

Good Friday 2024

Friday, March 29, 2024

This morning, I was in my garage, and I said, "Lord, apart from the Scriptures themselves, there's nothing we can say, to sufficiently express, our gratitude for this salvation completed at the cross.

And no matter what we do, it cannot do it justice, it cannot even begin to convey, or in any way repay...the greatest expression of love in all eternity, there on Calvary.

But here we are in one sense, trying. Here we are in our Good Friday Service, gathered together in loving memory of Jesus Christ. And what He did...when He died. Amen?

And we want to say Thank You God. Thank You for loving us – we love You, we thank You, and I know You know...we need You.

And so we offer up this service and communion. I have some simple handouts in the Back and online:

Gospels:

Matthew 26:36-27:66

Mark 14:32-15:47

Luke 22:39-56

John 18:1-19:42

Prophecies:

Genesis 22

Exodus 12

Psalm 22

Isaiah 53

7 Saying (Cries) from the Cross:

1. A Cry for Forgiveness (Luke 23:33-34a) (To His Crucifiers)
2. A Cry of Assurance (Luke 23:34b-43) (To the Repentant Criminal)
3. A Cry of Care (John 19:25-27) (To His Mother and Friend)
4. A Cry of Anguish (Matthew 27:45-46) (To His God)
5. A Cry to Cry (John 19:28) (To Those Around the Cross)
6. A Cry of Victory (John 19:30) (To Everyone)
7. A Cry of Submission (Luke 23:46) (To His Father)

This evening, we have communion, and I know our time will go by fast.

A "Poem," followed by 3 Points I'd like to highlight from the 7 Sayings of Christ from the Cross, and we actually have 3 brief movie clips that we're going to weave into the message, and I know it's going to be different, but I just know, this is a different day.

So, first the Poem.

I wonder...when did the tradition start? When in the USA, did they begin calling **that day GOOD**?

Do you even wonder, **how** it happened? **When**, it happened? Who came up with the great idea to designate this day as Good Friday?

I'm not sure, but I know somewhere along the line, a decision was made by someone in some sort of authority to **celebrate**...what I perceive to be the deepest depth of human hate...when God suffered and died, when Christ was crucified, by calling it Good.

"That was a **Good** Friday."

Really?

Was it good that He was in such agony, that He sweat drops of blood in the Garden of Gethsemane?

Was it good that although He was innocent of any crime - He was betrayed, arrested, rejected, and convicted to die?

Why?

Was it good that He was beaten to a pulp, that He was mocked, and spit on; that He was scourged with leather strands embedded with cutting metal, and glass which tore His body open, to the point of exposing His organs; He was marred more than any man? Was that good?

Was it good that He was crowned with thorns, carried the cross, and then nailed to it?

Was it good that He was lifted up high for all to see, on the busy road of Calvary, His naked beaten, battered, bloody body?

And there He was all alone, bearing the burden of 120 billion people, including you and me, all our sin, laid on Him, and the words of God most high, tetelestai, He breathed His last...and then He died.

He died.

Who has the audacity, the authority to call that Good?

You might be surprised to realize...that God did.

I believe He named it; I believe He claimed it, I believe He has the audacity, the authority, and the absolute sovereignty to call it Good Friday.

I don't believe the name of the day, the name we say is human in origin.

The Bible says in Isaiah 53:10, "Yet it **pleased the Lord to bruise Him**...when You make His soul an offering for sin."

I believe that somewhere before time, in the mystery of eternity, the blessed members of the Holy Trinity, saw the cross of Calvary, they saw the flood of blood, the rain of

pain, and all the sin on Him. They saw the great I Am, as the Lamb, and said, "It is good."

It's good for God, it was good TO God, because it's good for you and me, for us.

With each injection of rejection, with every insult hurled His way. With every blow from every fist, in His love He lived to pay, for all our sins, to be with Him, and now heaven is our home, saved by Christ the Holy One, seated on the throne.

I would call it Sad Friday, Bad Friday, I'd change it if I could. But it's not up to me, it's up to Him, and Jesus calls it good.

Play Movie #1

1. THE PURPOSE OF THE CROSS (Luke 23:33-34A)

Luke 23:33–34 (NKJV) "And when they had come to the place called Calvary, there they crucified Him, and the criminals, one on the right hand and the other on the left. ³⁴ Then Jesus said, "Father, forgive them, for they do not know what they do."

And the first words from the lips of our Lord, consisted in a prayer for forgiveness.

That was the **purpose** of the cross.

Here Jesus is praying for the ones responsible for His crucifixion, His accusers, His abusers, the ones who nailed Him to the tree.

And it sets the tone, it reveals God's heart, doesn't matter what you've done, it doesn't matter where you're from. It could be that you've lied, it could be that you've lied with someone who's not your spouse, it could be that you've lied in wait, and like these particular Jews and Romans, you've killed someone.

As a matter of fact, Jesus said if you hate someone, you've committed murder in your heart. We all need forgiveness.

And it's for that reason, these are the first words from the cross.

Maybe you've seen that Christmas card in circulation.

If our greatest need had been information, God would have come as an educator.

If our greatest need had been technology, God would have come as a scientist.

If our greatest need had been money, God would have come as an economist.

But our greatest need is forgiveness, so God came as our Savior!

(OT – Kofar; NT – aphiemi = to send away; set free)

Play Movie #2 (The Power of the Cross)

2. THE POWER OF THE CROSS (John 19:28-30)

John 19:28–30 (NKJV) “After this, Jesus, knowing that all things were now accomplished, that the Scripture might be fulfilled, said, “I thirst!”²⁹ Now a vessel full of sour wine was sitting there; and they filled a sponge with sour wine, put *it* on hyssop, and put *it* to His mouth.³⁰ So when Jesus had received the sour wine, He said, “It is finished!” And bowing His head, He gave up His spirit.”

(With a loud voice – Luke 23:36)

He needed to wet His whistle.

Psalm 22:15 (NET) “The roof of my mouth is as dry as a piece of pottery; my tongue sticks to my gums.”

He wanted everyone to hear those words, which in the Greek is that word tetelestai, “It is Finished,” – Debt paid in full.

Substitutionary Atonement. (It was the only way) (Me before the judge)

Leviticus 3:2 (NKJV) “And he shall lay his hand on the head of his offering, and kill it at the door of the tabernacle of meeting; and Aaron’s sons, the priests, shall sprinkle the blood all around on the altar.”

One of the brothers was telling me a true story about his relative who’s serving a life-sentence in Pelican Bay; And how it all happened was one day, his brother got in a fight and he beat someone down really bad, after which he fled the scene came home, knowing there were witnesses, and that the cops would come looking for him. Problem was, he was on probation – so he asked his brother, that since he was on probation and the judge would throw the book at him, to tell officers that it was you, and all they’re going to do is send you to camp, for battery charges. So, he did what his brother asked, he told the officers it was him, he signed a written confession, under the impression that he’d only do a small amount of time. But it turns out, that the next day the guy his brother had beaten down - died.

At first, the free brother thought there was going to be a hit on his life, for what he had done, but surprisingly the brother doing the time, said you’ll be fine, I’ll do the time, just stay out of trouble, use your freedom to live right.

(Vicarious – acting or done for another)

Did you know the Wealthy in China Use Body Doubles

In China, the extremely wealthy can avoid prison terms by hiring body doubles. Incredibly, this is true! Slate.com originally broke the story of how the super-rich in China get away with pretty much everything, even murder.

According to Slate, a wealthy 20-year-old named Hu was drag racing his friends, when he struck and killed a pedestrian. Although Hu received a prison sentence, it was later discovered that the man appearing in court and who served the sentence wasn't Hu at all, but a body double!

In another case, the owner of a demolition company that illegally demolished a home hired a destitute man and promised him \$31 for each day the "body double" spent in jail. In China, the practice is so common that there is even a term for it: "substitute criminal."

This may seem scandalous, but 2000 years ago Someone became our substitute and took the punishment we deserve. He took the penalty of all our sins in his own body on the Cross. Justice is not met by the wealthy getting off scot-free. However, the death of Christ was "The just for the unjust – so that he might bring us to God" (1 Pet. 3:18).

2 Corinthians 5:21 (NLT) "For God made Christ, who never sinned, to be the offering for our sin, so that we could be made right with God through Christ."

Jesus paid it all, all to Him I owe, sin had left a crimson stain, He washed it white as snow.

It is finished! Debt paid in full!

So then, does that mean that everyone's saved?

Movie #3

3. THE PARDON OF THE CROSS (Luke 23:39-43)

Luke 23:39–43 (NKJV) "Then one of the criminals who were hanged blasphemed Him, saying, "If You are the Christ, save Yourself and us." ⁴⁰ But the other, answering, rebuked him, saying, "Do you not even fear God, seeing you are under the same condemnation? ⁴¹ And we indeed justly, for we receive the due reward of our deeds; but this Man has done nothing wrong." ⁴² Then he said to Jesus, "Lord, remember me when You come into Your kingdom." ⁴³ And Jesus said to him, "Assuredly, I say to you, today you will be with Me in Paradise."

What would have happened if Jesus saved Himself?

What happened to that guy, how did he get saved?

He saw Jesus die. He saw the love; he sensed the love.

The soldiers did too.

Recently I read a story of a man in a big city who came across a little boy that was lost. This little boy was all alone in the hustle and bustle of city life and had no clue where his parents were; he was just there crying, when the man approached him and offered to help. "Hey little guy, we'll get you back to your family." Do you know anything about where you live?" The little boy said, "I don't know my address or my way home, but I do know that my home is close to a building with a really big cross on it." The man immediately knew what he was describing, it was the church a few blocks away with the big cross, it wasn't that far, so he led him there.

And once the little boy found the cross, he found his home.

I'm not supposed to tell you yet, but Sunday He rises from the dead.

This evening God invites you to turn from your sin, and trust in Him as your Lord and Savior.

Not only will he help you when life gets hard, he will help you when life ends; he has a place for you in heaven.

John 1:12 (NLT) "But to all who believed him and accepted him, he gave the right to become children of God."

(Jesus invites us to come to Him, follow Him)

That's why we sing, "*Nothing in my hand I bring, simply to Thy cross I cling.*"

Communion