

We gather to bow our heads at this great wonder: God's means of salvation. The Creator allows His creatures to kill Him. God restores all things in the destruction on the cross. God of creation, creates new life through death.

Meditate upon this great wonder. This wonder -all creation, all history focus upon 1 day. This day gives meaning to everything. God restores humanity to Himself, opened the way of salvation, turning the evil, the horror of the crucifixion into a place of wonder, love, and praise. Even praise.

Jesus gives 7 sermons from His pulpit of the cross. We heard 3 of them from St. John's Gospel. In the Gospel of St. Luke, **Then Jesus, calling out with a loud voice, "Father, into Your hands I commit My spirit!" And having said this He breathed His last. Now the centurion, seeing what had happened, praised God, said, "Surely this was a righteous man."** This is the only 'spoken' word Luke records between crucifixion and resurrection. When the lips of Jesus are silent in death, Luke records one voice. One voice in the face of deadly silence. You can't miss it. And what does Luke call it? In the Greek, doxology. That's what Luke writes. The centurion doxologies God, praised God.

Praise, contrary to modern Christianity, isn't centered on my emotional response or telling God how I feel. Scriptural praise, doxology, a declaration of God, what He has done. His works- not our feelings. Scriptural praise is confessing His miracles, His salvation, His presence, His promises finished, fulfilled.

When God intervenes, people open their mouths, praised God. Luke writes of doxology events: the shepherds saw heavenly wonders, ran to see the baby Jesus, doxologies the child. The people of Nain attended a funeral, Jesus raised a widow's child, their mouths opened to Jesus, doxologies to Him as God. A leper healed, ran back to Jesus, fell at His feet, doxologies Him as God; a blind man finally saw, doxologies his Lord. Mouths opened in praise, of miracles of God. And, now, when you would think the time for miracles passed; now, when you would think that all wonders are over; now, Jesus, God dead on a cross, Luke then records doxology. Why?

Luke wants you to see a wonder beyond all wonders. God has made a marvelous exchange. Exchange for your sin, He has given you His

righteousness; in the place of all sinners, the only righteous man takes all wrath of hell, that man can come before God in the works of the Christ.

If I ask, 'how you are?' You say, 'fine.' No you're not. Your life is complicated. Decisions and indecisions, regrets and wishes and plans and a lot of baggage. The changes in your children, what your grandchildren are up to; the aging of your parent, issues with your own body, this world out of control, dealing with things at home, obligations at work. You're very complicated, it's so easy to lose your focus. In this midst of it all, you don't find easy answers. It's never as simple as reading an internet post, or picking up a book about Christian living. We struggle, we pray, we truly love, we sincerely live. And, **all like sheep have gone astray**, fail, lose our way.

One thing remains certain: the righteousness of Jesus saves you from sin, from all that can truly harm you, even death. God looks at your complicated lives, sees your sin, and calls you righteous for the sake of His Son. Doxology, His work, not ours. His obedience, not ours. His love, not ours. Only one voice is speaking, one simple truth: this is a righteous man and by His righteousness you are saved.

You don't need to know 'us' long to see our sin, our failures. You don't need to be a genius to recognize you're that weak.

In our complicated lives, there's one thing that does not ever change. You can point to my sin, but I can point to my Savior. A righteous man; on the cross, the doxology of God.

Doxology, the crucifix. Yes, hard to look a crucifix in the face, to accept the truth we deserve His place. His bleeding image, **his appearance was so marred, beyond human resemblance**, ponder it. It is good even to beg Him to imprint this image on your heart, so that you might carry it with us wherever you go, so that it can be before your eyes.

Why St. Paul preaches to you, to know knowing among except Christ and Him crucified. For there, **surely He has born our griefs and carried our sorrows, your iniquities, your chastisement**, all sins answered for there, that **by His wounds, you are healed**. You have His peace. **It is finished**. It is certain. Take comfort in that certainty. Though our lives are complicated, God has given life in the death of His Son. For this simple saving love, we doxology in His righteous. And sit silently in doxology to marvel His love for you. You are healed.