

Good Friday

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- [0 : 00] They came up to him saying, Hail King of the Jews, and struck him with their hands.
- ! Pilate went out again and said to them, See, I am bringing him out to you, but I want you to know that I do not find him guilty of any crime. So Jesus came out wearing the crown of thorns and the purple robe. Pilate said to them, Behold the man.
- When the chief priests and the officers saw him, they cried out, Crucify him, crucify him. Pilate said to them, Take him yourselves and crucify him, for I find no guilt in him.
- John 19, verses 7 to 13 from the New Living Translation. The Jewish leaders replied, By our law he ought to die because he called himself the Son of God.
- When Pilate heard this, he was more frightened than ever. He took Jesus back into the headquarters again and asked him, Where are you from? But Jesus gave no answer. Why don't you talk to me, Pilate demanded.
- [1 : 17] Don't you realize that I have the power to release you or crucify you? Then Jesus said, You would have no power over me at all unless it was given to you from above. So the one who handed me over to you has a greater sin.
- Then Pilate tried to release him, but the Jewish leader shouted, If you release this man, you are no friend of Caesar. Anyone who declares himself a king is a rebel against Caesar.
- When they said this, Pilate brought Jesus out to them again. Then Pilate sat down on the judgment seat on the platform that is called the stone pavement, in Hebrew, Gabbatha.
- Now it was the day of preparation of the Passover. It was about the sixth hour.
- He said to the Jews, Behold, your king. They cried out, Away with him. Away with him. Crucify him.
- [2 : 15] Pilate said to them, Shall I crucify your king? The chief priests answered, We have no king but Caesar.
- So he delivered him over to them to be crucified. So they took Jesus and he went out, bearing his own cross, to the place called the place of a skull, which in Aramaic is called Golgotha.
- There they crucified him. And with him two others, one on either side and Jesus between them. Pilate also wrote an inscription and put it on the cross.
- It read, Jesus of Nazareth, the king of the Jews. Many of the Jews read this inscription, for the place where Jesus was crucified was near the city.
- And it was written in Aramaic, in Latin, and in Greek. So the chief priests of the Jews said to Pilate, Do not write the king of the Jews, but rather, This man said, I am the king of the Jews.
- [3 : 29] Pilate answered, What I have written, I have written. When the soldiers had crucified Jesus, they took his garments and divided them into four parts, one part for each soldier, also his tunic.

But the tunic was seamless, woven in one piece from top to bottom. So they said to one another, Let us not tear it, but cast lots for it to see whose it shall be.

This was to fulfill the scripture which says, They divided my garments among them, and for my clothing they cast lots. So the soldiers did these things.

But standing by the cross of Jesus were his mother and his mother's sister, Mary, the wife of Clopas, and Mary Magdalene. When Jesus saw his mother and the disciples whom he loved standing nearby, he said to his mother, Woman, behold your son.

Then he said to the disciple, Behold your mother. And from that hour, the disciple took her to his own home. Jesus, knowing that all was now finished, said to fulfill the scripture, I thirst.

[4 : 50] A jar full of sour wine stood there. So they put a sponge full of the sour wine on a hyssop branch and held it to his mouth. When Jesus had received the sour wine, he said, It is finished.

And he bowed his head and gave up his spirit. Since it was the day of preparation and so that the bodies would not remain on the cross on the Sabbath, for that Sabbath was a high day, the Jews asked Pilate that their legs might be broken and that they might be taken away.

So the soldiers came and broke the legs of the first and of the other who had been crucified with him. But when they came to Jesus and saw that he was already dead, they did not break his legs. But one of the soldiers pierced his side with a spear, and at once there came out blood and water.

He who saw it has borne witness. His testimony is true, and he knows that he is telling the truth that you also may believe. For these things took place that the scripture might be fulfilled.

Not one of his bones will be broken. And again, another scripture says, They will look on him who may have pierced. After these things, Joseph of Arimathea, who was a disciple of Jesus, would secretly, for fear of the Jews, ask Pilate that he might take away the body of Jesus.

[6 : 05] And Pilate gave him permission. So he came and took his body. Nicodemus also, who earlier had come to Jesus by night, came bringing a mixture of myrrh and aloes, about 75 pounds in weight.

So they took the body of Jesus and bound it in linen cloths with the spices, as is the burial custom of the Jews. Now in the place where he was crucified, there was a garden, and in the garden, a new tomb in which no one had yet been laid.

So because of the Jewish day of preparation, since the tomb was close at hand, they laid Jesus there. Amen. So as we reflect this evening upon the death of Christ, hopefully we've seen from his word, we've sung of the effects of that death, and we've seen that on that last Friday of Jesus's life, that his life, the purpose of his life was his death.

And as we reflect for a few minutes this evening, and the remaining time that we have, we're going to think on those things. And so before we do, let's ask the Lord to bless our time together.

Lord, we thank you for your word, we thank you for the reminder that comes from scripture of the work of Christ, and especially the work of Christ on the cross. And as we reflect these many years later, we give you thanks.

[7 : 36] And Father, may you work in our hearts' faith because of these things. And we ask this in his name. Amen. So I want to turn our attention before we begin to the section that Deanna read, John 19, 28 through 30.

And in the time that we have together, I just want to talk and reflect a little bit on something that she read. It's the reality of the death of Christ.

And we see it most clearly in those first couple verses. And as we do so, I want us to think about the phrase that we probably all know and have even maybe said in anger at someone because of their laziness.

It's that phrase, the road to hell is paved with good intentions. We don't know where that phrase comes from. Some people think it's Edmund Burke, the explorer, who said, all that's necessary for evil to triumph is for good men to do nothing.

Some people think it's the development of some kind of proverb over the ages. And yet others think it's Bernard of Clairvaux, who's a French theologian, whose song we'll sing in a minute.

[8 : 59] But in that phrase, which's been taken on the lips of everyone from Mohammed to John Wesley, we see in that phrase that there's this slide into eternal obscurity or even worse.

And in it, the participants either unwillingly, but definitely unwittingly, they don't even really know how they got there on that road.

But in the life of Jesus, we see the exact opposite, especially when we reflect on what happened on this Friday so long ago.

You see, in the life of Jesus Christ and really in his death, we see a road that is paved directly to the cross.

But it's not a road to hell, it's a road to heaven. It's built brick by brick, stone by stone, paved directly to heaven by the suffering, by the blood, by the death of Christ to glory.

[10 : 09] It's real and it's purposeful. His death gives us life. And as we reflect this evening on that, we're gonna talk about those things.

It's real and it's purposeful. The road to heaven and the road to hell. Even when I put those two together, they kind of stand in contrast. It might even be provoking, like which road am I on?

Is there another way? Which road are you on? You see, the person of Jesus forces us to choose in one of those ways.

And if you've remembered, over the last couple months, we've been walking every time I've spoken through the Gospel of John with the statements of Jesus. And there's this question that lingers among those statements.

Who is Jesus? Or who am I when he is speaking? But there's this second question that's at sometimes explicit when Jesus is speaking to people.

[11 : 13] And sometimes it's hidden in the background and John brings it forth as the writer. What are you going to do with Jesus? What does it mean for you to have faith in him?

What do you think about him? It kind of evokes this idea of it's a dividing line. It's a plumb line. It's the diversion of these two roads.

What do you think about him? What do you think about the death of Christ? If it's one of rejection, is it one of neutrality that kind of slides into rejection?

Is it one of apathy? Which really isn't apathy at all as Jesus tells us. Or is it one that really we're embarrassed to say it's one of quietly dismissing it because we're modern people that keep modern company.

But that kind of begs the question that it can't be real, can it? But it is real. It's real because the gospel of John says it's real.

[12 : 23] It's real for these reasons. You can't have the death of Christ and still have Jesus. And that's often what we think.

You see, it's palatable to our minds and even our senses to want Christ. You know, there's certain benefits if we try to separate those two things. We get all these great sayings.

We get all of these great examples to follow in different situations. We get his teaching, but you don't get any of that without his death because they're bound together.

And there have been attempts over history, even in our day, to kind of disentangle them. But when we do that, we don't make his sayings useful or his example helpful.

Instead, what we do is we call him a liar. And when we do that, we think that we can have him on our terms. We think that all of those great things that he has done and all those great things that he has said, that we can have all of those things.

[13 : 40] And then when we come to a section like John 19, we think that's all fantasy. after this, Jesus, knowing that all was now finished, said to fulfill the scripture, I thirst.

It seems pretty innocuous. It seems like a very throwaway statement. But in that, we see this culmination of all those events that led up to this moment.

We see in that the sum of Christ's humiliation. We see that everything has been marching towards this fact of him being made low, that began when he came to this earth, and that continued on in this last week of Jesus.

Mockery. Humiliation by being interrogated by his opponents, or questioned by even his closest followers. Humiliation humiliation that negated the fact that God was here in his glory in human form.

Humiliation in that he was betrayed by both his enemies and denied by his closest allies. Humiliation in being judged in court and then in the court of public opinion.

[15 : 06] Humiliation in his being scourged. humiliation in his marching to the cross. Humiliation in this final act of his death.

But even in his death, it was humiliation. It was the very last thing that could be done. It was the escalation of all these things that had been building.

You see, even in his death, it was not easy, but it was marked by suffering. And we know this from the words that he spoke.

We know this because he exclaims, I thirst. And then in that, he's not offered that same wine that we know of from the other gospels that people tried to hand him on his way to the cross, that wine mixed with myrrh that would have made his suffering easier.

No, it's not that wine at all. Here, it's just simple, sour wine. And it was this weird turn of events. The same hyssop that now offers him this sour wine was the same hyssop that was dipped in blood.

[16 : 20] And for Israel, it marked the doorpost, saving them from death, saving them from suffering. And now, it's extended to him to prolong his suffering.

the blood on the frames of the door and the Passover were offered by hyssop. And now, suffering is offered to Christ on that same hyssop branch.

Even in his death, humiliation. Even in his death, suffering. It's real because it's the logical end of all of his life, of this humiliation that began in him coming to the world.

And now, on this final day, it's real because scripture bears witness to it. When we read of these events of the cross, we're often confronted with this idea of injustice.

And we think how unfair that the Savior that was sinless died, that sin held him there. And we can slowly kind of slip into this idea that this is an accident, this is unfortunate, and this, did they really know any better?

[17 : 40] They were just confused. It's definitely not deliberate, but it's anything but that. The death of Christ is for a purpose.

The death of Christ demonstrates the intentionality of God working in redemption. God is for a life.

But it's not just his death, it's also his life that demonstrates this. If you remember the miracles of Jesus, he often conducts them and then he reminds his friends or the person that has received this miracle, he says to them, don't tell anybody, for my hour has not yet come.

Or he'll say this again, when he heals or brings people back from the dead, he'll do something a little bit different and he'll slip away in the crowd even though they press in amongst him and they want to take him.

They're seeking to capture him. He does all of this so he can be in this moment right here in John 19. And all along, Jesus has reminded his followers of this, life.

[18 : 56] That no one takes his life from him, but he lays it down of his own accord. He has the authority to lay it down and he has the authority to take it up again.

And that's the charge that he receives from the father. Christ's death is not by accident. Christ's death is with a purpose.

his life is leading all to this moment. His life is paving the way to the cross. Even in these last moments, we see something where we see that purpose of his death.

We see the purposefulness of his words. The last words of Christ show that to us. Even in this request of sour wine where he says, I thirst.

It's fulfillment of the promise of Psalm 69. David utters those words and Jesus in his suffering, his mind kind of steeped in scripture, he utters these words from Psalm 69 because he responds to seal the promise of scripture.

[20 : 15] He's given wine not out of pity, but out of mockery is what Mark tells us to prolong his life, to prolong his suffering for entertainment.

Even in his words, even in his dying, there's humiliation and suffering. And he's able to cry out then with these famous words after his thirst goes away with, it is finished.

And when he says this, it's not out of resignation, it's not out of defeat, it's not out of completion of the task of dying. It's more than that.

It's all of redemptive history, that's all of time coming to this moment in his death. The promise that was at the beginning, at the very beginning, that man would crush the head of the serpent and that his heel would be bruised.

It's a fulfillment of that promise. It is finished. It's the picture of all of these saviors of Israel that we heard about in Judges, except they leave so much wanting.

[21 : 27] It's that promise fulfilled. It is finished. It's the picture of all these kings who are not so just in the life of Israel. That is finished.

It's this picture even in the worship of Israel, the day of atonement. All of these things are pointing forth to Christ in this moment.

It's the promise in Isaiah that his wounds would offer healing. It's this promise over and over again of this very moment and this very point in time.

And so it's more than just words. it's more than just blood. It's more than the blood of bulls and goats as we see in Leviticus.

It's more than that because it never has to happen again and it never does because those things promised a thing they couldn't fully do because they were pointing always to this moment right here.

[22 : 35] it's a conclusion of the charge the father gave the son. Not by accident, not by happenstance, but on purpose.

It's a road paved to the cross to death of the Lord Jesus Christ who gave himself for our sins to deliver us from this present evil age according to the will of our God and father.

It's planned and purposed by God. What's the purpose of his death though? What does it accomplish? The purpose of his death is this.

It does something that sacrifices never could do, right? It's for the last time. There's no more need for sacrifice. There's no more need because it is finished.

It is finished because in the death of Christ we find the love of God but we find it in being met with the wrath of God against sinners.

[23 : 46] There's pardon for sin, not for brokenness, not for anything less, but full on rebellion against authority.

Not authority of that day, not authority of the highest kind, but authority of the ultimate kind of all eternity. It's that kind of rebellion. And in that, the pardon is extremely great.

For the creator has now become the redeemer. We talk often of Christ-centered Christianity, and that's a good thing. But there's nothing less than that.

In fact, it's more cross-centered. It's leading all to this moment, because this is the heart of the gospel. The gospel doesn't happen unless we have the death of Christ for sinners.

Because in this, the Son lays down his life for sinners and turns away the wrath of God, so that we might have life.

[24 : 53] And in that, John will write later, that in that, that is a picture of love. And so that's why we can talk about this gruesome event, this injustice, and speak of it fondly, for it has purchased pardon.

And how do we know it worked? Because three days later, we get our confirmation. So, this evening, and for all time, slide not into hell, but instead, remember that you are carried, and you are marched down the road to glory, not by you, but by the blood, suffering, and death of Christ.

That is what carries you. May we delight in his glory, and may we see the real purposeful death of Jesus, and worship the king, so that we may know the love of God.

Let's pray. Lord, we're thankful this evening for the reflection upon Christ's death. May you work in our hearts to remind us of this, to carry it forward with us, and Father, may we worship you, and may we rejoice at his sacrifice.

We ask this in Christ's name. Amen.