Transcription Note for James Archer Sermon #4

In the course of this project, well after Sermon #4 had been transcribed and annotated, we discovered that Sermon #11 was a corrected copy of Sermon #4, apparently written in Archer’s own hand at some later date. Sermon #11 is a near duplicate of Sermon #4, bearing the identical title and with only minor revisions, most notably, the omission of the opening Latin inscription. Sermon #11 has been transcribed in its entirety to include all revisions (q.v.). Please refer to Sermon #4 below for the original draft transcription and annotations.

A Discourse on the Passion of our L.J.C.

Sequebatur autem illum multa turba populi, et mulierum quæ plangebant et lamentabant illum. Conversus autem ad illas Jesus, dixit: Filiae Jerusalem, nolite flere super me; sed super vos ipsas flete et super filios vestros.

And there followed him a great multitude of people, and of women: who bewailed and lamented him. But Jesus turning to them, said: Daughters of Jerusalem, weep not over me, but weep for yourselves, and for your children. Words taken out of the 23C. of S¹ Luke and 27th and 28th Vs.

Is not then the Passion of J. C. of which we this day celebrate the august but sorrowful Mystery, the most affecting object, which ought to occupy our minds and excite our grief? Can our tears be possibly more holily and more profitably employed, than in bewailing the death of a Man God, and that a more urgent and more necessary duty should,

suspend, as I may say, the obligation which gratitude otherwise so justly |imperiously| imposes on |requires of| us, of compassionating [“compassionating,” i.e.; pitying], with our flowing sentiments of Piety, the sufferings of our Divine Redeemer? Yes my Friends, Jesus Christ as a proof of the most generous and disinterested Charity that ever was, going to mount Calvary to die for us, admonisheth us not to bewail his death but to bewail a very dif

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spective object: Nolite flere super me[,] sed super vos [ipsas] flete.[¹] S¹ Ambrose pronouncing the funeral oration of the Emperor Valentinian the younger thought he had duly acquitted himself of his Ministry and to the full satisfaction of his auditors, when he had exhorted them to testify by the tribute of their tears, what they owed to this incomparable Prince who had exposed his life and had as it were immolated himself for them. Solvamus bono Principi stipendiarias lacrymas, qui pro nobis qui pro nobis etiam vitae stipendium solvit.[²] But I who am about to entertain you on the

¹ Luke 23:28; “…weep not over me; but weep for yourselves…” (DRB)
² “Let us pay (offer) the tribute of tears to our good Prince, who also paid (offered) the tribute of his life for us.” A modification of Ambrose’s “Solvamus bono principi stipendiarias lacrymas, quia ille nobis solvit etiam mortis suae stipendium”; “Let us pay (offer) the tribute of tears to our good Prince, because he also paid (offered) the tribute of his death for us.” Source: Ambrose. Sancti Ambrosii Mediolanensis Episcopi Opera, Ad Manuscriptos Codices Vaticanos, Gallicanos, Belgicos, &c. Nec Non Ad Editiones Veteres Emendata, Studio et Labore Monachorum Ordinis S. Benedicti, E Congregatione S. Mauri. Tomus Secundus, Johannis Baptistae Coignard, regis typographi, ac bibliopolae ordinarii. Et Johannis Baptistae Coignard filii, regis typographi, ac bibliopolae ordinarii, via Jacobae sub Bibliis aureis, vol. 2,
bitter Death and sufferings of a God, Saviour of mankind, instead of borrowing the words of St Ambrose which seem so applicable \(\text{to my subject, find myself compelled on the contrary to say to you: No. my friends, give not your tears to your dying God, he does not require them, your tears are precious, be careful in the employment of them \(\text{how you employ them}, a subject of greater importance demands \(\text{calls for} \text{them of you: Jesus Christ does not only permit you not to bewail his death, but he even expressly forbids you, if this should be an obstacle to your bewailing an \(\text{another} \text{evil which more strictly concerns you and which effectually is more deplorable than even the death of the Son of God. I am aware that all creatures became or appeared sensible thereat. The Sun was eclipsed; the Earth trembled, the Veil of the Temple was rent, the Rocks split assunder, the graves opened and the dead rose again, all nature was troubled: man alone, I repeat it, is dispensed from this duty, provided that he acquit himself of another which is indeed lest tender in appearance but more solid in reality. Let us then leave to the luminary bodies and to the Elements the care of honouring the funeral obsequies of J.C. by the marks of their mourning or if you choose to associate with them intellectual creatures, let us leave to the Blessed Angels the care of honouring the funeral Obsequies of J.C. by the token of their mourning; the Angels of peace says, Isaias, shall weep bitterly.\[^3\] But as for us, let us weep with J.C. let us weep for what Jesus Christ wept: thus we shall sanctify our tears and render them salutary to us.

An evil which in the idea of God is greater than the death of a Man God, an evil which is more deserving of our tears than all that the Son of God endured in his profession, you are too enlightened my D\(^\text{f}\) [Dear] friends, not to have immediately understood to be that of Sin. There is no other. Nothing amongst all possible beings besides sin could claim our tears in preference to the sufferings of J.C. and justify the words of God our Saviour when he said to us with equal truth and Charity: Weep not over me but

\[^3\text{See Isaias 33:7.}\]

\[^5\text{See Isaias 33:7.}\]

\[^3\text{See Isaias 33:7.}\]

\[^5\text{See Isaias 33:7.}\]
Mystery of his holy passion be to bewail the disorder of our sins as the cause of it. For if J.C had suffered independently of our Sins, his passion however rigorous to him, would not be so dreadful to us; and if our sins had no connexion with his sufferings, they would be less odious to us. It is therefore by sin that we are to measure the inestimable benefit of the Passion of the Son of God, and by the inestimable benefit of his passion to measure the grievousness of sin. Behold the subject of our tears and of your pious attention.

If what our holy Faith this day represents to us this day be a thing most wonderful in the order of nature, viz. a suffering God; I may confidently affirm that this prodige,\(^4\) astonishing as it is, is surpassed by that which the same faith discovers to us in the order of grace, when it places before our eyes a penitent God. Such is, (O the depths of the Counsels of God) such is the quality which the Saviour of the World has been pleased to take upon himself, and which he constantly bore during the whole course of his passion. Such is the Mystery which we celebrate; and since according to the Holy Scripture, true penitence consists in two things, contrition by which we detest sin, and satisfaction by which it is atoned for, when I say a penitent God, I mean a God affected with the most lively contrition for the sins of mankind, I mean a God satisfying at his own cost and in the strict rigour of justice for the sins of man. Two obligations which the Man God, J.C. took upon himself from the first moment of his life, and which you are about to see if he exactly fulfilled in the day of his passion. For this purpose I mean to represent him to you in the garden of Olives and on Mount Calvary.

In the Garden as a contrite God, feeling all the bitterness of sin. On Calvary where he expired, that you may there contemplate in his person a God offering himself a Victim in satisfaction for sin. Renew your attention, my D[ r] friends and let us begin by the interior pains of J. C. to learn what ought ever to be the subject of our grief.

No sooner had he entered into the garden where he went to pray, that he fell into the most profound grief, insomuch that he declared to his disciples that his soul was sorrowful even unto death[,] \textit{tristis est anima mea usque ad mortem.} He was seized with fear[,] \textit{cepit paverer;} he was oppressed with heaviness, \textit{cepit tædere;} so great was the conflict in his interior, that he already suffered a kind of agony, \textit{factus in agonia}, which forced from his sared\(^5\) body a sweat.

\(^4\) \textit{prodige} – (arch./obs.) A prodigy: an omen, portent, or sign; inexplicable, outside the course of natural events.

\(^5\) “sared” – (obs.; Old Eng.- Mid. Eng.) (1) Variant of “sore”: in bodily pain, suffering, afflicted, wounded; (2) Variant of “sere/sear”: dried, withered, thin. Possibly also a miswriting; perhaps “scarred,” or in other locations, “sacred” body.
of blood. What is the meaning of all this asks S't Chrysostom in a God who is fortitude itself, and whose apparent weaknesses are so many miracles of his all powerful Charity? What doth he fear? Why is he troubled? Why this
discouragement in a soul, which in other respects enjoying the clear vision of God, doth not cease to be filled with the pure joys of Beatitude? Why this internal war and this revolt of the passions in a mind incapable of being moved by any other springs than those of sovereign reason? Ah My Friends, this is what we ought well to meditate on, for our edification. For to say that the Saviour of the world thus grieved only at the sight of death, that the ignominy alone of the Cross, or the rigour of the torments they were preparing for him, caused in him these agitations, these disgusts, these mortal fears, would not be to have a sufficient idea of the Passions of a God. No my Brethren eloquently replies S't Chrys. this is not what this great Soul was the most afflicted at. The Cross which J.C. had chosen as the instrument of our redemption, did not appear unto him so terrific an object. This Cross which was to be the cause of his glory, did not become to him a subject

of disgrace |shame|. The Chalice, which his Father had given him and for which reason it was so precious to him, was not that bitter chalice for which he testified so great an horror: and which forced from all the members of his sacred Body a sweat of Blood; it was not precisely the approach of the Mysterious Baptism of his death. For however bloody was to be this Baptism, he had most earnestly desired it, he had sought it with holy eagerness, he had said to his Apostles:

\begin{center}
\textit{Baptismo \[autem\] habeo baptisari & [abbr. of \textit{et}] quomodo coarctor, usque dum perficiatur?}
\end{center}

I have a baptism wherewith I am to be baptized: and how am I straitened until it be accomplished? S't Luke 12.50. There was then another cause besides the presence of death that rendered the soul of our Saviour thus sad and disconsolate. It was sin as I have already observed; amongst all Beings, sin alone was capable of causing this poignant grief in the Man God, and render the Lord of Glory a suffering and penitent God. Raise yourselves then my Dr Friends above all human thoughts |conceptions|, and by the

light of Faith again attentively consider this great Truth.

Whilst the Chief Priests and Pharisees were holding Council at the House of Caiaphas against J. C. and were preparing to oppress him by false accusations and fictitious Crimes, Jesus Christ himself in the Garden humbling and prostrating himself before his Eternal Father, considered himself, without however any prejudice to his innocence, loaded with real crimes and according to the Prophecy of Isaias, which was literally verified in him: \textit{Posuit [Dominus] in eo iniquitatem omnium nostrum}. The Lord hath laid on him the iniquity of us all. Isaias C. 53 &
6th V. Now in consequence of God having transferred our iniquities upon his adorable Son, this just one who was incapable of sin, found himself loaded with the sins of all states and conditions; yes with all the Sacrifices that would ever be committed and of which he had a distinct foreknowledge, with all the Blasphemies that would be uttered against Heaven, with all the scandals and abominations that would be spread over the whole universe. All these iniquities rushed in like a torrent upon him and were to him as so many executioners:

*Circumdederunt me dolores mortis*[\textsuperscript{6}] saith he, *et torrentes iniquitatis conturbaverunt me.*\[6\] The Sorrows of death surrounded me: and the torrents of iniquity troubled me. These words of the Psalmist I say are those of J. C. for according to the interpretation of St Augustin, they ought to be personally understood of him. It was then at the sight of this happy moment for us but dolorous to J. C. \[interlined without strikethrough\] our Lord that the Prophet Jeremy said to him; *magna est velut mare contritio tua.* It was then, at the sight of this happy moment for us, but most dolorous to J. C. that the Prophet Jeremy had a right to say \[justly said\] to him; *magna est enim velut mare contritio tua.*\[7\] Ah Lord your sorrow is like unto a vast ocean for its unfathomable depth and its immeasurable immensity. It was to increase and swell this sea that all the sins of mankind, as the holy scripture mentions, entered as so many rivers into the Soul of the Son of God: for if it is also of his passion and of the excess of his sorrow, that this passage is to be understood: *Salvum me fac[, Deus[,] quoniam intraverunt aquæ usque ad animam meam.*\[8\] With this

\[\textsuperscript{6} See Psalm 17:5.\]
\[\textsuperscript{7} See Lamentations 2:13; “...for great as the sea is thy destruction...” (DRB)\]
\[\textsuperscript{8} See Psalm 68:2; “Save me, O God, for the waters are come in even unto my soul.” (DRB)\]

\[\textsuperscript{12} difference however, that instead of the Rivers that flow into the sea become so blended and intermixed therewith that the one cannot be distinguished from the other, whereas in this abyss of Sins, in this sea of Dolours, in which the Soul of our Saviour was inundated \[immersed\], he clearly discerned and distinguished every species of sin and those of every individual person. Can it then be wonderful that this immense multitude of Crimes,\[9\] which according to the Metaphor of the Holy Ghost having formed a deluge of waters in this Blessed Soul, it should be as it were swallowed up thereby, or in the excess of sadness and grief proceeding from \[the effects of\] his zeal for his Fathers glory and Charity for us, that this deluge of waters should be followed by a sweat of blood? *Factus est sudor ejus sicut guttae sanguinis.*\[10\]

\[\textsuperscript{9} Although the word appears as “Crines,” it is a miswriting of “Crimes.” See the usage repeated on page 16 below.\]
\[\textsuperscript{10} See Luke 22:44; “…his sweat became as drops of blood...” (DRB)\]
Behold, my D’ Friends what I call the Contrition of a God and the first act of his penance. We will at present pass over the Perfidy of his disciple Judas, and the innumerable other outrages, indignities and sufferings of J. C. and proceed to

Mount Calvary where he expired: There contemplating in Spirit this crucified God, the Author and finisher of our Faith, who according to the expression of the Apostle Heb. 12 having joy proposed to him underwent the Cross,\(^{[11]}\) suffering the most cruel and ignominious death. Why was the most innocent of men treated as the most criminal and delivered up to unmerciful executioners? Ah my Friends this death was the punishment due to our sins, and whatsoever horror we may conceive for what passed on Mount Calvary, we must acknowledge was justly ordained and holily and divinely executed. For we are not this day to consider the Saviour of the World as to what he is in himself but as to what he was pleased |voluntarily chose| to be for the love of us: We are not to regard his Passion with respect to the Jews who were only the instruments of it, but with respect to God who was there in the principle Agent and sovereign Disposer. Jesus Christ himself was the Saint of Sa holy of holies, he was the well beloved of the Father, the Object of his complacency

\[^{[11]}\text{Hebrews 12:2; “Looking on Jesus, the author and finisher of faith, who, having joy set before him, endured the cross, despising the shame, and now sitteth on the right hand of the throne of God.” (DRB)}\]

The Head |Chief| of the Elect, the Source of all Blessings and incarnate Sanctity: But on Mount Calvary these qualities were as I may say eclipsed, he made himself a curse for our sake, \textit{Factus pro nobis maledictum} Gal. 3\(^{[12]}\) and became the propitiation for our sins \textit{propitiato pro peccatis} 1\textsuperscript{st} John C. 2\(^{[13]}\) Now having charged himself with our sins, there were no punishments which |that| were not due to J. C.’s [s] humiliations, affronts, whips, scourges, nails, thorns, and the Cross; For all these were the wages of merited by our sins. Considering him in this point of view, did he suffer too much? No, his Charity, says St Bernard, was full and abundant but it was not lavished: if he is called the man of Sorrows, it is a name says Tertullian most suitable |applicable| to him, since he is the man of sin; we behold him bruised and torn with blows and scourges, but between the number of strokes and the multitude of crimes he atones for, there is but too great proportion: he is abandoned to a wicked, cruel and barbarous rabble, who add to the sentence of Death all that their fury can suggest; but altho’ they add to the sentence of Pilate, they

\[^{[12]}\text{See Galatians 3:13.}\
^{[13]}\text{See 1 John 2:2.}\

add nothing to that of God. Whilst then this Divine Lamb is immolated, My D’ Friends, instead of your minds being prepossessed with his merit, his sanctity & his virtues, consider him as the
victim for your sins. If you represent him to yourselves such as he is in this view, charged with all our debts, that flagellation to which he was condemned will no longer appear so offensive to you, those thorns that tear him will no longer wound the delicacy of your piety; those nails that pierced his hands and feet will no longer excite your indignation. My sins, you will say, accusing yourselves thereof, have deserved all these pains |punishments|; and since J. C. has taken them upon him all my sins he must suffer all the punishment due to them. Moreover, in this consideration, the Eternal Father by a conduct as adorable as it is rigorous, forgetting (if I may be allowed these expressions) that he is his Son, and regarding him as his enemy, declares himself his persecutor or rather the Chief of his persecutors. The Jews

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made their hatred for him serve as a zeal for Religion, to inflict upon his sacred Body all that cruelty could invent; But the cruelty of the Jews did not suffice to punish a man like unto this, a man loaded with all the crimes of the human Race: It was necessary, says St. Ambrose, that god should have a share therein. Yes My D’ Friends, it was God rather than the Counsel of the Jews that delivered up J. C. the just one as [...] though guilty into their hands as St. Peter told in his Sermon told thence. It was by a Decree of the Divine wisdom that the just one, as tho’ guilty was delivered into their hands as St’ Peter told them Definito consilio et præscientia Dei traditum. Acts C.2;[14] It is a true the Pharisees and Doctors of the Law persecuted J. C. and sought to put him unto death; but it was not as holy David divinely inspired said till after the Lord had struck him: Domine quem tu percussisti, persecuti sunt. They have persecuted him whom thou hast smitten: Domine quem tu percussisti, persecuti sunt.[15] Until then they had respected him; until then, how much soever they were incensed against him, they had not dared to offer any violence |outrage|

[14 See Acts 2:23; “... by the determinate counsel and foreknowledge of God...” (DRB)]
[15 See Psalm 68:27. Archer modified the verse by replacing the initial Latin word, “Quoniam” (because) with “Domine,” the vocative form of Dominus (Lord).” He perhaps intended; “Lord, they have persecuted him whom thou has smitten (struck).”]

[17]

to his sacred person: But no sooner hadst [...] God turned thyself against him and vented your just wrath against him, than you grantest |gave| them a replevy[17] and they fell up [on] this innocent prey, which was reserved for their fury. But by whom was he reserved if not by thee, O Lord, who in their sacrilegious vengeance did effect one which was most holy. Long did thou wait for this victim; it was necessary that your glory should be repaired and your justice satisfied: this thou had in view, but seeing in the World no other than criminal subjects and than weak

[16 Illegible: Perhaps “your” corrected to “thou O” God.
[17 “replevy” – (Anglo-Norman/Mid. Eng.) Law: An alteration or shortening of “writ of replevin.” In this usage: A writ or action to bail or liberate a prisoner, to take possession of.]
men and criminal subjects whose sufferings could be of no merit in your sight, you found 
yourself in a sort of inability of avenging yourself. This day you can do it, for behold a victim 
worthy of you, a victim capable of atoning for the Sins of a thousand Worlds, such a Victim as 
you wished [desired] for and as you merited [deserved]. This Saviour fastened to the Cross, is the 
Subject your rigourous Justice had itself prepared. Strike then O Lord, strike, he is ready to 
receive your [the] strokes of your just wrath, consider him not as your anointed, but cast your 
eyes upon him only to remind you that he is our Host or 

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or [word duplicated] victim and that in immolating him you may satisfy that Divine hatred you 
have for Sin. But God is not satisfied with striking him but he abandons him in the midst of his 
sufferings to so great interior desolation that he crieth out Deus meus, Deus meus, ut quid 
dereliquisti me? My God. my God why hast thou forsaken me? Matt. 27th[18] He does not 
however use these words that he may be delivered from his sufferings but he thereby shews us 
rigour of the Divine Justice which required that he should suffer such excessive torments. Now 
in all this procedure of God there can be nothing but what is perfectly consonant with the rules of 
Equity. No, saith S[18] Augustine, there never was any death that was at the same time more just 
and more unjust that that of our Redeemer: more unjust with respect to men who were the 
executioners and more just with respect to God who passed the Sentence.

Behold, my D' Friends, what sin hath cost our Lord: and what hath it [But How great is] 
hitherto cost us? In the prodigious contrast which

[18 See Matthew 27:46.]

[19] appears between in this respect between him and us, between him who was altogether holy and 
us who are sinners, had he not great reason to say to us: Weep not over me, but weep for 
yourselves?

Behold, my D' Friends, what sin hath cost our Lord. Reflect how great is the difference 
between his Sorrow and satisfaction suffering, which he who was innocent underwent 
satisfaction for it, who was innocent, and that of us who are guilty; and you will see with how 
great reason he says to us: Weep not over me but weep but over yourselves. Let us then in 
consideration of the Suffering of our D' Redeemer to have conceive the greate [,


[19] for, sin 
the cause of them and 
sovereign hatred and detestation for sin which was the cause of them. Let us willingly accept of whatever Crosses and afflictions God may require of us in satisfaction for them. If he were to require |exact| of each of us what he did of his beloved Son we should have 
no cause to complain. But, O infinite mercy and Bounty of our God! almost all the punishment is inflicted
on his adorable Son and favours are heaped upon us. His blood is shed, ours is not required, we have only to offer up his and apply it to us by means of the holy Sacraments which he has established, unite ourselves to him, and ever light sufferings with his which and be diligent in the holy exercise of prayer, resignedly receive the light sufferings afflictions which the Divine Providence may please to send us and the penances which the holy Church & Religion impose |enjoin| in union with the sufferings of our Blessed Redeemer, and through his merits we shall obtain Eternal Happiness which, In the Name &c come to the possession of that Glory which he purchased at so great a |for us at such an immense| price a happiness I sincerely wish[.]

In the Name of the Father &c [etc.]