**Good Friday Service - Into Your Hands I Commit My Spirit**

good Friday. How can one describe such a day? The wrongdoing of all humanity putting to an end, an innocent man, the son of God. This is the story of Jesus' death by way of across all. In one moment, bringing death to the bright light of our future. He never stopped loving us, and yet this is incredible part of it.

Our sin stopped his heart. Our sin drove the nails firmly in the hands of God all the long, these were the plans we told ourselves that we were in control and this was deemed sufficient for all of us. The brutal beating the inhuman. Flogging the naked humiliation haven't watched inside all our rebellion, our guilt, our shame, or racing, the very notion of reconciling us with God, our sin and our debt.

Overcoming Jesus here is our King. Obliterated the enemy, laughing his plans unstoppable. There's no longer the sound of freedom rising. Now God's people are utterly broken. Behold the chains of mortality. Yes, this is what is true. We had heard the stories of old, the lost are found. The blind can see that we are made strong and now we are witnesses to this reality.

God is dead. We'd almost believed there is a wave redemption. There is a life fulfilling. Here's a peace beyond understanding. Now we know better for us. We can say that God is encapsulated in this one realization. The single greatest sacrifice in human history is finished. How clearly we can see.

So what's so good about good Friday? Just one thing. If the blood. If Jesus can reverse the curse of sin and raise the dead to life, how clearly we can see he's finished the single greatest sacrifice in human history and capsulated in this one realization, we can say that God is for us. Now we know better.

There is a peace beyond. Understand. There is a life of fulfillment. There is a way of redemption. We'd almost believe God is dead. The now we are witnesses to this reality, to a weak are made strong. The blind can see, the lost are found. We'd heard the stories of all the yes, this is what is true. The chains of mortality.

Utterly broken. Behold, freedom rising. Now God's people are unstoppable.

For all of us. We told ourselves that we were in control all along these plans firmly in our scene, drove the nails our sins, and yet this is the incredible part. Never stopped loving right life with our future all in one moment. Bringing death to death way across. This is the story of Jesus, the son of God, an innocent man, putting to an end the wrong doing of all humanity.

How can one describe such a day? good Friday.

we want to welcome you here tonight. As we remember, uh, the good Friday and what this means for Christ and what this means for his followers. We're obviously doing this in a different way than we have done in times before. Um, as we. In some ways identify with suffering in ways we have not identified with before.

And so we come to be with Christ as he ends his life, that we might begin our spiritual lives in what we are going to be doing. This evening is are going to be looking at the last statement of Christ on the cross. We have as a church community over the last seven weeks, been looking at each of the statements.

We will in this service, recall each statement and extinguish one of the candles as we remember the life that was extinguished from Christ. This service has a little bit of a different feel. If you haven't been to our good Friday before. It is a darker service. Uh, we will not be using musical instruments on purpose, uh, as we recognize the humiliation that Christ went under.

Um, this. Time period for us, as we remember, we look back on the cross as a beautiful thing and it is beautiful, but it is also a terrible thing, and the crucifixion was a moment of utter humiliation. Of abject pain and isolation. And we recognize and celebrate with Christ as he asked us to do the night before, to remember what this took from him.

And so we do this in honor of him and memory of him. And also as we extinguish each one of these candles, we mourn the loss of him and we will come back on Sunday. Rejoicing that our Christ is not dead anymore. So thank you for coming. We're going to start by singing man of sorrows and, uh, we tried to provide the lyrics on the screen for you there and then we'll beginning, we'll begin with the first reading.

[Man of Sorrows hymn}

as the soldiers led him away, they seized Simon siren, who was on his way in from the country and put the cross on him and made him carry it behind Jesus. And a large number of people followed him, including women who mourned and wailed for him. When they came to the place of the skull, they crucified him there along with the criminals, one on his right and the other on his left.

Jesus said, father, forgive them for they do not know what they are doing.

Two other men, both criminals were also led out with him to be the executed. One of the criminals who hung there, hurled insults at him. Aren't you the Messiah? Save yourself and us, but the other criminal rebuked him. Don't you fear God? He said, since you are under the same sentence, we are punished justly for we are getting what our deeds deserve, but this man has done nothing wrong.

Then he said, Jesus, remember me when you come into your kingdom. Jesus answered him. Truly, I tell you today, you will be with me in paradise.

[When I Survey The Wondrous Cross]

Near the cross of Jesus stood his mother, his mother's sister, Mary, the wife of Clovis, and Mary Magdalene. When Jesus saw his mother there and the disciple whom he loved standing nearby, he said to her woman, here is your son and to the disciple, here is your mother. From that time on, this disciple took her into his home.

The chief priests and the teachers of the law mocked him among themselves. He saved others, they said, but he can't save himself. Let this Messiah, this King of Israel come down now from the cross that we may see and believe. Those crucified with him also heaped insults on him at noon. Darkness came over the whole land until three in the afternoon and at three in the afternoon, Jesus cried out in a loud voice.

Eloi Eloi Lama, Suboxone I, which means my God, my God, why have you forsaken me?

Later knowing that everything had been finished and so that scripture would be fulfilled. Jesus said, I am thirsty.

[In Christ Alone]

jar of wine. Vinegar was there, so they soaked a sponge in it, put the sponge on a stock of the hyssop plant and lifted it to juice the slips when he had received the drink, Jesus said is finished without. He bowed his head and gave up his spirit.

has been shared earlier. Over these past six weeks, we've been experiencing or participating in an extended Canterbury service, and we're 10 Bray is a Latin word, meaning darkness. And with each candle as it's extinguished, the darkness increases. If I could, I would just take, I could take a moment and share with you some of my practices, but I've adopted over the last, I would say the last dozen years or so at as I focus on this evening, it's my choice to focus on the darkness.

I even go as far as to at times I have, and I will again this year, the fast from dinner this evening until I eat again on Sunday morning. It's a tradition of mine since the movie came out to watch the passion of the Christ each good Friday, and I do so not because I enjoy the movie because it's so painful.

I do it because with, as, as I watch Christ take those stripes for me, realizing that not only am I the one receiving the Stripe in him, but I'm also the man on the other side of the whip. I'm the one giving the Stripe, and as I do, so I'm reminded again graphically how painful this was. I'm a big fan of the Tolkien trilogy.

I've read the trilogy through three or four times. Actually. I'm feeling like I need to read it again soon. But knowing the end of that story propels me through, especially the longer, harder, darker parts of it. But I have to say, and I remember every time I read it, the way that I was propelled through that book, the first time I read it.

I prefer to allow years pass from one reading to the next. Just so I can forget you and I call this day good Friday, and we do so because we know what's coming on Sunday morning. We know what happens here. Tonight is ultimately for our good. We see the cross and in it we see victory and triumph. But we do so because of the victory and the triumph that we will experience on Easter morning.

But I want to encourage you, if I can tonight and tomorrow, allow the weight of this death to press down on, allow yourself to sink into the darkness, if you will, if we can. If we can forget for a moment what happens on Easter morning and allow this night to have its full impact. We can just forget the end of the story.

I promise you that when you wake up on Easter morning this year, you will be a wholly different thing for you. If we want to fully comprehend the triumph of Eastern that we need to fully embrace the defeat of good Friday Luber chords. This for us in chapter 23 of his gospel. It was now about noon and darkness came over the whole land until three in the afternoon for the sun stopped shining and the curtain in the temple was torn.

In two, Jesus called out with a loud voice, father into your hands. I commit my spirit. When he said this, he breathed his last, the censuring seeing what had happened, praised God and said, surely this was a righteous man. When all the people who had gathered to witness what this, this site saw what took place.

They beat their breasts and they went away, but all those who knew him, including the women who had followed from Galilee, stood at a distance watching these things. If your Bible has section headings, this one, this section probably is called the death of Christ. It's difficult to hear. It's difficult to say.

But Jesus dies. This is not some sort of special son of God, but here the son of God is executed and he dies and our minds race ahead. They jump ahead because of the pain of this moment and we want to shout yes, but this isn't the end of the story. If we're going to fully understand what happens at the climax of this story, we need to understand what happens here.

Our hero has fallen and he doesn't get back up because he has received a mortal wound from this place. His battered body will be prepared for burial and laid in a tomb and sealed off from the land of the living. Hello. Romans ten four says Jesus was delivered over to death. This is real. Ben. It says human death the same that the Adam and every single one of his children have experienced since the beginning of our race.

Jesus dies and to prove he is dead. A soldier takes a spear and he shoves it under his rib cage up toward his heart, and Jesus doesn't move because he's dead. When he was arrested. Jesus says to the temple guards who take him every day. I was with you in the temple and you did not lay a hand on me, but this is your hour when darkness reigns.

This is the hour when darkness reigns and death winds and death comes to clean his prize. There's another Victor here on this day in the Victor is the law. Paul tells us in Romans three 25 and 26 that God put Christ forward to show his righteousness because in his divine forbearance, he had passed over former sins.

In times past God passed over sins. Let me use King David if I can, as an illustration. After his adulterous affair with Bathsheba and his subsequent murder of her husband, when David is confronted by the prophet Nathan. Who was there acting as God's agent. David confesses and cries out, and Nathan says, you will not die.

But the law demands death and God shows mercy to David and he lives. And the law has to wait time. And again, the law must wait as time. And again, God shows himself to be a God gracious, merciful, and slow to anger and abounding. And steadfast love, but the day of the accounts settled and a debt is painful and also has its heyday.

This is the high watermark for sin manifolds. Sin of all of Adam's raced past, present, and future converge here on this innocent man. On this day. This is the depth to which sin would take us. This is where sin has been leading us.

So death and the law and sin, they get what they came for. And do you think they feel the earth shake. Do you think they saw that the sun had stopped shining you think they heard the veil in the temple tear from top to bottom. Like a man grabs his garment and rips it in grief. You think they heard the dying victims last words father into your hands?

I commit my spirit. The Jews standing around the bottom of his cross that day, they would have recognized that this was a quote from Psalm 31. And some 31 David writes, for you are my rock and my fortress for your namesake, you lead me and guide me. You take me out of the net that they have hidden from me.

For you are my refuge into your hands. I commit my spirit. You have redeemed me. Oh Lord, faithful. God. this is, this is a song of deliverance and those hearing Jesus say these words, they would have recognized it as that. Isn't that ironic song of deliverance here in this moment here with this dying breath.

You and I are like that, aren't we? How many times for you and for me has God had to take us to the very place till there is no strength left. So there's no courage left in me until there. There's no ideas left on how I can get myself out of this trouble. And then, and only then we turn to God in trust and in hope, and we do the thing that we, we will now admit we should have done from the beginning.

We should have trusted him because he's trustworthy. But it's not like that for Jesus, not even here. Less than 24 hours before this event, Jesus says to Peter, put away your sword. You think I cannot call my father, and he will at once, put at my disposal more than 12 legions of angels, but how then would the scriptures be fulfilled?

Let's say it must happen this way. Even with this last breath, as his strength is gone, and at any time before this moment on this day, Jesus could have called the whole thing off, but it needed to happen this way. Jesus slightly modifies the words of David. David said into your hands, I commit my spirit.

Jesus adds the word father at the beginning of this line, he says, father into your hands, I commit my spirit.

Jesus has lived every moment of his life on earth in his father's hands. He's crazy about his father and he wants nothing more than for you and I to know his father the way he knows him. His desire is that we would know his father, and here at the end he commits his spirit, his life, into his father's hands in death.

Jesus has never died before. Jesus learned obedience here at the cross. The one who made heaven and earth experiences something here now for the first time that he never has before and it's death. And here in death, he commits his life to his father. What Jesus is declaring in his dying breath is what he has contended all along there is life after life.

Death does not end anything. And there is living that goes on beyond after this life that has nothing to do with a beating heart or breathing lungs. And beyond that, there was a father to whom we can entrust our lives even after life. And so here with his last breath, he lets us know. But this is not the end of anything.

When the fact, this is just the beginning, there is nothing to fear father into your hands. I commit my spirit.

Huh? Now we'll end our good Friday service this evening. I pray that this will be a blessed time for you and the ones you love. As I said before, allow this time to settle in. Allow yourself to slip into the darkness, feeling. Embrace it. Knowing. But there is light at the end of this time. You are dismissed when peace.

God bless you.