

THE THINGS HE CARRIED

SESSION 8

THE HOPES OF GOD

Read through this chapter and then the following passages, as they help to give you a deeper understanding of the chapter.

“He carried a heart that was about to be broken. That was how he eventually died.”

Not only was his body broken, but also his heart. We often speak glibly about our hearts being broken, very few are, but the heart of Jesus was broken for us. He loved us so much that he was willing to go through all the things we have read about here.

- “Things slot into place” – this was the physical agony that Jesus suffered. Have these words helped things to slot into place spiritually? They require something of us – as they hymn says, this: “Demands my soul, my life, my all.
- Think about the extent to which you have allowed Jesus into your life. Have we made room for him, or is he crowded out by our busyness?

“There is a terrible loneliness in dying.”

Isaiah 53:

3 He was despised and rejected— a man of sorrows, acquainted with deepest grief. We turned our backs on him and looked the other way. He was despised, and we did not care.

4 Yet it was our weaknesses he carried;

- It was our sorrows that weighed him down. It wasn't only the physical suffering of his death, it was so much more. Let us pray that we do not forget all that Jesus went through in order to bring us salvation. When we read the sequence of his physical suffering on pages 66-67, what is our response?
- Throughout this series, we have been reminded how the recordings of the crucifixion in the gospels have been the fulfilment of Old Testament scriptures. Psalm 22, Isaiah 53, Zechariah 12:10 being a small sample. John 19:36-37 tells us that all these things took place that the Scripture might be fulfilled: “Not one of his bones will be broken” (Psalm 34:20) and “They will look on him whom they have pierced.” (Zechariah 12:10) – these both written hundreds of years before this event.
- How must his mother and the other women, and John, have felt when they saw him die? Loss, disappointment, fear? What would be there overriding emotion? How would they relate his death to the three years of his ministry?

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“Unless a grain of wheat falls in the ground...”

John 12:24 “What I’m about to tell you is true. Unless a grain of wheat falls to the ground and dies, it remains only one seed. But if it dies, it produces many seeds.”

Jesus had to die that we might have life. When I read about people who received a new heart, or other organs, I always think of this. For the recipient to have life the donor had to die. But... because he now lives, we can face our today and our tomorrows with hope, joy and faith.

This is the real moment of disclosure; the moment when the balance tips ...”

- His moment of death came as the soldiers pierced him with a sword. They had already
- decided, (in fulfilment of scripture), that there was no need to break his legs because he was already dead but to prove to everyone, that there was no doubt about this, they pierced his side. The Bible tells us that blood and water poured out. 1 John 5:6 “And Jesus Christ was
- revealed as God’s Son by his baptism in water and by shedding his blood on the cross - not by water only, but by water and blood. And the Spirit, who is truth, confirms it with his testimony.” Stephen Cottrell says: “..in my mind’s eye, through this lens, a mighty river, coming out off heaven to earth, a new creation: water and blood streaming from his heart to mine.”

“Now I see what he carried”

- Read through this paragraph a few times until it settles into your spirit. There is a popular old hymn, the chorus of which says: “Burdens are lifted at Calvary ... Jesus is very near”. Can you feel his nearness?

“His heart is broken for me”

- “Such love” – what else can we say?

“So here I stand”

- This last paragraph is so beautiful – the summary of what is a remarkable account/description of the things he carried.
WHAT CHOICE WILL YOU MAKE?

Complete the book by reading pages 72-3, asking yourself the questions from John 19:28-37 and reflecting on the cross.

