



Empowering People to Change the World

**Good Friday**  
**The Goodness of Good Friday**

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## The Goodness of Good Friday

### Communion

- On the night that Jesus was betrayed, arrested, and crucified, He had one last meal with His disciples, His closest friends. None of whom fully realized what would take place in the hours to come. Jesus, fully aware of what He was about to endure, wanted to leave His disciples with something they could do to remember what He was about to do. He left us, as well, with something to remember Him and His death. He instituted the Lord's Supper.
- As we partake in communion together, an act of holy remembrance. Let's reflect on the body and the blood.

### Luke 22:19-20

As I was reflecting on Good Friday and starting to prepare this message, I will admit that I didn't make it very far. In fact, I didn't make it past the first word.

I kept thinking about the word "good." And I kept wondering, why do we call it Good Friday?

And why don't we call Easter, Good Easter?

- Easter is the fun day! The celebratory day. The day we all dress up in fun colors and smile real big and take pictures and say "He is risen" all day. We give our kids candy. Eat a big meal together. But we call it Easter.

And today is the day we use the word *good*.

But today is the day we remember the suffering and crucifixion of Jesus Christ.

- Why?
- Is it because the cross itself is good?
- Is it because the crucifixion itself is good?
- Is it because of the disciples?
- Or because people like Fridays?

I tried to do a bit of research to answer this question. Why does the church call this day Good Friday?

And I didn't find much. I found answers and explanations about the significance of the day and Jesus, and what it means. But I didn't find much on the historical reasoning for naming it Good Friday.

It's also been called "Holy Friday" and "Sorrowful Friday"

I think that second one is definitely fitting.

Because, in fact, most of that day didn't appear to be very good.

If you were to ask any of his disciples that day, while Jesus was being arrested, beaten, spit on, and killed, if that day was good, what do you think they would have said?

Yet, today is Good Friday.

So I am going to challenge you, ask you to put yourself in the shoes, the sandals of the disciples.

- Imagine what it was like for them to see their friend, teacher, leader, brother, brutally beaten and killed.
- The feelings and emotions that must have filled their hearts and minds.

Could you do that with me, church? For the next 30 minutes, can we discard whatever distractions, thoughts, or feelings are bothering us right now and focus on Jesus?

Whatever happened this morning, whatever is going to happen this evening. Let's put it to the side for just a little bit and truly focus and re-live this together.

Let's walk with the disciples this afternoon. Let's reflect, let's remember, and let's feel what they felt. See what they saw, hear what they heard.

- Can we do that this afternoon?

Alright, let's read the account of Good Friday from God's Word together through the eyes of his closest friends.

We are going to read from the Gospel of Luke, so if you have your Bibles with you this afternoon, please turn to Luke chapter 22.

We are going to pick up the story in verse 39.

### **Luke 22:39-46**

- After Jesus ate the last supper with His disciples, He went to the Mount of Olives with His disciples to pray. He had been doing this each evening recently.
- His disciples were unaware of what was coming, but Jesus knew. And He knew the importance of spending time with His Father in prayer. And He was encouraging His disciples to do the same.
- In this moment, Jesus knew and was dealing with the weight of what was about to happen. He also knew that one of His disciples was about to betray Him. And he went to the garden where Judas would easily be able to find Him. Jesus was earnestly praying to the Father for the cup to be removed and for the will of God. His prayer was answered not by the cup being removed, but by an angel ministering to Him and providing Him with strength. He was praying with such earnestness that sweat dripped off of Him like drops of blood.
  - Sometimes the Father answers our prayers differently than we would hope. But he gives us what we need.
  - In that moment, Jesus needed strength. The Father saw that and provided it.
- And it was in this moment, that Jesus was so caught up in passionate, earnest prayer that He found His disciples sleeping.
- Now I asked that we put ourselves into the shoes of the disciples, right?
- In the past when I have read this passage, I have always felt some sympathy for the disciples. And I know, from personal experience, that they are not the only people in history that have fallen asleep while praying or trying to pray.
- So, I know I can relate to them in that regard.
- But this passage says that the disciples were also filled with sorrow. They have spent years with Jesus, and I think they know that something is not right, not good. Bad. And it filled them with sorrow. It troubled them. It worried them.
  - But instead of responding to that sorrow with prayer, they slept.
  - Instead of turning their worry, their fear into fervent, honest prayers they slept.
- When has that same thing been true in our own lives?
  - Can we relate to the disciples here as well?

- The apostle Paul, in Philippians chapter 4, wrote about bringing everything to the Lord in prayer. *Everything!*
- Jesus modeled this. Jesus modeled to his disciples and to us the importance of prayer. The importance of bringing life's biggest moments to God.
  - Go to the Father with what troubles you, with what worries you.
  - When the temptation is to sleep, or run, or distract with things of this world – pray.
  - When it's the last thing you want to do – pray.
  - When you have no other option – pray.
  - Turn your sorrow, your worries, your anxieties – into honest, vulnerable, fervent prayers.

Let's keep reading – verse 47

### **Luke 22:47-53**

- Imagine being one of the twelve in this moment.
  - Or should I say, the eleven.
- Seeing Jesus, your teacher, your friend for years, a good man. Getting arrested. A man who had done nothing wrong, who was without sin, getting arrested.
  - What about that is good?
  - Imagine the emotions the disciples must have felt. Pain, confusion, hurt, rage at the injustice of it all.
  - So much so that it led Peter to strike one of the men with a sword and cut off his ear.
  - Can you blame him? How would you have reacted?
    - Watching as the man you love and respect more than anyone else is being bound and led away like a criminal.
      - No, this cannot be a good day.

Let's continue with verse 54

### **Luke 22:54-62**

- Put yourself in Peter's shoes.
- A few moments ago, we saw Peter react to Jesus' arrest with vengeance and anger.
- And now we see Peter deny Jesus 3 times. In his confusion, hurt, and pain, he goes from striking out in anger with a sword to denying that he ever knew Jesus.
- Peter let fear take over.

- Now imagine the pain Peter must have been experiencing to watch His closest friend get arrested, and then the feelings of shame and guilt He must have felt when the rooster crowed.
  - No way was Peter thinking that this was a good day.
  - In fact, he was probably thinking that this was the worst day of his life.
- But can we relate to Peter in these moments?
- When have we allowed rage, anger, or fear to dictate a moment in our lives?
- When have we reacted inappropriately, too quickly, or harshly?
- When instead, we should be relying on the Holy Spirit in difficult moments. Asking for divine wisdom, discernment, and insight.
- Let's reflect on Peter's swift actions and decisions, not with condemnation but with empathy and reflection.

Lets continue reading in verse 63.

### **Luke 22:63-65**

- Jesus is now being mocked and beaten.
- Imagine watching that unfold in front of your own eyes.
- Watching Jesus being made fun of, being hurt.
- What emotions would be welling up inside of you?
  - Rage, hurt, confusion, fear?

Jesus then goes before the council of religious leaders, Pilate, and Herod.

- His innocence is questioned
- His Godliness is mocked
- He is accused.
  - Yet He responds with patience, grace and gentleness.
- The crowd of religious leaders and bystanders grows more and more hostile and angry.
- They shout at Jesus and give directions to those in charge.
- They condemn, they snarl.
- If you were in the crowd how would you feel?
- If you saw the anger from people and heard their requests what would you do?
  - Would you speak out or shrink back?
  - No, this isn't a good day; this couldn't be a good day.
- The crowd demands the release of a criminal named Barabbas instead of Jesus.
  - How could this be?
  - This doesn't make any sense.

- A murderer instead? Jesus didn't murder anyone... And yet the people would rather a murderer live among them than Jesus?

Let's keep reading in chapter 23 starting with verse 18

### **Luke 23:18-25**

- Even Pontius Pilate was confused, unsure of why Jesus needed to die.
  - Pilate was the high governmental authority in this moment.
  - He had the final word.
  - Yet he was succumbed by the pressure and influence of the crowd.
- Imagine being one of Jesus' closest friends amidst that crowd.
- Hearing the shouts and the chants of "crucify Him!"
  - Certainly, He won't be crucified. He hasn't done anything wrong.
  - This isn't good. This situation is bad...
- But it had now been decided. Jesus was to be flogged and crucified.
  - Whipped to near death. Then dragged up to the hill where He would be nailed to a wooden cross. The hill where He would die.
  - Experiencing extreme pain, shame, and agony.
  - A tortuous way to die.
  - It had been decided.
- Nothing about this day seems to be good.
- Yet this is Good Friday.
- And today is good.
- Despite what His disciples were thinking and feeling, Good Friday is good. There is so much goodness, and let me tell you why.

I have 3 reasons why today is Good Friday.

### **#1) Because Jesus is Good**

- Nothing that we have read leading up to Jesus' death made the disciples think that this was a good day.
- But they knew something.
- Jesus is a good man. That right there is exactly what made this day so difficult.
- Why does a good man have to die? And have to die in such an extreme and brutal way.

- The disciples must have felt so confused, sad, scared, shocked. This isn't how it was supposed to end... They didn't want it to end. They wanted more of Jesus.
- So why did this good man, Jesus, die?
- As they were watching the events unfold on that first Good Friday, I imagine there were so many thoughts and feelings rushing through their hearts and minds.
- Thinking back to everything they witnessed walking with Jesus the past few years.
- Because while on earth, Jesus showed His disciples what it means to do good. What it means to love people.
- If you read the gospels, you find example after example after example of Jesus loving people. Of the goodness of Jesus Christ.
- Like when Jesus stopped to spend time with the children.
  - To listen to the little children – why?
  - Because He loved them
- Or Jesus stopping in the middle of a crowd of people to notice the women on the ground, in the dirt, who everyone else called unclean.
  - To stop and forgive her, heal her – why?
  - Because He loved her.
- Or Jesus preaching to a crowd of thousands of people who came from near and far to hear His words, yet he pauses to feed them, why? Because He didn't just care about their spiritual hunger but also their physical hunger.
  - Because He loved them.
- Jesus is good.
- The disciples saw it, they knew it.
- And the disciples saw firsthand from Jesus how to love people well how to spread the goodness of God.
- Jesus left us an example.
- Can we do it?
- Can we love people like Jesus loves them?
- Can we quench people's spiritual hunger by sharing the Gospel?
- Can we quench people's physical hunger by feeding them?
- Can we give some attention to the outcast – to the person no one else wants to interact with? Can we love that person?
- Can we invest in the children?
- This is the example Jesus set while on earth.
- Good Friday is good because Jesus is good.
- But the question that must have still bothered the disciples in this moment must have been why?

- Why did this good man have to die?
- That brings us to our second reason.

## #2) Because the Sacrifice is Good

- So why did Jesus have to die? The question that was plaguing the hearts of His closest friends and disciples.
- And why did He do it? He didn't have to go through with it. They were so confused... This is the man who walked on water, who cast out demons, who made the lame walk, who made the blind see, who raised Lazarus from the dead. Why is He up there?!?!? Why is he going through with this?
- And what held Him up there? What kept Jesus up on the cross?
  - Because it certainly wasn't the nails.
    - You think a few nails could hold the Son of the Most High God on a wooden cross?
    - No, it was not the nails.
  - And no, it wasn't the soldiers. Yes, Roman centurions were brutal, fierce, and intimidating. Yes, they had power. But let me tell you this afternoon that it wasn't the soldiers that kept Jesus on the cross.
  - And it wasn't the Pharisees and religious leaders either. Yes, they had power, yes, they had influence and authority, but they were not keeping Jesus on the cross either.
- So what was it? It was love.
  - Jesus' love for the Father and His love for you.
  - That alone is what kept Him on the cross.
  - D.A. Carson wrote,

*It was not nails that held Jesus to that wretched cross; it was His unqualified resolution, out of love for His Father, to do His Father's will—and it was His love for sinners like me.*

- D.A. Carson

- Jesus' extreme love for people, His love for His Father, that alone kept Him on that cross. Kept Him in agony. Kept Him in pain.
- And today, as we remember this event, we use the word *good*?
- Suddenly, that word now seems insufficient.
- Because what the Pharisees missed, what the soldiers missed, what so many people missed that day was the true significance of what all this meant.

- The love of Jesus that held Him on the cross covers me, covers you, covers a multitude.
- The sacrifice Jesus made is good.
- In His sacrifice, Jesus took on every sin, every pain, every ounce of shame, regret, and guilt. Every unrighteous and unholy thing.
- Bearing sin, shame in the most shameful way possible.
- He took it on so that you can leave it behind.
- He bore it so that you don't have to.
- He suffered so that He can relate to your suffering.
  - Every pain that you have ever felt.
  - Every shameful thought
  - Every guilty thought
  - Jesus felt it.
- He can relate, and understand your suffering because he felt it. He endured it.
  - What kind of God, what kind of Father does that?
- Jesus sacrificed. His sacrifice is good. His sacrifice changes everything. Changes the world. Changes my life, changes yours.
  
- **1 Peter 2:23**

“...who, when He was reviled, did not revile in return; when He suffered, He did not threaten, but committed Himself to Him who judges righteously; who Himself bore our sins in His own body on the tree, that we, having died to sins, might live for righteousness – by whose stripes you were healed.”
  
- The sacrifice is good.
- And that brings us to the third and final reason today is Good Friday.

### #3) Because What is Coming is Good

- We have the privilege of knowing, unlike the disciples, what is coming. What is coming is Easter Sunday.
- The disciples didn't fully know it, but they were waiting for Jesus to come back. There was hope.
  - Hope was there, whether they realized it or not.
- There was hope of victory, of death being defeated. They didn't know it yet, but it was coming.
  - And that is good.
- And just like the disciples were waiting for Jesus to come back.

- So are we.
- We wait in anticipation and hope of Jesus' second coming.
- There is hope.
- And the knowledge of that and the hope that comes with that is good and makes this day and every day good.
- And as believers in Christ Jesus, we carry that hope inside of us. And every day is an opportunity to share with someone the hope that we have.
- Will you do that church?
- Will you share the hope that Good Friday and Easter brings?

- **Hebrews 6:19**

“This hope we have as an anchor of the soul, both sure and steadfast, and which enters the presence behind the veil”

- Will you use the hope of Jesus Christ as an anchor for your soul? And will you share that hope with the world?
- Today is Good Friday because of what is coming, because of hope. Today and every day.

I want to close this service with the final moments of Jesus' time on earth before He died.

As we close would you please stand with me? We are going to end with the final words of this passage. I want to invite you to leave this service quietly with respect and remembrance but also with hope and expectancy. We look forward to seeing you back here on Easter Sunday.

**Luke 23:44-46**

**It is finished.**