, amazing statement, even the death of the cross."

Now, these three verses, Paul paints three pictures of Christ. Now, forgive all this outlining and all these points, but it's so important. In verse six, we see Jesus as the sovereign. In verse seven, we see Jesus as the servant. In verse eight, we see Jesus is the sacrifice, and I love these points, Jesus the sovereign, verse six, Jesus the servant, verse seven, and Jesus the sacrifice in verse eight. We will see seven steps from heaven, and its splendor and glory that Jesus took to come to earth to suffer and die. So, under this point and a couple other subpoints, we're going to break it down to seven steps that Jesus took to leave heaven to come down to earth, and take on humanity, and die by death, by crucifixion upon the cross.

Now, before we trace the steps of humiliation, note first who he was and where he came from. Look at verse six. He is the sovereign. Notice in verse six, he says, "Who being in the form of God thought it not robbery to be equal with God, or thought equality with God, not something to hold onto or to cling to." Now, here's the key. When Paul says in verse six, "Who being in the

form of God," that is a powerful statement, not became... Listen to me very carefully. He didn't become God. Did you know that God is eternal? If people just understood the attributes of God, they wouldn't get all messed up in heretical teachings about God. No one becomes God. If you had to become God, then at one time you weren't God, so you will never be God. Okay?

When some new ager says, "I am God," they have no idea what they're talking about. I went to a seminar, and for \$300, I discovered my inner deity. Now, what kind of a God must you be if you have to pay \$300 to find out you're a God? Pretty dumb God, I would say. "Wow, it only costs me 300 bucks, and I found out I'm divine. Wow, that's awesome." A lot of people are trying to become God, but only one God who became a person, or not became a person, but became a man. So, I want you to look at this statement who being. Circle the word being. It means that he is eternal in his nature and essence in the form morphe of God. Now, the word form does not convey outer shape or appearance. We use the word form for outside shape or appearance.

Maybe someone's playing tennis, and you guys have great form on the tennis court. So, that's not what the word form here means. The word form, morphe, as used a couple times in our passage actually denotes an inner nature or essence, not the external appearance. I can't emphasize this enough. You can consult other translations of this passage. Actually, they translate that who being in very nature, divine or God. It actually says that. So, being in the form of God is a direct statement that Jesus Christ is God. There are those that say that the Bible nowhere teaches that Jesus Christ is God. Here, we have a clear passage saying that Jesus Christ is divine. He's being in the morphe, the essence of God, who being in the very form of God.

The New International Version says who being in very nature God, Jesus Christ was not the most God conscience man who ever lived, nor was he simply like God. Rather, he was equal with God. Let's not forget that. We need to understand who Jesus Christ is. I pointed out already that being means that Jesus has not become or begin to be God, but he's been God from all eternity. Now, let me... To support this, and I can't spend much time on it. We looked at it in our doctrinal series, give you some verses to jot down on the deity of Christ. John 1:1, "In the beginning was the, what, the word and the word was with God, and the word was God or God was the word." So, he is the eternal word. He is the divine word. He's the personal word."

So, Jesus is the second person of the triune Godhead is eternal. You'll never understand this Philippians passage by the way either unless you understand the doctrine of the Trinity that there is only one God, but he is manifests in three persons, not three separate Gods, one in essence or nature, but three in persons, God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Spirit. Then also, Jesus preexisted Bethlehem. He said, "Before Abraham was, I am." In Colossians 1:17, he is before all things, and in John 17:5, "Jesus in his great high priestly prayer said, "Father, restore me with the glory I had with you before the world was." So, he was preexistent Bethlehem, and preexistent creation, and Jesus possessed divine attributes. Jesus claimed to be God.

In John 10:30, he said, "I and the Father are one." The word one there is neuter, so it doesn't

mean that we're one person, but it means that we're one in essence. So, we're both divine. The Bible says that he's God in Hebrews 1:8, but unto the son, he sayeth, "Thy throne, O God." So God the Father calls God the Son God in the scriptures. Now, look at verse six again. It says, "Thought it not equal or thought it not robbery, excuse me, to be equal with God," literally did not regard equality with God a thing to be grasped. From that Greek word, it's interesting that the King James translate that thought it not robbery, simply just looking at the thought of robbery. What is robbery? Robbery is taking something that's not yours, right?

Thought it not robbery to be equal with God, so when Jesus claims to be God, it's not robbery. He's not taking what is not his. It's not something to cling to or hold onto, because he is definitely, stated in verse seven or verse six, excuse me, to be in very essence God. So, Jesus is the eternal God. Write down Micah 5:2. It says there that he is the Lord. He changes not. God doesn't change. He is eternal. He is immutable. He does not change. Jesus has always been and always will be. He is the great I am. Amen? No one should ever compromise the divine nature and internality of Christ. But notice second thing in verse seven, he became a servant.

Now, another way to note these verses, verse six is his deity. Verse seven is his humanity. You say, "Well, I just thought we found out he's God," and I said, "Yes, he is," but notice now, he's also man, his humanity. Look at verse seven, but made himself of no reputation. He wasn't made by someone else. He was made himself voluntarily of no reputation, and took on him the form, same word used in verse six, morphe, but he was in essence of a servant and was made in the likeness of men. If you peak at verse eight, it says, being in the fashion as a man. So, this is a clear statement on the humanity of Jesus. So, the sovereign becomes the servant.

Now, the first three steps down, if you're able to take with your notes, and write down step one, step two, step three, step four, I'm going to give them to you. Step one, it says, "He made himself of no reputation." That's step one. He made himself of no reputation. This is where we need to be clear. The word made himself of no reputation. The statement is tied into the word kenosis. Now, the word means to empty or to empty of. So, the question becomes what did Jesus empty himself of? What did Jesus give up when he became a man? What did he give up or empty himself of?

As I already spilled the beans as to why I'm preaching this series, but let me tell you what he did not give up. You need to write this down in big, bold letters. He did not give up or empty himself of his deity. If you're ever watching any Christian television, or hearing any preacher preach and say that Jesus laid aside his deity, then run for your life as fast as you can. He did not give up his deity. Just simply understanding that God is immutable doesn't change. How does he give up his deity? How does God stop being God? He can't do that. He can't change His nature. Whenever God is revealed to be in the Bible, he always will be. He always has been, and he always will be.

Have you ever known somebody that you could say, "They've really changed?" You ever had anybody in your life? They've really changed. Obviously, you have. Maybe somebody says, "You've changed," but guess who doesn't change. God. Amen? He's that only immutable, fixed

point that we can hang on to. So, he did not give up his deity. Well, what did he give up? He didn't give up his attributes. That's the second mistake some people make. They believed that Jesus actually gave up his attributes. Now, we're going to see that He voluntarily chose not to use his attributes, but only in the will of God the Father, the plan and purpose of God the Father, but he didn't give up his attributes. If he had given up any of his attributes, he would no longer have been God.

Now, the one that really will stretch your mind, and I probably shouldn't even go there, but it'll stretch my mind, so I want to stretch your minds, is how did he become a man on earth, and give up his omnipresence? The answer, I don't know. How does he live in heaven right now as a glorified God man, and live in my heart? I don't know. But isn't it awesome? I don't understand. You know why? Because God is bigger than us. God is transcendent. He's beyond us. So, at no time did Jesus ever give up his deity or his attributes. The use of his attributes were submitted to the purpose and plan of the Father, but he was God.

Now, I am supposed to be quick, because we have communion this morning. I probably shouldn't go into this, but there's a lot of popular contemporary churches today that emphasize the humanity of Christ, which is good, but to the point to where they say, "We are no different than Jesus." That's scary, and that the same miracles and the same power he demonstrated, we can demonstrate, and we can manifest because we're just like him in this world. That's heretical. We'll never be divine. We'll never be just like Jesus, until we see him face to face, and we're without sin, but we'll never be God for all eternity. We'll be redeemed human beings and sinners.

So, Jesus is another whole category, but they overemphasize his humanity in order to try to bring Jesus down to our level, and they forget about his divine nature. It's a very subtle but very dangerous imbalanced that I hear in a lot of preaching going on today as well. So, the first step down was that he laid aside his glory, and you might make a note of that, so not his deity or his attributes, but his glory. Now, let me give you the list. He temporarily divested himself of his divine glory. Someone called it the insignia of his majesty. He was the king incognito. He was the king in peasant's clothes. He emptied himself of his independent use of the divine authority. He emptied himself of the voluntary exercise of his divine attributes, and he emptied himself of his eternal riches, 2 Corinthians 8:9.

He also emptied himself of the temporary use of his face-to-face relationship with God the Father. He emptied himself, which is self-renunciation, self-renunciation, but I want you to think about that, especially as we take communion. Remember, Jesus was in the beginning the word. The word was with God, John 1:1. You know what that phrase actually means? Face-to-face. When Jesus left heaven, he gave that up. From all eternity, God the Father and God the Son had a face-to-face relationship. He gave it up to be conceived in the womb of the Virgin Mary, be born a little baby to grow up dependent on his parents, to eventually, as we see in Philippians two, to die upon a cruel cross.

Go back to the first portion of the chapter, "Let this same mind be in you, which was also in

Christ Jesus." He gave everything up for the sake of our redemption, for the sake of our salvation. So marvelous, so wonderful. Now, here's step two, verse seven. "He took on him the form of a servant. He willingly took on the nature of a slave." Now, this is the humanity of Christ. Christ became a human conceived in the womb of the Virgin Mary. He took on humanity. Now, lest I forget, let me say it before it slips out of my mind. The humanity that Jesus took on was sinless humanity. Did you know that God created human beings innocent and sinless in the garden of Eden?

That sin is not a part of our intrinsic nature. It was given to us and Adam from the fall, and it will be eliminated through the blood and resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead, his sacrifice on the cross. But Jesus Christ came in perfect sinless humanity. Anything less than that is not what the Bible teaches about the person of Jesus Christ. Here's step three. Step three, verse seven, "He was made in the likeness of men." Now, what that means is that when they looked at Jesus, he looked just like a man. You want to know why? Because he was one. You said, "Well, he was a God man. He probably glowed in the dark, right? A God baby when changed his diaper at night made it easy for Mary. He glows in the dark. You're going to have the nightlight in the baby's room. You just go and change those diapers real quick, or he had a halo."

I've seen the pictures. Don't tell me, Pastor, that he didn't have a halo. He didn't have a halo. When he was in the crowd, they didn't go, "See that guy with a halo? That's the son of God." No, he looked like anyone else. He looked like a carpenter from Nazareth. That's because he was, which was the despised place in the despised region, and he had a job that was menial working in a carpenter shop. So, he came in the likeness of men, but he was more than just a man, truly man, fully man, but more than just a man. He was the God man. The supernatural conception in the womb of Mary made him a man. Write down John 1:14. It says, "The word became flesh and did, what, dwelt among us," literally pitched his tent among us.

He came and pitched his tent with us. He lived with us. God came to earth. This is the Christmas story. It's the incarnation wonder of all wonders, the miracle of Christmas. God would become a man. Someone said he forsook the courts of everlasting day, and chose with us a darksome house of mortal clay, so the true manhood of Jesus, as well as the true deity of Jesus. Now, here's the third point, verse eight, and we'll stop here, the sacrifice. We see in verse six his deity. We see in verse seven his humanity, and now we see in verse eight his crucifixion, so the servant, the sovereign, the sacrifice. Look at verse eight, "And being found in the fashion as a man." That means in very essence, truly, man.

Sometimes we'll say fully man, fully God. It's actually better to say truly man, truly God, but understanding that his humanity was sinless. He humbled himself, verse eight, and became obedient unto death even the death of the cross. Now, don't lose me here. We got steps four, five, and six, and seven, so Four more steps, and I can't carry on them. Here's step number four if you're taking notes. Verse eight, "And being found in a fashion as a man," means being found in appearance as a man, perfectly man, because he was in essence human, and he looked like a man. Here's step number five. It says that he humbled himself, verse eight. Jesus was not humbled by others, but rather he humbled himself.

Now, I want you to think about this. Have you ever been humbled? You're supposed to say yes. If not, you need to be humbled. No, not me, or we have an embarrassing experience. We go, "Oh, it was so humiliating." We use that in a negative concept. Oh, it was so humiliating. Oh, a bummer. Jesus humbled himself. Now, he did so because he was God, and no one could humble him. It's easy to humble me. It's easy to put me in my place, but no one could humble Jesus because Jesus was divine. He was above everyone, so he chose to humble himself. So, Jesus voluntarily came from heaven to earth. When we preach about the cross, we always use that word voluntarily. Jesus gave himself to come to earth to die upon the cross.

Let me give you step number six. In verse eight, he became obedient unto death. Now, notice the steps down, steps down. He humbled himself. He became obedient unto death. Step number six, Jesus obeyed the father's plan. Remember in the garden of Gethsemane, not my will, but what? Thy be done. Coequal with the Father, but now in function submitted to the Father's plan, which is a reflection by the way of the marriage relationship. The two become one, co-equal in Christ and God, but the husband is the head of the wife for function. If we preferred that, we pervert the very nature of God himself. So, Jesus humbled himself, and then he became obedient unto death.

I read an amazing statement yesterday that just blew me away. I actually texted to my friend, Skip Heitzig, and all he answered back was the word wow, three exclamation points. A man by the name of Ralph Martin said, "Only a divine being can accept death as obedience. For ordinary men, it is a necessity." I don't know about you, but when I think of that, I just say, "Wow. He became obedient." Guess what that means. It means he's God. Only God could choose to die. I don't have any choice in the matter. Guess what? I'm going to die someday. You're going to die someday. I just thought I'd encourage you. You're going to leave church today. What did the preacher say? He said I'm going to die. That's all I heard. I'm going to die.

It's not a matter of being obedient unto death. I don't have any choice. If I don't want to die, I don't have any choice, but Jesus did. Think about that. He chose to die. Why would anyone choose to die? Oh, what great love. Oh, what amazing love. Amazing love, how can it be that thou my God would've die for me? Amazing love. He became obedient unto death. Here's step seven, verse eight, "Even unto the death of the cross." Now, notice the steps down. He emptied himself. He took on him the form of a servant. I mean, just leaving heaven, becoming a servant is a big deal. Then became obedient to death. That's another big deal, but then go a little lower. What kind of death? Death on a cross.

I've preached this a thousand times, and it hit me like a ton of bricks. Do you know that Paul, who wrote these words, was a Roman citizen? It was illegal for any Roman citizen to be crucified on a cross. Do you know that the Jews looked at the cross? If you died on the cross, that it was actually a horrible disdain. It was an enigma. It was a horrible thing, and yet, Jesus not only chose to die, but by crucifixion on a cruel cross. How much love did he demonstrate for us? Jesus not only died, he died by crucifixion. He became sin for us who knew no sin that we might be made the righteousness of God in him, such suffering, such sorrow that he would come and take the pain, the penalty for my sins.

Now, let me close with three bullet points about the cross of Christ. I believe they'll be on the screen if we've coordinated this properly. The first is Jesus died to rescue us from sin, and that is our redemption. You see that? Now, we could never exhaust the doctrine and the cross in one sermon, but these are three pretty complete points, to rescue us from sin, not only to show us God's love that he did, but to rescue or redeem us from sin. Second thing, he died to defeat Satan. The word is conquest, to conquer evil. When Jesus died on the cross, he divested Satan of his power and authority. Then number three, Jesus died on the cross to reveal the father's love, revelation.

Look at these three words, redemption, conquest, revelation. I learned these years ago, and I put them to memory, because they summarized the cross. The cross was a redemption, a conquest, and a revelation. Ancient theologians used to talk about what called the theater of the cross. This is why I love communion, because the bread symbolizes his body, and the cup symbolizes his blood for us. We don't just look at the cross and go, "He loves us." We don't just look at the cross and say, "Oh, he conquered evil." He did. But we look at the cross also and say, "He redeemed me by his blood." Amen? When you take the bread, and you drink the cup, remember what he did for you on the cross.

Remember when Jesus, in John 13, rose from the supper, and laid aside his outer garment? It says he took off his coat, his tunic, and he put around his waist a towel, and he got down and washed the disciple's feet. Now, that actually happened, but guess what? It's also a picture. It's a picture of Jesus taking off his glory and his majesty and his splendor in heaven, laying it aside temporarily, voluntarily, and taking on the badge, a towel of a servant, and coming to wash us in his own precious blood, and to forgive us of our sins. It's a picture. Isn't any wonder that Isaac Watts would write in his famous hymn, "When I survey the wondrous cross on which the Prince of Glory died, my richest gain I count but loss, and I pour contempt on all my pride?" Let's pray.