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The Servant's Burden

Isaiah 53.6

Series: The Suffering Servant (Communion Series)

The Village Church

June 5, 2022

I. Our Champion

- A. Every now and then, someone emerges in the sports world, who is so talented, so gifted, and so dominant, that it is said that he (or she) carries the team
 - 1. That apart from that one dominant player, there would be no way the team is even in the conversation for contending for a championship
- B. Baseball
 - 1. Perhaps it was Babe Ruth in his heyday for the Yankees
- C. Basketball
 - 1. It's a little easier to see it in basketball – with only 5 players at a time, one player can be a dominating force
 - 2. Michael Jordan arguably carried the Chicago Bulls
 - a. Did it three times in a row
 - b. Then stepped away from the game – Bulls weren't the same team
 - c. Then returned and did it three more times
 - d. Jordan carried the Bulls
- D. Football
 - 1. Maybe Tom Brady qualifies in the contemporary scene
 - a. Who in his prime with the New England Patriots led them to the Super Bowl nine times, winning six
 - b. During those years, the entire team changed around him, multiple times
 - c. He was the common denominator
 - d. Arguably, he carried his team
- E. That's essentially the meaning of "champion"
 - 1. The Philistines thought they had one
 - a. His name was Goliath
 - b. He was huge – the Shaquille O'Neill of warfare
 - c. No one was more powerful
 - 2. So when the Philistines had the chance they challenged the Israelites
 - a. And said we'll put up our best guy, our champion
 - b. And he will carry us
 - c. And we will bury you (Krushchev???)
- F. Of course, Israel had its own champion
 - 1. An unlikely champion, to be sure
 - 2. David – a mere shepherd boy

- a. But who had developed extraordinary skills as a warrior as he fended off wild animals in protecting sheep
 - 3. And as time went on, he carried Israel
 - a. “Saul has slain his thousands; David his ten thousands”
- G. The NT is clear – Jesus is our champion
 - 1. **Gk – archegos**
 - a. Translated in various ways: founder, leader, hero
 - b. But also champion
 - 2. **Acts 3.15** – the archegos of life
 - 3. **Hebrews 2.10** – the archegos of our salvation
 - 4. **Hebrews 12.2** – the archegos and perfecter of our faith
 - 5. Jesus is the champion of our life, of our salvation, of our faith
 - a. Jesus is the one who carries us
- H. That’s especially clear in our text today
 - 1. Series: **The Suffering Servant (Isaiah 53)**
 - a. Series that we are using for communion Sundays
 - 2. Series from Isaiah – the Jewish scriptures – details the many ways in which the Messiah is a suffering Messiah
 - 3. The notion of a suffering Messiah was not something the 1st Century Jews were willing to accept
 - a. They were accepting a Goliath-like champion, who would free the Jews from the oppression of the Romans
 - b. Even Jesus’ own disciples had a hard time coming to grips with it
 - c. Even when Jesus explicitly told them “the Son of Man would be delivered into the hands of men and they will kill him” (Mark 9.31)
 - 4. And today, many Jews seem to be blind to the plain teaching of their own scriptures as Isaiah lays out the suffering of Messiah in such thorough descriptions
- I. In Isaiah 53.6 the Messiah is said, literally, to carry those whom He would save
 - 1. **Isaiah 53:6** (ESV) —
 - a. 6 All we like sheep have gone astray; we have turned—every one—to his own way;
 - b. and the LORD has laid on him the iniquity of us all.
 - 2. He has carried us
- J. But what has not been so clear is in what way He has carried us
 - 1. How He has carried us?
 - 2. And for what purpose?
- K. The athletic heroes that I mentioned carried their teams
 - 1. But in every case, while they were dominant, they couldn’t have done it alone
 - a. They had teams who facilitated their gifts
 - 2. Babe Ruth didn’t pitch (at least when he was with the Yankees)
 - 3. Jordan needed teammates like Dennis Rodman to get rebounds and Scottie Pippen open up areas of the court so Jordan could work his magic
 - 4. And Brady played not one down on defense

- L. But Jesus, our champion, is different
 - 1. He carried us
 - a. Carried us in ways in which we are incapable of contributing
 - b. Carried us when we were helpless
 - 2. And less than helpless
 - a. Indeed, when we were enemies of God
 - b. Lawbreakers
 - c. Cosmic rebels against the Almighty Sovereign
- M. “The Lord has laid on him the iniquity of us all”

II. **The Servant’s Burden: Our Sin**

- A. The reason we need to be carried is because of our sin
 - 1. “The Lord has laid on him the iniquity of us all”
 - 2. Now if you don’t think you have any iniquity – you’re off the hook!
 - a. You don’t need Jesus
 - b. You don’t need a servant to act on your behalf; certainly not a suffering servant
 - c. You don’t need to be carried
 - 3. It’s only those who have a sense of their own iniquity who have any reason to be attracted to Jesus Christ
 - a. To Messiah Yeshuah
 - b. To the “Man of sorrows”
 - 4. James Durham: Men will never look rightly on Christ’s sufferings, nor suitably esteem of him, nor make him, and the doctrine that holds him and his sufferings forth, cordially welcome, except they have some sense of their sinful nature and disposition.
 - 5. Do you have a sense of your sinful nature and disposition?
 - a. R.C. Sproul
 - b. Let’s say God gave every human being the right to commit one sin without incurring guilt
 - c. (Now God doesn’t do that; God is altogether holy and righteous; God’s standard is perfect holiness)
 - d. But Sproul, for sake of argument said, “Let’s say God gave everyone one sin.”
 - e. “How long ago did you use yours up?”
 - 6. **Deuteronomy 6:5** (ESV) — 5 “You shall love the LORD your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your might.”
 - a. Yep, that characterizes me
 - b. I love the Lord with my heart, my soul, my strength
 - c. If you could just leave the world “all” out of it
 - d. Because as soon as the text says I must love the Lord my God with all of my heart, with all of my soul (my mind, my will, my emotions), with all of my strength
 - e. I don’t know that I’ve done that for 15 minutes
 - 7. For us to understand this meal

- a. To understand what Jesus did on that cross for us who believe in Him
- b. To rightly consider the bread, the body of Christ
- c. The cup, the blood of Christ
- d. We must understand what it means that the Lord has laid on Him the iniquity of us all

B. **It's Nature**

- 1. We are sinners by nature
 - a. It's who we are
- 2. **Isaiah 53:6** (ESV) — 6 All we like sheep have gone astray...
 - a. We are like sheep
 - b. It is the nature of sheep to go astray
 - c. Left to their own devices, separated from a shepherd, divided from their flock
 - d. All sheep will get in trouble
 - e. All sheep will eventually fall
 - f. All sheep will certainly die
- 3. In recent years, GEICO has come up with a series of commercials based on the nature of things
 - a. Common phrase: "It's what you do"
 - b. Recall the spy trapped on the roof top, chased by enemies, answers his cell phone; it's his mother; Mothers call at the worst times – it's what you do
 - c. Camels in a zoo put up with all kinds of verbal abuse and sarcasm; it's what you do
 - d. Free range chickens roam free – it's what you do
 - e. People in a horror movie make bad decisions – it's what you do
 - f. You're supposed to apply that to buying insurance; 15 minutes can save you 15% on car insurance; make the call; it's what you do
- 4. Sinners sin; it's what you do
 - a. You not a sinner because you sin; you sin because you are a sinner
- 5. Theologically, it's called original sin
 - a. **Original sin** is not the "original sin" – Adam and Eve's disobedience
 - b. Original sin is the result of Adam and Eve's sin – every single human being from that time on has a sinful nature
 - c. Our fundamental disposition is sinful
 - d. We all are inclined to act for our own selfish purposes
 - e. **Genesis 6:5** (ESV) — 5 The LORD saw that the wickedness of man was great in the earth, and that every intention of the thoughts of his heart was only evil continually.
 - f. **Jeremiah 17:9** (ESV) — 9 The heart is deceitful above all things, and desperately sick; who can understand it?
 - g. **Job 15:14** (ESV) — 14 What is man, that he can be pure? Or he who is born of a woman, that he can be righteous?

- h. **Psalm 51:5** (ESV) — 5 Behold, I was brought forth in iniquity, and in sin did my mother conceive me.
 - i. **Matthew 15:19** (ESV) — 19 For out of the heart come evil thoughts, murder, adultery, sexual immorality, theft, false witness, slander.
 - 6. “All we like sheep have gone astray”
 - a. Why?
 - b. Because it’s who we are
 - c. It’s what we do
- C. **It’s Pervasiveness**
 - 1. Sin is pervasive
 - a. There is no part of our lives that is not affected by sin
 - b. No faculty that is immune to sin
 - 2. Our **minds** are affected by sin; we don’t think straight because we are sinners
 - a. **Romans 1:21** (ESV) — 21 For although they knew God, they did not honor him as God or give thanks to him, but they became futile in their thinking...
 - b. **Romans 1:28** (ESV) — 28 And since they did not see fit to acknowledge God, God gave them up to a debased mind to do what ought not to be done.
 - 3. **Our wills** are affected by sin
 - a. Oh, we like to pretend that we have free will; that our wills can choose just as easily for good as for evil, just as easily for righteousness as for wickedness
 - b. That’s not the testimony of scripture
 - c. **Genesis 8:21** (ESV) — 21... the intention of man’s heart is evil from his youth....
 - 4. Our **affections** are affected by sin; we love that which is contrary to the nature and character of God
 - a. **John 3:19** (ESV) — 19 And this is the judgment: the light has come into the world, and people loved the darkness rather than the light because their works were evil.
 - 5. Every aspect of our human nature is stained, tainted, corrupted by sin
 - 6. **Romans 3:13–18** (ESV) —
 - a. 13 “Their throat is an open grave; they use their tongues to deceive.” “The venom of asps is under their lips.”
 - b. 14 “Their mouth is full of curses and bitterness.”
 - c. 15 “Their feet are swift to shed blood;
 - d. 16 in their paths are ruin and misery,
 - e. 17 and the way of peace they have not known.”
 - f. 18 “There is no fear of God before their eyes.”
 - 7. A veritable anatomy lesson of sin
 - a. From head to toe, sin is pervasive in the human personality
 - b. It is a metaphor to be sure

- c. But he's not really talking about lips, mouths, feet, eyes
- d. He's using those faculties to represent every conceivable human capacity

D. **It's Universality**

1. **Isaiah 53:6** (ESV) —
 - a. 6 All we like sheep have gone astray;
 - b. we have turned—every one—to his own way;
 - c. and the LORD has laid on him the iniquity of us all.
2. There is not one human being who escapes the indictment of sin
 - a. Isaiah 53 has in mind specifically those who will come to faith in Messiah
 - b. “The Lord has laid on Him the iniquity of us all”
 - c. Messiah Jesus has carried us who believe in Him by carrying our iniquity
 - d. But the indictment of sin applies to the entire human race
3. **Romans 3:23** (ESV) — 23 for all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God...
4. **Romans 3:10–12** (ESV) —
 - a. 10 as it is written: “None is righteous, no, not one;
 - b. 11 no one understands; no one seeks for God.
 - c. 12 All have turned aside;
 - d. together they have become worthless;
 - e. no one does good, not even one.”
5. Sin not only affects every faculty of every person
 - a. Sin affects every human being
 - b. There is no one who can claim to be without sin
 - c. Save our champion, our Jesus, our Savior

E. **It's Peculiarity**

1. **Isaiah 53:6** (ESV) —
 - a. 6 All we like sheep have gone astray; we have turned—every one—to his own way...
2. We all have our own way of sinning
 - a. As distinguished from God's way
3. **Deuteronomy 10:12** (ESV) —
 - a. 12 “And now, Israel, what does the LORD your God require of you, but to fear the LORD your God, to walk in all his ways, to love him, to serve the LORD your God with all your heart and with all your soul...”
4. But instead, we have disregarded the ways of God and set out on our own paths
 - a. **Psalm 81:11** (ESV) — 11 “But my people did not listen to my voice; Israel would not submit to me.”
5. “We have turned – every one – to his own way”
 - a. We all have our own peculiar way of sinning
 - b. My sins are not your sins

- c. Your sins are not your neighbor's sins
- 6. There are as many different ways of sinning as there are human beings
- 7. Our guide in Israel – Opher, who is Jewish – would often say, “When you get two Jews together you get three opinions”
 - a. I'll see him one and raise him another
 - b. When you get two humans together, you get 5 ways of sinning
- 8. We have our own ways of sinning; we are all peculiar in our sinning
- 9. And even Christians – we prefer some ways of sinning over others
 - a. We look down on other people's sins; think little of our own
 - b. We might look with disgust on certain sexual sins
 - c. But shrug our shoulders over economic sins
 - d. We might find ourselves angry with liars
 - e. We might easily pass by others in need when we could help them
- 10. We find some sins more acceptable than others
 - a. But the point is – we are all sinners
 - b. And all sin, apart from the grace of God in Jesus, condemns us all to hell
 - c. To eternity in hell
 - d. Because our sin is against an eternally holy and altogether righteous Being
- 11. Lesson – there are a multitude of ways to sin; a multitude of ways to hell; we are very creative
 - a. But only one way to heaven
- F. **It's Seriousness**
 - 1. Sin matters
 - a. How do we know it matters?
 - 2. Because “the Lord has laid on him the iniquity of us all”
 - 3. It matters so much that God the Father sent His own Son
 - a. Sent His Son to become incarnate; to take upon Himself our human nature
 - b. And then sent His Son to die in our place
 - c. Not just a physical death
 - d. But to die by taking upon Himself the just punishment of our sins
 - e. To die by experiencing genuine separation from His Father
 - f. To die by taking upon Himself the hell we deserved
 - 4. God didn't shrug His shoulders when the human race rebelled
 - a. God didn't say, “It's no big deal”
 - b. No! God did the unthinkable
 - c. **2 Corinthians 5:21** (ESV) — 21 For our sake he made him to be sin who knew no sin, so that in him we might become the righteousness of God.
 - 5. Sin is serious
 - a. Serious as a heart attack
 - b. More serious than a heart attack
- G. Unless we understand

1. The nature of our sin
2. The pervasiveness of sin in all aspects of the human personality
3. The universality of sin – that all are sinners
4. The peculiarity of sin – that each of us sins in our own ways
5. The seriousness of sin
 - a. We come to this table unprepared to truly worship the Christ who has carried us
 - b. On whom the Lord has laid the iniquity of us all

III. **The Covenant of Grace**

- A. One more thing must be said to fully appreciate the supper
 1. We need to consider, not just the sinful dispositions and inclinations of ourselves
 - a. In all of the dimensions of our iniquity
 2. But we need to explore the dispositions and inclinations of God
- B. **The Divine Council**
 1. All of this that Jesus has done in carrying us flows from the loving nature and character of God
 2. **Isaiah 53:6** (ESV) — 6 ... and the LORD has laid on him the iniquity of us all.
 - a. The Lord did it!
 - b. LORD – Yahweh; God the Father
 - c. Laid on Him – God the Son
 - d. The iniquity of us all
 3. This was not a unilateral decision of one member of the Triune Godhead
 - a. This was a decision in eternity past
 - b. Within the Divine Council
 - c. To save a lost humanity
 4. **Isaiah 53:10** (ESV) — 10 Yet it was the will of the LORD to crush him; he has put him to grief; when his soul makes an offering for guilt, he shall see his offspring; he shall prolong his days; the will of the LORD shall prosper in his hand.
 5. **Acts 2:23** (ESV) — 23 this Jesus, delivered up according to the definite plan and foreknowledge of God, you crucified and killed by the hands of lawless men.
- C. **The Love of God**
 1. Why did God do it?
 - a. Was God obligated to do it?
 - b. Would there have been anything wrong if God had said, “These are a sinful and a rebellious people; I will cast them aside and consign them to an eternity of destruction that they justly deserve”?
 2. If God was obligated to save anyone, it wouldn’t be grace
 3. But God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son...
 - a. That whoever believes in Him should not perish but have eternal life (**John 3.16**)
 4. We take the love of God for granted, do we not?

- a. The only way we can even begin to fathom the love of God for us human beings is by considering...
 - b. The nature of our sinful condition
 - c. The pervasiveness of our sin in every human faculty
 - d. The universality of sin in every human being
 - e. The peculiarity of our sin, in how each of us creatively manufactures our own idols
 - f. The seriousness of our sin
5. Against the backdrop of our sin
- a. We can then see the glorious love of God

D. The Power of the Servant's Act

- 1. Finally, in this text, we see the power of the Servant's act
- 2. **Isaiah 53:6** (ESV) — 6 ... and the LORD has laid on him the iniquity of us all.
- 3. Every single believer
 - a. Jesus Christ took upon Himself all of the iniquity of all of those who would ever believe in Him
 - b. So Jesus did not fail to save every single believer
 - c. He took your iniquity, and your iniquity, and your iniquity, and my iniquity
 - d. Upon Himself
- 4. So that every debt to God is paid
 - a. Paid, not by you or me
 - b. Paid by our Suffering Servant

IV. **Our Response**

- A. Have you yet trusted Jesus, the Suffering Servant?
 - 1. Do you not yet see that only in this Jesus can your iniquity be carried?
 - 2. When will you turn in faith and trust in this Suffering Servant for your eternal salvation?
 - 3. Why do you believe that it is not enough for God to send His Son to die in your place?
 - a. Do you really think He should have done more than that for a cosmic rebel like you?
 - 4. Will you not do it today?
 - a. Will you not trust in the Suffering Servant today?
 - b. Will you not cast the burden of your sin on Messiah Jesus right now?
 - c. Why wait another minute?
- B. Christian
 - 1. Can you now fathom what this meal is about?
 - a. How in the body and blood of Jesus, the Lord laid on Him the iniquity of us all?
 - b. All of us straying sheep
 - c. All of us who has turned to his own way
 - 2. Will you not now give up your peculiar ways of sinning?

3. For God's purpose in the Divine Council is to create a holy people
 - a. **1 Peter 1:14–16** (ESV) — 14 As obedient children, do not be conformed to the passions of your former ignorance, 15 but as he who called you is holy, you also be holy in all your conduct, 16 since it is written, “You shall be holy, for I am holy.”
4. Approach this table with awe and reverence – indeed, with holiness
 - a. Worshiping your Champion, your Hero
 - b. The One who has carried you