

4.02.21 Why It Is Called Good Friday?

I encourage you, if you haven't already, to take the time later to consider all that happened to the Lord on that Friday, long ago.

You'll find the full chronology (and the scripture references) in your bulletin; but briefly, the biblical record tells of the Lord's unjust arrest, the mock trials, flogging, and the contempt spewed out by the soldiers, religious leaders, and Jewish people, as they mocked Him.

And how does our merciful Lord respond to all this?

1. "Father, forgive them, for they do not know what they are doing." -Luke 23:34

Jesus asks the Father to forgive them in their ignorance; when He could have rightly judged them for their blasphemies.

In Peter's first sermon (**Acts 2**) he confronts the Jews (verses **22-24**) saying, "Men of Israel, listen to these words: Jesus the Nazarene, a man attested to you by God with miracles and wonders and signs which God performed through Him in your midst, just as you yourselves know— this Man, delivered over by the predetermined plan and foreknowledge of God, you nailed to a cross by the hands of godless men and put Him to death. But God raised Him up again, putting an end to the agony of death, since it was impossible for Him to be held in its power" i.e., He didn't stay dead!

Paul said it this way (**1Corinthians 2:8**), "None of the rulers of this age understood it, for if they had, they would not have crucified the Lord of glory."

John 3:16, "For God so loved the world that He gave His one and only Son, that whoever believes in Him shall not perish but have eternal life."

Romans 5:8, "But God demonstrates His own love for us in this: While we were still sinners, Christ died for us."

God's forgiveness is granted to us in Christ even though we do not deserve it, and even after all that was unjustly done to Him, He still asks the Father to forgive us.

2. "Truly, I say to you, today you will be with Me in Paradise." -Luke 23:43

There were two criminals being crucified at the same time as the Lord, one on either side of Him. One of them yelled insults at Jesus, while the other remarked that even though they deserved the punishment they were receiving, Jesus did not, for He was innocent of any crime. Then the one speaking reverently about Jesus asked Him, Lord, please "remember me when You come in Your kingdom!" Jesus answered, "Truly I say to you, today you shall be with Me in Paradise." It would seem that this criminal believed in Christ as Lord.

Jesus knew that His death was imminent and that He would soon be in heaven with His Father, and so, Jesus used the word "paradise" as a synonym for "heaven."

Paul says (**2Corinthians 12:4**), "[that he] was caught up into Paradise and heard inexpressible words, which a man is not permitted to speak."

John writes (**Revelation 2:7**), that all genuine believers in Christ "will eat of the tree of life which is in the Paradise of God."

So, *Paradise* is the place of blessing and reward where all Christians go after death, or at the "rapture," to be with God forever.

3. He said to His mother, "Woman, behold, your son!" Then He said to the disciple, "Behold, your mother!" -John 19:26-27

Just five days ago, all the people praised and adored Him, but today, they cried out for Him to be crucified. Jesus was betrayed, mocked, dishonored, beaten, unjustly condemned, and then nailed to a cross.

While on the cross, in great pain, Jesus takes the time to express His love and care for Mary, His mother, who He entrusts to John, and from that very hour John took Mary into his own household, treating her as his own mother.

What great love Jesus displayed for His widowed mother, and what trust He expresses in His disciple John. This same John who would outlive all the other Apostles and leave for us the Gospel of John, 1-2-3John, and the Book of Revelation.

**4. "My God, My God, why have you forsaken Me?"
-Matthew 27:46; Mark 15:34**

This is a quote from **Psalm 22:1**, speaking of the time when the Messiah (Jesus) would take upon Himself the sins of the whole world, paying for them with His own shed blood, as a ransom for many.

Isaiah 53:5, "He took upon Himself our sins."

1Corinthians 15:3, "He died for our sins."

2Corinthians 5:21, "Even though He knew no sin, He became sin on our behalf."

Galatians 3:13, "He became a curse for us."

Hebrews 9:26, "He has done away with sin by the sacrifice of Himself."

1Peter 2:24, "He took our sins in His body on the cross."

1Peter 3:18, "He died for sins, once for all."

1John 4:10, "He became the propitiation [atonement, appeasement, acceptable payment] for our sins."

Habakkuk 1:13 says God cannot look upon wickedness [sin] with favor, and so, the Father had to abandon His own Son, i.e., to turn away, as God's wrath was poured out on Him, leaving God's Son totally alone.

Why is that so important so as to be included in the seven sayings of Jesus from the cross?

John 1:1-2, "In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. He was in the beginning with God."

The "Word" was in the beginning, the Greek word translated *beginning* means *source, origin, sovereign rule, absolute authority*. The Greek translated "Word" here is *Logos*, it means the embodiment of all divine authority, power and wisdom. Jesus is the Word, God's revelation to the world; He is the full and final testimony from God to mankind about God's salvation (**Hebrews 1:3**), "He [Christ] is the radiance of [God's] glory and the exact representation of [God's] nature, and upholds all things by the word of His power. When He had made purification of sins, He sat down at the right hand of the Majesty on high."

Not only is the Word, God's Son, Jesus Christ, but *He was with God before anything was made that has been made*. The Greek for the phrase "was with God," means "face to face," i.e., the *Word* [Christ, God the Son] was in an intimate, up close and personal, fellowship with God the Father before anything was created; and not only that, but *the Word was God*. Jesus is God the Son.

God the Father, God the Son and God the Holy Spirit have always been together in fellowship, never apart; but the fellowship between the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit had to cease while Christ became sin and God poured out His wrath upon Him.

That is why Christ's abandonment on the cross is so important, for Jesus was totally alone, God the Father had to turn away from God the Son, for the only time in all of eternity, recorded here as Jesus cries out, "My God, My God, why have you forsaken Me?"

5. "I am thirsty." -John 19:28

Jesus didn't want to drink the sour wine, it couldn't quench anyone's thirst, let alone someone who was only minutes away from death.

But notice (**John 19:28**), "knowing that all things had already been accomplished, to fulfill the Scripture, Jesus said, "I am thirsty." In a sense, Jesus hastens the end to come, for this is the fulfillment of Psalm **69:21**, "for My thirst they gave Me vinegar [sour wine] to drink."

6. "It is finished." -John 19:30

Jesus' cry, "It is finished!" is one Greek word, *pronounced teh-tel-es-sty [tetelestai]*. This phrase was part of everyday life and language in Jesus' time:

When a servant completed a difficult task for his master, he would say *teh-tel-es-sty [the job is done]!*

When the Jewish people went to the temple with their sacrifice, the High Priest would examine what had been brought and respond with the Hebrew equivalent of, "*You have fulfilled your obligation with this offering.*"

When a merchant at the market place made a sale and payment was handed to him, he would say *teh-tel-es-sty*, i.e., "I accept your payment in full."

Jesus took our punishment for sin; He cancelled our sin debt to God by paying it Himself, with His own life, so that we might be made acceptable to God the Father. Sin separates us from God, and therefore the curse of sin must be removed before we can be in God's presence.

It was for this reason that God's Son came to earth, salvation now being complete, Jesus says, "It is finished!"

Isaiah 53:5-6, "He was pierced through for our transgressions, He was crushed for our iniquities; The chastening for our well-being fell upon Him, And by His scourging we are healed. All of us like sheep have gone astray, Each of us has turned to his own way; But the Lord has caused the iniquity of us all To fall on Him."

Romans 3:23-24, "for all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God, being justified as a gift by His grace through the redemption which is in Christ Jesus."

Romans 10:13 "Whoever will call on the name of the Lord will be saved."

Jesus' declaration, *"It is finished,"* is God's sovereign and eternal verdict for all who believe in Jesus Christ, having become victorious over sin, death, and judgment, through the sacrifice of God's One and Only Son.

7. "Father, into Your hands I commit My spirit." -Luke 23:46, Psalm 31:5

The Son of God accomplished all that the Father had sent Him to do. He fulfilled all righteousness bringing salvation and redemption to all who believe in Christ; and after completing His sacred, sovereign and eternal work Jesus says, "Father, into Your hands I commit My spirit."

God the Son gave up His spirit, He did not just die as a result of the beatings, blood loss, and torture. His body was going to die when He sovereignly chose for it to die, but His spirit is eternal and cannot die, so it left His body.

John 10:17-18, "I lay down My life--only to take it up again. No one takes it from Me, but I lay it down of My own accord. I have authority to lay it down and authority to take it up again."

As Jesus hung on the cross, there was total darkness from noon to 3 pm, as God's wrath was poured out on the Lamb of God, God's One and Only Son.

After Christ had received full punishment for the sins of the world, the communion He had with the Father was restored, for the work He had come to do was now finished and redemption had been granted to all who believe in Him.

John 10:27-28, "My sheep hear My voice, and I know them, and they follow Me; 28 and I give eternal life to them, and they will never perish"

John 11:25-26, "I am the resurrection and the life; he who believes in Me will live even if he dies, and everyone who lives and believes in Me will never die. Do you believe this?"

John 20:31, "These have been written so that you may believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God; and that believing you may have life in His name."

1John 5:11-13, "And the testimony is this, that God has given us eternal life, and this life is in His Son. He who has the Son has the life; he who does not have the Son of God does not have the life. These things I have written to you who believe in the name of the Son of God, so that you may know that you have eternal life."

And that is why such a horrible, dark, and sorrowful day is called "Good" Friday. But come back on Sunday, because the story doesn't end there, for on the third day after His death, He came out of the grave alive!

Therefore, when anyone repents of their sins, believing in Christ for forgiveness, they receive eternal life, that will be demonstrated as they follow Jesus.

Repent of your sins!

Believe in Christ for salvation!

Follow Him by reading and obeying God's Word!

For only then will you know that you are saved, and only then can you bring praise and honor and glory to God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Spirit.

Pastor Mike
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