"The Passion of Christ"
(Psalm 22)

I. Introduction.
  A. Orientation.
    1. Last week, we considered the work Jesus did and the blessings He received from Psalm 21.
      a. How Jesus trusted in His Father in His state of humiliation.
      b. How He rejoiced to do the work the Father sent Him into the world to do – accomplish our salvation – and how He rejoiced in the His reward – His Kingdom and His people.
      c. How He was exalted and glorified for His work – how He was made blessed in the presence of His Father and crowned as King over all the kingdoms of the earth.
      d. And how the Father promised He would find out all His enemies and subdue them under His feet.

    2. We also saw how the blessings He received flow to us by faith:
      a. How He receives us and rejoices over us as a bridegroom over his bride.
      b. How He pours out on us the blessings of salvation
      c. How He pours His Spirit on us by faith.
      d. How having received authority over all the kingdoms of the earth, He rules and overrules all things for His glory and our good.
      e. And how no matter what injustices take place in this world, how this righteous Judge will one day set all thing right.
        (i) This was a reminder to us as well of the amnesty that God offers us now through Christ.
        (ii) All He requires is that you turn from your sins and receive Him as your Lord and Savior, and He will give you a full pardon and everlasting life.
        (iii) But if you refuse, how you will have to pay His justice yourself in everlasting damnation.
        (iv) If you haven't submitted to Jesus as your Lord and Savior, do so now while the day of mercy is still here.

  B. Preview.
    1. This morning, our psalm takes us deeper into what Jesus did to bring salvation to us; it shows us why He needed to rely on His Father's strength to accomplish this work in His sufferings on the cross.
      a. His passion wasn't everything that was necessary.
        (i) He had to take to Himself our nature and be born as one of us.
        (ii) He had to experience all the facets of life, as we did.
        (iii) He had to do all His Father's will without failure.
        (iv) And of course, He had to declare to us God's will for our salvation.

b. But the cross was central to His work.
(i) So much so that often His whole work is summarized by this one act.
(ii) Jesus had to die, the just for the unjust, to reconcile us to God (1 Pet. 3:18).

2. Let's consider from our text what Jesus had to endure in order to save us, as well as what He received further as a reward. We'll see
a. How Jesus suffered.
b. How Jesus trusted His Father through His sufferings.
c. How Jesus was exalted for His sufferings.

II. Sermon.
A. First, let's consider how Jesus suffered (vv. 6-8, 11-18). There's too much detail in the psalm to go verse by verse, so we're going to deal generally with each.
1. First, Jesus suffered rejection by His people.
a. We see in verses 6-8 that the people – which in His case were His own covenant people – despised Him.
(i) They considered Him to be lower than a human being – a worm (v. 6).
(ii) They hated Him, not just in their hearts, but in their gestures (v. 7).
(iii) They also despised Him in their words by mocking Him and His claim to be the Messiah (v. 8; cf. Matt. 27:43).

b. We know it can be painful when people we hardly know reject us, but it's far more painful when those you are close to reject you, especially those you're doing everything in your power to help.
(i) What would you experience if you tried to do something good for your brothers and sisters here and they despised you for it?
(ii) That's what Jesus experienced for our salvation.

2. Second, Jesus was persecuted by those who should have protected Him: the authorities (vv. 11-13; 16-18).
a. Instead of protecting Him, they also became His adversaries (v. 12).
(i) Like lions, they opened their mouths to devour Him (v. 13).
(ii) And there was no one to help (v. 11): even His disciples abandoned Him; Peter denied Him; the Shepherd was struck and the sheep were scattered.
(iii) David goes on to write that He was like a man surrounded by hungry dogs (v. 16); by a band of thieves and murders (v. 16).
(iv) They took Him by force and nailed Him to a cross (v. 16).
(v) His bones were not broken – when it came time to speed the execution, they would have broken His bones if He hadn't already yielded up His soul to the Father (John 19:33).
(vi) Those standing by stared at Him (v. 17), considering Him to be cursed of God (Gal. 3:13), while the soldiers below Him gambled to see who would take His clothing (v. 18).

b. It's painful to have those you care about turn on you and be cruel to you.
(i) Matters are much worse when those charged with protecting your life turn on you, especially when you have to face these things alone.
(iii) This is what Jesus suffered for our salvation.

3. Third, Jesus suffered physically and emotionally.
a. Emotionally:
(i) He felt as though His soul was poured out like water (v. 14).
(ii) There was no soundness in His bones: it was if they were all out of joint (v. 14).
(iii) His heart had melted like wax within Him (v. 14).
(iv) Why?
(a) Because of the anguish of His soul.
(b) Because of His sufferings.
(c) His greatest suffering being that His Father had forsaken Him – He had become our sin-bearer and began to experience God's wrath against our sin.

b. And physically:
(i) His strength had dried up (v. 15).
(ii) There was no moisture in His mouth – His tongue stuck to His jaws (v. 15).
(iii) He felt as though He was returning to the dust in death (v. 15).

c. We know something of this kind of suffering.
(i) Going through prolonged difficulties feels like it drains the life out of us.
(ii) But we don't know what it is to suffer to this degree.
(iii) Jesus suffered more than we ever will – at least if we are believers – and He was willing to do this for our salvation.

B. Second, let's consider how Jesus trusted His Father through His sufferings.
1. The psalm begins with a cry for help, in light of the suffering He was enduring: "My God, my God, why have You forsaken me?"
a. These are the very words Jesus spoke on the cross to point those around Him to this psalm.
b. He wanted them to know this suffering, this death, was the Father's will; that He was going through this to fulfill Scripture.

2. He asks why the Father has forsaken Him (vv. 1-2).
a. He had forsaken Him because our sins were laid on Him; because God's wrath had come against Him.
b. God is of too pure eyes to behold sin with favor (Hab. 1:13): Jesus' fellowship with the Father – as a man – was broken.
(i) He had entered into a time when He became a curse for us – He was separated from God; He literally endured hell for us on the cross.

(ii) It was for this He had sweat great drops of blood in the garden, as He looked ahead to this suffering He must endure (Luke 22:44).

3. At the same time, He expresses trust in the Lord (vv. 3-5, 9-11; 19-21): Jesus knew the Father had not forsaken Him.
   a. He knew His Father was holy and so could not be otherwise than what He is: trustworthy (v. 3): He would not forsake His promise to Him.
      (i) His fathers – Jewish saints – trusted Him, and He delivered them (v. 4-5); He had never disappointed them (v. 5).
      (ii) Jesus had trusted Him from His earliest days (v. 9); His parents had committed Him to God from birth (v. 10).

   b. And He expresses this trust by calling on Him (v. 11).
      (i) Lord, don't be far off; come to help Me (v. 19).
      (ii) Deliver Me from the power of My enemy (v. 20).
      (iii) Save Me from the lion's mouth (v. 21).

4. Considering that Jesus had perfect fellowship with the Father from His youth up, and this fellowship was interrupted when He became sin in our place, and how much anguish Jesus went through for us as His Father poured out His anger against that sin, I hope we see something of what our salvation cost Him.

C. Finally, let's consider how Jesus was exalted for His sufferings.
1. His prayers were answered, "From the horns of the wild oxen You answer me" (v. 21).
   a. The Father delivered Him from death on the third day (Acts 10:40).
   b. He raised Him up into heaven and seated Him at His right hand, the place of highest honor (Acts 2:33).
   c. And as we saw last week, He made Him the promise that all would one day submit to Him (Ps. 110:1; 1 Cor. 15:25; cf. Ps. 21:8-12).

2. And so Jesus set His heart to worship the Lord and calls on all the righteous to do the same (vv. 22-25).
   a. He says He will declare the glory of His Father to His brethren – to those the Father has given to Him (v. 22), and that's what He did and continues to do today through His Word and the preaching He has appointed in His church.
   b. He will praise the Father in their presence (v. 22), and lead them in offering praise to the Father for the things He has done, fulfilling the vows He made – the agreement in the Covenant of Grace (vv. 23-25). This is being fulfilled even now in heaven.

3. Lastly, we see the blessings Jesus will dispense as a part of His exaltation (vv. 26-31).
   a. He will be exalted as King over the nations (vv. 28).
   b. He will give relief to the afflicted who seek Him (v. 26).

c. His salvation will be proclaimed throughout the world, and all the families of the earth will come and worship before Him (vv. 27).
d. His blessings will abound over all the earth, and all will be satisfied, all will bow down before Him (v. 29; cf. Phil. 2:9-10).
e. Their descendants will speak of Him and serve Him, from generation to generation (vv. 30-31).
f. It appears that the Lord will reveal His salvation not only through souls of men by conversion, but also through physical blessings as His kingdom expands.

4. In light of these things, let's be exhorted as those whose task it is to advance His cause and kingdom in this world:
   a. To be willing to suffer for the Lord who suffered for us.
   b. To trust the Father and the Son for the strength to accomplish His will in the present generation: He has received these blessings that He might pour them out on His church that we might do His will.
   c. To take encouragement from this psalm:
      (i) That the Father has exalted His Son over all the nations.
      (ii) That the Father will advance His kingdom until it fills the earth.
      (iii) And that all the nations will one day worship Him for His grace and goodness.
      (iv) Next week, we'll continue to look at the work of Christ as God revealed it in the Old Testament. Amen.