

# GOOD FRIDAY

*The Seven Last Words of Christ*

*March 29, 2024*

FIVE OAKS CHURCH

# GOOD FRIDAY

## *What is Good Friday?*

Good Friday marks the historical death of Jesus Christ.

## *Why is it good if it marks the death of Jesus?*

It is called “good” because of what Jesus’ death means for the redemption of humanity.

## *Worship on Good Friday may focus on three aims:*

1. To narrate and remember the events of Jesus’ death
2. To open up the meaning of these events for our understanding of God and the redemption accomplished by Jesus on the cross
3. To invite worshipers to renewed prayer and dedication.

## *How does Good Friday prepare us for Easter?*

The season of Lent, which includes Good Friday, prepares us for Easter by reminding us that while we were still sinners, Christ died for us. In just a few days, we celebrate Easter, which marks the resurrection of Jesus. The journey to Easter is not merely a path we walk in remembrance of historical events, but rather, an invitation to investigate the heart of God, to understand the gravity of our own sinfulness, and to marvel at the extravagant grace that meets us there.

## *CONGREGATIONAL PRAYER*

O Christ, who forsook no one but was forsaken by the closest of friends, and who committed no crime yet was sentenced to a criminal's death, we enter your presence in awe and adoration. On this day, centuries ago, you could have saved your life, but you refused to betray the purpose for which you had been born. You had come into the world to love God and neighbor as yourself, and when that love required you to shoulder a cross, you summoned the strength to bear it. Today, O Christ, as we sing and pray about the cross, teach us its meaning once again and help us to take up our cross and follow you. Amen.

## *HYMN OF REFLECTION*

What wondrous love is this, O my soul, O my soul?  
What wondrous love is this, O my soul?  
What wondrous love is this, that caused the Lord of Bliss  
To bear the dreadful curse for my soul, for my soul  
To bear the dreadful curse for my soul...

## *The Seven Last Words of Christ*

Tonight, we reflect on the Seven Last Words of Jesus, and see how the accounts of the New Testament are embodied in the Old Testament. These seven statements, made by Jesus while he was on the cross, represent essential doctrines of Christ followers.

# THE FIRST WORD

Jesus' first word on the cross..."Father, forgive them, for they do not know what they are doing" (Luke 23:34)... clearly expresses the meaning of forgiveness and mercy—not only for those persecuting him as he utters these words, but for all who have sinned. Several Old Testament passages foreshadow this profound act of grace and set the stage for the fulfillment of God's redemptive plan through Christ.

## *Isaiah 53:12*

"Therefore I will give him a portion among the great, and he will divide the spoils with the strong, because he poured out his life unto death, and was numbered with the transgressors. For he bore the sin of many, and made intercession for the transgressors."

## *Psalms 103:8-12*

"The LORD is compassionate and gracious, slow to anger, abounding in love. He will not always accuse, nor will he harbor his anger forever; he does not treat us as our sins deserve or repay us according to our iniquities. For as high as the heavens are above the earth, so great is his love for those who fear him; as far as the east is from the west, so far has he removed our transgressions from us."

## *Micah 7:18-19*

"Who is a God like you, who pardons sin and forgives the transgression of the remnant of his inheritance? You do not stay angry forever but delight to show mercy. You will again have compassion on us; you will tread our sins underfoot and hurl all our iniquities into the depths of the sea."

Jesus' first word on the cross is embodied in these Old Testament passages, which collectively highlight a God who is inherently merciful and forgiving, setting the theological and prophetic groundwork for Jesus' ultimate expression of forgiveness on the cross. Jesus' plea for forgiveness is not just an isolated moment of grace but also the culmination of God's consistent character and plan revealed throughout the Scriptures.

### ***PRAYER OF CONFESSION***

Jesus, Lamb of God, **have mercy on us.**

Jesus, bearer of our sins, **have mercy on us.**

Jesus, redeemer of the world, **have mercy on us.**

Almighty God, look with mercy on your family for whom our Lord Jesus Christ was willing to be betrayed and to be given over to the hands of sinners and to suffer death on the cross; through him who now lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, forever and ever. **Amen.**

*This is the first word...*

## **THE SECOND WORD**

Jesus' second word from the cross, "Truly I tell you, today you will be with me in paradise" (Luke 23:43), spoken to the repentant thief, underscores the promise of salvation and eternal fellowship with God for those who believe in him. This profound assurance finds its echoes and anticipations in several Old Testament passages:

*Isaiah 25:8-9*

"He will swallow up death forever. The Sovereign LORD will wipe away the tears from all faces; he will remove his people's disgrace from all the earth. The LORD has spoken. In that day they will say,

‘Surely this is our God; we trusted in him, and he saved us. This is the LORD, we trusted in him; let us rejoice and be glad in his salvation.’”

*Ezekiel 36:26-28*

“I will give you a new heart and put a new spirit in you; I will remove from you your heart of stone and give you a heart of flesh. And I will put my Spirit in you and move you to follow my decrees and be careful to keep my laws. Then you will live in the land I gave your ancestors; you will be my people, and I will be your God.”

*Daniel 12:2-3*

“Multitudes who sleep in the dust of the earth will awake: some to everlasting life, others to shame and everlasting contempt. Those who are wise will shine like the brightness of the heavens, and those who lead many to righteousness, like the stars for ever and ever.”

These Old Testament scriptures collectively anticipate the hope and assurance that Jesus’ second word from the cross offers to believers—a promise of salvation, the defeat of death, and the joy of eternal fellowship with God in paradise.

### ***HYMN OF RESPONSE***

How great the chasm that lay between us  
How high the mountain I could not climb  
In desperation, I turned to heaven  
And spoke your name into the night

Then through the darkness, your loving kindness  
Tore through the shadows of my soul  
The work is finished, the end is written  
Jesus Christ, my living hope

Hallelujah, praise the One who set me free  
Hallelujah, death has lost its grip on me  
You have broken every chain, there's salvation in your name  
Jesus Christ, my living hope

*This is the second word...*

## THE THIRD WORD

Jesus' third word from the cross, "Woman, here is your son," and to the disciple, "Here is your mother" (John 19:26-27), illustrates his care for personal relationships and the establishment of a new spiritual family among his followers. This act of entrusting his mother, Mary, to the disciple John and vice versa underscores the significance of community and care within the body of Christ. Several passages set the foundation for this theme:

*Ruth 1:16-17*

"But Ruth replied, 'Don't urge me to leave you or to turn back from you. Where you go I will go, and where you stay I will stay. Your people will be my people and your God my God. Where you die I will die, and there I will be buried. May the Lord deal with me, be it ever so severely, if even death separates you and me.'"

*Psalm 68:5-6*

"A father to the fatherless, a defender of widows, is God in his holy dwelling. God sets the lonely in families, he leads out the prisoners with singing; but the rebellious live in a sun-scorched land."

*Exodus 20:12*

"Honor your father and your mother, so that you may live long in the land the LORD your God is giving you."

Through these passages, we see the groundwork for Jesus' expression of care and the formation of a spiritual family among his followers. His words from the cross extend beyond his immediate concern for Mary and John, inviting all believers into a deeper sense of community and mutual care, reflecting God's heart for his people, the family of God.

## ***SONG OF REJOICING***

From my mother's womb  
You have chosen me  
Love has called my name

I've been born again  
Into your family  
Your blood flows through my veins

I'm no longer a slave to fear  
I am a child of God  
I'm no longer a slave to fear  
I am a child of God

*This is the third word...*

## **THE FOURTH WORD**

Jesus' fourth word from the cross, "My God, my God, why have you forsaken me?" (Matthew 27:46 and Mark 15:34), echoes the deep anguish of feeling abandoned by God, capturing a moment of intense suffering and identification with humanity's plight. This cry is a direct quotation from Psalm 22, indicating its deep roots in Old Testament scripture that foreshadows the Messiah's sufferings.

*Psalm 22:1*

"My God, my God, why have you forsaken me?  
Why are you so far from saving me, so far from my  
cries of anguish?"



*Isaiah 53:3-4*

“He was despised and rejected by mankind, a man of suffering, and familiar with pain. Like one from whom people hide their faces he was despised, and we held him in low esteem. Surely he took up our pain and bore our suffering, yet we considered him punished by God, stricken by him, and afflicted.”

*Psalms 69:20-21*

“Reproach has broken my heart, and I am full of heaviness: and I looked for some to take pity, but there was none; and for comforters, but I found none. They gave me also gall for my meat; and in my thirst they gave me vinegar to drink.”

Jesus’ cry, “My God, my God, why have you forsaken me?” encapsulates the essence of taking on the sin of the world, experiencing separation from the Father to fulfill God’s redemptive plan. These Old Testament passages provide a backdrop that helps us grasp the depth of Jesus’ sacrifice, emphasizing his identification with our sufferings and the ultimate purpose of his death—to bring about our reconciliation with God.

***HYMN OF REFLECTION***

How deep the Father’s love for us  
How vast beyond all measure  
That he should give his only Son  
To make a wretch his treasure

How great the pain of searing loss  
The Father turns his face away  
As wounds which mar the Chosen One  
Bring many sons to glory

*This is the fourth word...*

# THE FIFTH WORD

Jesus' fifth word from the cross, "I am thirsty" (John 19:28), reveals his physical suffering and fulfills the Scriptures, highlighting his humanity in the midst of divine sacrifice. This expression of physical need points to deeper spiritual truths and is foretold in the Old Testament through symbols and prophecies of suffering and need.

*Psalm 22:15*

"My mouth is dried up like a potsherd, and my tongue sticks to the roof of my mouth; you lay me in the dust of death."

*Isaiah 53:2-3*

"He grew up before him like a tender shoot, and like a root out of dry ground. He had no beauty or majesty to attract us to him, nothing in his appearance that we should desire him. He was despised and rejected by mankind, a man of suffering, and familiar with pain. Like one from whom people hide their faces he was despised, and we held him in low esteem."

While highlighting his physical suffering, Jesus' declaration of thirst also invites reflection on the spiritual thirst of humanity—a thirst ultimately quenched through his sacrificial death. The Old Testament passages foretell the Messiah's suffering and serve to deepen our understanding of the significance of Jesus' thirst on the cross, both as a fulfillment of prophecy and as a profound expression of his humanity and solidarity with our suffering.

## ***SONG OF PRAISE***

As the deer panteth for the water  
So my soul longeth after thee

You alone are my heart's desire  
And I long to worship thee

You alone are my strength, my shield  
To you alone may my spirit yield  
You alone are my heart's desire  
And I long to worship thee

*This is the fifth word...*

## THE SIXTH WORD

Jesus' sixth word from the cross, "It is finished" (John 19:30), signifies the completion of his redemptive work, fulfilling God's plan for salvation. This declaration marks the culmination of all that was prophesied about the Messiah in the Old Testament and his mission to save humanity from sin.

*Isaiah 53:5-6*

"But he was pierced for our transgressions, he was crushed for our iniquities; the punishment that brought us peace was on him, and by his wounds we are healed. We all, like sheep, have gone astray, each of us has turned to our own way; and the LORD has laid on him the iniquity of us all."

*Genesis 3:15*

"And I will put enmity between you and the woman, and between her offspring and yours; he will crush your head, and you will strike his heel."

*Zechariah 13:1*

"On that day a fountain will be opened to the house of David and the inhabitants of Jerusalem, to cleanse them from sin and impurity."

Jesus' pronouncement, "It is finished," is a powerful declaration of victory over sin and death, marking the fulfillment of Old Testament prophecies concerning the Messiah's sacrificial death for humanity's salvation. This moment encapsulates the culmination of Jesus' earthly ministry, sealing the promise of redemption and eternal life for believers.

### *HYMN OF CONFESSION*

Behold the man upon a cross  
My sin upon his shoulders  
Ashamed I hear my mocking voice  
Call out among the scoffers

It was my sin that held him there  
Until it was accomplished  
His dying breath has brought me life  
I know that it is finished

*This is the sixth word...*

## **THE SEVENTH WORD**

*Luke 23:46*

"Father, into your hands I commit my spirit."

T \_\_\_\_\_ + R \_\_\_\_\_ = C \_\_\_\_\_

- I. Assurance of trust in God
- II. Assurance of intimacy with God
- III. Assurance of access to God

*This is the seventh word...*

**Reading of the crucifixion of Jesus**