

04.13.22 – A Weekly Word for Covenant Church

Title: “The Death of Death”

Scripture Reading: [Mark 15: 33 – 41](#); [Romans 3: 25, 26](#)

Reflection: Rev. Evan Heerema

In 1648, English theologian John Owen wrote a book entitled, The Death of Death in the Death of Christ. In it, he asserts that by the death of Christ the salvation of sinners was fully and completely accomplished. Through the offering of his life as a sacrifice (meaning the entire humiliation of Jesus’ life, death, and burial), Jesus has secured perfectly and completely the redemption of those for whom he died. There was no longer need for the sacrificial death of the lambs of sinners to serve as substitutes for human beings. The “sacrifice of atonement” (Romans 3:25) was fulfilled in Jesus’ death on the cross. Thus, the death (the end) of death (the death of substitutes) in the [once for all] death of Christ. This describes a theological position. We call it substitutionary atonement.

But from a pastoral/ministry perspective there is something more that must be said. And that is, the distaste of our death has also been overcome by the death, burial (and we must say resurrection) of Jesus. Of course, we grieve the separation of personal relationships. We lose what we have known, or the dreams we hoped to have. Believers in Jesus can take heart that he too suffered the loss of relationships; the most extreme defined by his cry from the cross, “My God, my God, why have you forsaken me?” As Pastor Doug mentioned Sunday morning, when we die physically, we are dying our second death. Our first death occurred when we died with Christ to sin and to its power. And because of our first death – in Christ – we also already live with Christ in his resurrection. And that is the hope we do have when standing at the grave of a loved one. Death, with all its very legitimate hurt, has been overcome. [Colossians 3: 1-3](#) says, “Since, then, you have been raised with Christ, set your hearts on things above, where Christ is, seated at the right hand of God. ² Set your minds on things above, not on earthly things. ³ For you died, and your life is now hidden with Christ in God.” Jesus’ death confirms the fact that God was demonstrating his righteousness at the present time, announcing our justification by faith in Jesus (Romans 3: 26).

This “Holy Week” concludes the journey of Jesus from his humiliating birth to his excruciating death and burial. Prayerfully give the Spirit room to bring you to your knees before the suffering servant and God’s crowned King. Make no mistake that this is a week of triumph. A week of triumph for God’s plan of salvation through his one and only Son, Jesus the Christ, the anointed One. “He tore the bars away, Jesus my Lord.”

Prayer:

Our father in the heavens, King of the universe, blessed art thou, for giving us peace as we remember our death with him, and our life with him. Fill us continually with your Spirit so that we may be humble, seeking you with all our heart, soul, mind, and strength. Yoke us with Jesus in his death and resurrection, allowing him to lead and guide, for your glory and honor. AMEN

Action Item for the Day/Week:

During this week, pray for, talk with, or share something with a neighbor, co-worker, friend, or enemy that will make your time together a holy moment, blessed by God.

Songs for today:

[Low In the Grave He Lay](#)