

GOOD FRIDAY

IT IS FINISHED

It is finished.

JOHN 19:30

We know that our old self was crucified with him in order that the body of sin might be brought to nothing, so that we would no longer be enslaved to sin. For one who has died has been set free from sin. Now if we have died with Christ, we believe that we will also live with him.

ROMANS 5:6-8

REFLECTION

On Good Friday, we commemorate the death of Jesus, the event at the centre of the mystery of redemption.

Our Good Friday services are crafted to help us contemplate, revere, and even embrace the cross. As we approach Easter, it can be tempting to rush past Good Friday or turn away from the cross in discomfort. But we must see the cross as the precursor of joy, an inseparable part of the triumph that we celebrate at Easter.

GOOD FRIDAY SERVICES | APRIL 18

CHILLIWACK: 9.00AM | 10.45AM

PROMONTORY: 10.45AM

HARRISON: 10.45AM

PRAYER

Dear Lord Jesus, for years I struggled with calling the day of your crucifixion “good.” How presumptuous on our part. That there had to be a day when you, the eternally glorious Son of God, would be made sin for us is not good at all. But at the same time, that you would freely and gladly give yourself for us on the cross is never-to-be surpassed goodness—quintessential goodness.

Oh, the wonder of it all. From the cross and from your heart came these two impassioned cries: “Father forgive them” (Luke 23:34) and “My God, my God, why have you forsaken me?” (Matt. 27:46). The first required the second. The second secured the first. Together they humble our hearts and fuel our worship.

And then there’s the third cry: “It is finished.” Nothing is left undone concerning our salvation and for the transformation of our world. Once and for all, perfectly and fully, we have been reconciled to God. You became sin for us that in you, we might become the righteousness of God (2 Cor. 5:21)—the Just for the unjust, the Beautiful One for the broken ones, the Lamb of God for the rebels from God.

Lord Jesus, a million years into our life in the new heaven and new earth, we will still be stunned with awe, worship, and gratitude for the greatness of your sacrifice and love for us. Because you were fully forsaken, we are forever forgiven. Because you exhausted God’s judgment against our numberless sins, we now live by the gift of your perfect righteousness. Bow our heads in humility and raise our hands in praise. We pray in our all-glorious, all-grace-full name.

Amen.

HOLY SATURDAY

A DAY OF IN-BETWEEN

Now there was a man named Joseph, from the Jewish town of Arimathea. He was a member of the council, a good and righteous man, who had not consented to their decision and action; and he was looking for the kingdom of God. This man went to Pilate and asked for the body of Jesus. Then he took it down and wrapped it in a linen shroud and laid him in a tomb cut in stone, where no one had ever yet been laid. It was the day of Preparation, and the Sabbath was beginning. The women who had come with him from Galilee followed and saw the tomb and how his body was laid. Then they returned and prepared spices and ointments. On the Sabbath they rested according to the commandment.

LUKE 23:50-56

The next day, that is, after the day of Preparation, the chief priests and the Pharisees gathered before Pilate and said, "Sir, we remember how that impostor said, while he was still alive, 'After three days I will rise.' Therefore order the tomb to be made secure until the third day, lest his disciples go and steal him away and tell the people, 'He has risen from the dead,' and the last fraud will be worse than the first."

MATTHEW 27:62-64

REFLECTION

Easter Saturday. A day of in between. A grave is about to be emptied, but not yet. The joy of knowing what's coming; the pain of having to wait for it. An analogy for the whole Christian life.

Sam Allberry

Written on the walls of an easement in Köln by someone hiding from the Nazis: "I believe in the sun even when it is not shining. I believe in love even when feeling it not. I believe in God even when God is silent." This is Holy Saturday.

Holy Saturday is a time of reverence, stillness, and expectation. On the eve of Easter, between death and resurrection, we confront the silence of the tomb. While Holy Saturday is a solemn day, it is also a day of great anticipation as the dawn of Easter is about to break.

PRAYER

Dear Lord Jesus, how could your family and followers have slept the night of Good Friday? I can only imagine the depth of sadness that seized their hearts. And yet others were euphoric and relieved that you, “the deceiver,” could no longer threaten the status quo of the religious community.

As the sun rose on Saturday, no one understood that the most undeserved death imaginable would yield the greatest return calculable. As you were nailed to the cross, the written code—God’s law, with all its regulations and requirements—lost all its condemning power over us. With your last breath, you disarmed the powers of darkness, triumphing over all authorities marshalled against God’s kingdom (Col. 2:14-15).

No one realized that your mortal punishment would bring our eternal peace; that your fatal wounding would secure our everlasting healing; that your being crushed under God’s judgment would lead to our being cherished by the thrice-holy God (Isa. 53). Though they had the Scriptures, they had no clue.

And yet the chief priests and the Pharisees did remember your promise of resurrection. They weren’t sad about your death; they were mad with fear about the possibility of your life. Having planned to put to death a resurrected Lazarus (John 12:10), they weren’t about to indulge a resurrected Jesus.

Oh, silly, sinful men—they’d sooner hold back the rising of the sun than the rising of the Son of God. Resurrection Sunday was coming, and there was absolutely nothing they could do about it. The sadness of Saturday would soon be shattered with the shouts of Sunday: “The Lord is risen! He is risen indeed!” In your triumphant and loving name we pray.

Amen.