

WHY DO WE CALL IT GOOD?

GOOD FRIDAY (written only, no service due to COVID-19)

MATTHEW 27:45-56

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Good Friday – The Friday before Easter, observed by Christians in commemoration of the crucifixion of Jesus.

Background – Many people often question why we call the day of crucifixion “Good Friday.”

(1) Many have said the word good used to have a secondary meaning of “Holy.” Some say God and good got switched around due to their similarity and one case was the phrase God be with you, which is today, good-bye. So perhaps Good Friday was originally God’s Friday.

But I think we call it Good Friday because in retrospect, all that tragedy brought about the greatest goodness there could be. Yet, despite its sadness, Good Friday is truly good. It is Godly sorrow. If it was an accident to make God’s Friday to be called Good Friday, but I say it was not an accident at all. It was God’s own doing a sharp prophetic jab at time and culture obsessed by happiness. The commemoration of Christ’s death reminds us of that human sin that caused this death. At the same time, of course; Good Friday recalls for us the greatness and wonder of God’s love that he should submit to death for us.

No wonder in parts of Europe; the day is not called “Good” but “Great” or “Holy” Friday. Good Friday has always challenged merely human goodness. Its sad commemoration reminds us that in the face of sin, our goodness avails nothing. Only one was good enough to save us. That person is Jesus; that he did so is cause indeed for his goodness that calls for our celebration.

In the text, Jesus has suffered much agony in the Garden of Gethsemane, so much anguish that he actually sweats blood from his capillaries. Upon preparing to leave the Garden he is betrayed by Judas and arrested. He is taken to stand before the High Priests Caiaphas and the Sanhedrin Court. While standing before his accusers, they question and probe in hopes of discovering false evidence against our Lord and Savior. He is asked if he is the Christ, the Son of God and he responds by saying, “It is as you say.” For this answer he is accused of blasphemy and he is condemned to death.

Immediately, they began to spit in his face, strike him with their fists, slap him and mock him with the words “Prophecy to us, Christ, who hit you.” He doesn’t say a mumbling word and while all of this is occurring, Peter denies that he even knows our Lord and Savior.

At this point, the Chief Priests and Elders make the decision that Jesus should be put to death; he is bound and led before Pilate on Good Friday. He is asked “Are you the King of the Jews,” he responds again, “It is as you say.”

At this point, they make a decision as customary in this time: to release a prisoner during the Passover. They choose Barabbas as opposed to Jesus and the crowd begins shouting , “crucify him; crucify him”, even though Pilate could find no fault in him. After the interrogation, Pilate sent him to King Herod who happened to be in town and had hoped to see Jesus perform a miracle. Herod has Jesus led to the Praetorium by the governor’s soldiers, he is stripped and they put a scarlet robe on him along, with a crown of thorns on his head, causing the blood to stream down His face.

They, then, proceed to put a scepter (a staff carried by sovereign or those in authority) in his hand and repeatedly, strike him on his head again, again, and again, after which they took off his clothes, he was scourged with the flagellum (a

short whip with braided thongs, attached iron balls or sharp pieces of sheep bones which tore flesh from the bones).

After the scourging, the entire battalion of soldiers gathered around his faint bleeding body; put a scarlet robe on him, pressing the weight of the robe on his torn shoulders, set a reed in his hand, knelt down to him mocking him again saying, “Hail to the King of Jews.”

They then spit on him again, put a crown of thorns on his head and begin hitting him on the head again, again and again. They had kept him up all night long. He had endured mental and physical anguish; they had beaten Him and mocked Him. Now they make a beaten and battered Savior bear his own cross in an attempt to lead him down the Via Dolorosa (the way to the cross).

And you might be asking yourself; “What’s the goodness in all of that? Well, let me tell you:

- Christ was punished and chastised for our sins, he suffered willingly in order to save us, I see goodness in the fact that we all must become spectacles in order to save others.**
- He was stripped naked, I see the goodness in that, all though sin makes us naked and shamed, but Jesus secured clothing that was white and pure for us (that’s righteousness).**
- He was forced to wear a scarlet robe. I see goodness in that the robe represented our sins but now we can wash our robes as white as snow when we wash them in the blood of the lamb.**
- They put a crown of thorns on his head. I see goodness in that the thorns represented a curse but Christ, through his suffering, became a curse for us.**

- They bowed down and mocked him, I see goodness in the fact that I know the day is coming that every knee will bow and every tongue will confess that Jesus is Lord.

- They beat him on the head with the scepter, I see the goodness in the fact the scepter represented authority and prophesy was fulfilled for it said he would be wounded for our transgressions and bruised for our iniquities.

- They cast lots for his clothes, I see goodness again that the prophesy was fulfilled and the mere fact that Jesus stripped himself of his glory in order to become man and die for us so we may inherit glory.

- They took his coat which was valuable, I see goodness in the coat represented the pontifex, which in Latin, means the bridge builder between God and man. In other words, he's our intercessor.

- They stared at him as he hung on the cross I see goodness in the fact that they watched him hang his head; and this means, there was no question that he died.

- I see goodness in Jesus saying its finished; goodness in that it's finished signaled the victory cry that he had finished his work, finished his mission, and finished His task. He yielded up the ghost, to all who believe on Him.

- Finally, I see goodness in him dying on the 9th hour which was 3:00 p.m., The goodness is that's the exact time the priests would make the evening offering of the Passover lamb.

The goodness is while they were sacrificing the symbolic lamb for the people, the true Lamb of God was being sacrificed for the people's sins outside the city.

Thank God He did for the veil ripped, meaning no more separation from God. And earthquake occurred, and the dead in Christ were resurrected, symbolizing the conquest of death by Christ' resurrection.

I thank God the goodness didn't stop there!!! . AMEN!