

# God's Heaviest and Greatest Work

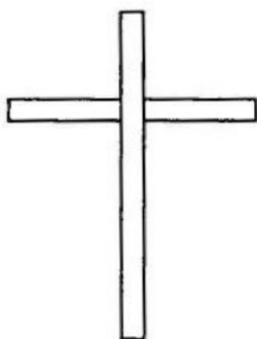


A sermon

By

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AND  
GREATEST WORK



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*You have burdened me with your sins, you have wearied me with your iniquities*

Isa. 43:24.

Doesn't it sound peculiar? Is it possible that God can labour and feel tired? As human beings we have to work in order to get along, that is quite clear. It is also clear that we can become tired. But God is not like man so as to become tired. He is omnipotent; and that means that He can do anything He wants to do without the slightest fail. Once, by His mere word, He created heaven and earth and all things existing therein. And by His word He is still accomplishing that the created world can exist and function with regard to both big and small things. He gives us clothes, food, house and homestead, health and welfare. Of course this is no trouble to God.

And yet it is said here: "You have burdened me with your sins, you have wearied me with your iniquities." These words are found in the Bible, and then it is so, because everything in the Bible is fully true. But how are we to understand these words?

Well, these words deal with what God has done through the work we use to call *the redemption*. This work concerns our possibilities of living in the Kingdom of God and to obtain eternal life. Therefore, in Isa. 43 God speaks about how He has been burdened and troubled *because of our sins*. But could the Son of God be burdened, could He become tired or exhausted? Yes, He is not only God but also *man*. He performed His redemption work in this world for about 33 years. He did get labour and toil because of our sins, just as He says: "You have burdened me with your sins, you have wearied me with your iniquities." Everything else God has done and is still doing without pains, but the redemption work was *mere pains*. Therefore the redemption work is God's *heaviest* work. But because of this it has also become God's *greatest* work.

## JESUS' WORK OF REDEMPTION - GOD'S HEAVIEST AND GREATEST WORK

*It was God's heaviest work*

*a) because Jesus was to keep all God's commandments completely*

Try to understand how difficult it is to keep *just one* single commandment, e. g. "You shall not kill." In this commandment God does not only demand that we refrain from killing other people. We should also refrain from becoming angry with them and from hating them. We are not allowed to revenge ourselves on a person who has been nasty to us, nor to be sour or brusque if he comes to ask for forgiveness. Instead we should always be good, tender and helpful towards other people, even against our worst enemies, we should return good for evil, forgive, and forget the evil they have done. And all this we ought to do *with all our heart* and *willingly*, and also to go on doing this as long as we live.

For us it is impossible to keep even one single commandment in the way God demands, not even for one second. But Jesus could keep *all* God's commandments completely. First as a child, then as a youth, and finally as a fully grown man. Jesus never committed any sin. He loved both God and men with a perfect love.

But this could not be done without hard work and toil. This was so, because Jesus was a human being with the same weak nature that we have. He became tempted in everything just like ourselves. It was a daily fight and battle for Him when He was to obey His Father. He is fully right when He says to each one of us: "You have burdened me with your sins, you have wearied me with your iniquities."

*b) because Jesus was to suffer all punishments for sins on account of all men*

Imagine how difficult it is to *carry* even *one* single sin, i. e. to know that one has done wrong, e. g. to feel afraid of the anger and *punishment* from one's parents. Think of how hard and difficult it is to receive one's punishment.

Now, Jesus in His body has borne *all* sins of *all* people on the tree of the cross. He has *suffered* everything that the sins of men deserved. It was not a little, it was more than any of us can understand. Jesus did not suffer only such things as maltreatment, crowning with thorns, scourging and crucifixion. His total life was *one long* suffering. He suffered more with regard to His soul than with regard to His body. The most difficult thing was that His Father in heaven for some time left Him and removed all His help and all consolation from Him. This was *the eternal punishment*. Jesus cried on the cross: "My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?"

If we should have carried and suffered our own punishment because of our sins, we ought to have suffered *eternally*. We would not have been able to suffer enough. *That* bad is our sin, and that strict is God with regard to sin. Jesus did not have to suffer as long as an eternity, because He is the Son of God. But as long as He suffered, He suffered indescribably much. He can say to each one of us: "You have burdened me with your sins, you have wearied me with your iniquities."

## *It was God's greatest work*

At least *we ourselves* ought to think in this way, because everything that Jesus did in His redemption work He did *for us*, not for animals, not for the angels, but for us, human beings.

*We* had sinned, and we are still sinning daily in many ways. We cannot keep even one of God's commandments. We are sinners and evil-doers. If we remember how strict God is with the obedience of His commandments and that He sees even our thoughts and what is in our hearts, then we may understand that *we are* evil-doers, idol-worshippers, unclean beings, thieves, liars and everything else that is bad. We have drawn upon us God's wrath and deserve only His punishment. We deserve that God drives us away from Himself for ever, so that we will never more obtain His help, consolation or love. - And if Jesus had not come, *we would have been rejected* on account of sin, because God does not turn a blind eye on any sin. *Even one single sin* would have been enough to make us eternally unhappy.

But Jesus came and gave us help. The commandments we could not keep He kept for us. The punishment that we deserved to suffer, *He* suffered for us. He did not allow

Himself to be hindered by the fact that it cost Him so much work and toil. He loved us so much that He was ready to pay any price for our salvation. He knew that if He was steadfast unto death, He would be able to accomplish for us the forgiveness of our sins, help us to become the children of God and to obtain new and good hearts. We would be afraid of nothing, then. We could die in peace and after death come to God in heaven.

Of course it is a great gift when we are given what we need with regard to eating and drinking, for our clothing and our home, when we can work and be happy in our lives, when we have freedom and good friends. But it is something much *greater* to have peace in our conscience through the forgiveness of sins, and to own such treasures as belong to the eternal and invisible Kingdom of God. Although we may live comfortably in this world, when life is at its best, yet this life will soon come to an end. After that comes eternity.

How will it be then for you and me, when we have sinned so much? How wonderful that we can hope to come to God to be with Him for ever! If that is our hope, then we can endure many difficult things in this world without being dissatisfied. We can think in this way: If I am patient like Jesus, and if first of all I think of God's invisible Kingdom, and if I lay up for myself treasures in Heaven, then I may follow Jesus to Heaven, when I die.



Do you think that the redemption work, done by Jesus, is a great thing? Do you love Jesus, because He was ready to perform such a heavy work in order to accomplish your salvation?

Perhaps you are like most people in these matters. They do not think that Jesus and His redemption work are worth while. If you are of that kind, then it is likely that you prefer money and amusement and happy days in this world, but you do not care about what Jesus acquired for you through His labour and toil. What a tremendous ingratitude on your side then! How could the heavenly Father then count you as His child? It does not matter what you try to do to be loved by Him. He cannot look upon you as His beloved child, if you despise what Jesus has done. It is not your deeds that have value before God, only the works of Jesus have such value. If you despise the redemption work that has been accomplished by Jesus, then you are under the wrath of God. Then in death you will lose all worldly goods, and heaven will be closed because of your unbelief and ingratitude. Although Jesus redeemed you as well as others, it is as if you had never had any Saviour.

But if you appreciate Jesus and His redemption *more* than anything else in heaven and on earth, then you have a Father in heaven that counts you as His beloved child. Then it does not matter how much you have sinned in all your life or how sinful you feel. The heavenly Father loves you in spite of all that, and for Jesus' sake He is your Father as well as the Father of Jesus. Then He has already thrown your sins to the bottom of the sea. He loves you as much as He loves His Son. This, therefore, you must know: The sin cannot condemn him who trusts in Jesus and His redemption work. Nothing can condemn such a person, because it is written: "There is therefore now no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus."

If you really believe in Jesus and love Him, then you do not wish to sin. You hate the sin, and you fight against the sin just as Jesus did. And Jesus will help you to win more and more in your fight against sin. Do not become tired in that fight! Ask Jesus for help! Accept His help, when you are reading your Bible, when you take part in the church service and listen to the sermon, and when you come to the Holy Communion! Hold out yet a little while! You are like a runner that may reach the goal at any time. When death comes, then you reach your goal, and then you acquire a prize that will make you blessed for ever.

Amen