

Preacher's Pen points

The Unselfishness of Jesus



Jesus was the most unselfish person who ever lived. All through His ministry we see His willingness to care for others and to give to others. But consider the cross as the ultimate display of our Lord's unselfishness. If there was ever a moment when Jesus had a right to think only about Himself it was on the cross. After all, what evil had he done so as to warrant the horrible mistreatment He experienced that day? Would He not have been justified in delivering Himself from the pain of crucifixion? Could He have been criticized for not taking thought of others under such circumstances? Yet in spite of His ability and His right to deliver Himself we see total selflessness on Jesus' part. Consider three examples.

Selfless thought for His persecutors

Even while suffering the anguish of crucifixion itself, Jesus was thinking about the forgiveness of His torturers! *"Father, forgive them for they know not what they are doing!"* (Lk. 23:34). What amazing unselfishness this is, that Jesus instead of pleading for His deliverance, was pleading with God to make a way of deliverance for His persecutors.

Selfless thought for His mother

Hanging on the cross, Jesus spoke to his loyal mother and the apostle John who stood nearby. To His mother, he spoke, *"Woman, behold your son"* and to John, *"Behold your mother"*. Jesus was unselfishly thinking of his mother and making arrangements for her care even as He died! What unselfishness this displayed!

Selfless thought for the thief

When saving souls would have been the last thing on most people's minds, Jesus would not enter glory without saving just one more! Even though both thieves had once taunted Him, one of them, coming to understand Jesus' innocence, humbly and penitently requested, *"Jesus, remember me when you come in your kingdom"* (Lk. 23:42). Jesus unselfishly answered, *"Today you shall be with me in Paradise"* (Lk. 23:43). Instead of saving Himself, Jesus chose to save this ex-con!

What did Jesus do for Himself on the cross? Nothing! Instead He willingly subjected Himself to the whole experience for the sake of God's purpose and for the salvation of all humanity.

Living Unselfishly as His Followers

The apostle Paul appeals to Jesus' selfless sacrifice as the basis for his exhortation to the Philippians: *"Do nothing from selfishness or empty conceit, but with humility of mind let each of you regard one another as more important than himself; do not merely look out for your own personal interests, but also for the interests of others. Have this attitude in yourselves which was also in Christ Jesus"* (Phil. 2:3-5).

Every first day when we gather to break bread we are reminded of Jesus' humble, giving, selfless love for each us. Let the memory of His selflessness linger in your thoughts and shape the way you treat the people around you this week! —Johnny Felker (www.truthchasers.com)