

Good Friday Meditation

Begin your time of meditation on this Most Holy Night with a silent and personal prayer to God as you get a candle from the stage. The candle represents God's Light, the Creator of the Universe and the One who broke through the darkness and said, "*Let there be light*" (Genesis 1.3), the One who came to earth and took on flesh, who lowered Himself, not just to be with us but to be like us. It is Jesus who came into a world controlled by the darkness of sin and said "*I am the light of the world. Whoever follows me will never walk in darkness, but will have the light of life.*" (John 8.12)" This candle is yours to keep, take it with you to help you remember the light of the world and focus on the light as you pray and worship. Find a place in the sanctuary to worship the Lord.

Our Sin is Denial and Betrayal and it Separates Us From God

Good Friday is the day our Lord suffered died for each of our sins. 1 John 2.2, "*Jesus Himself is the propitiation (sacrifice of atonement) for our sins; and not for ours only, but also for those of the whole world.*" This day really began, yesterday. Jesus spent the previous evening and all His remaining moments with His disciples, but His last moments, the journey of suffering and death He would spend completely alone, rejected, and abandoned by those with whom He spent the most time. Jesus was betrayed: "*one of the Twelve—the one called Judas Iscariot—went to the chief priests and asked, "What are you willing to give me if I deliver him over to you?" So they counted out for him thirty pieces of silver. From then on Judas watched for an opportunity to hand him over.*" (Matthew 26.14-16) While Jesus was in Gethsemane with the other disciples, "*Judas, one of the Twelve, arrived. With him was a large crowd armed with swords and clubs, sent from the chief priests and the elders of the people. Now the betrayer had arranged a signal with them: "The one I kiss is the man; arrest him."* Going at once to Jesus, Judas said, "*Greetings, Rabbi!*" and kissed him." (Matthew 26.47-49) While every disciple pledged their allegiance to Jesus just hours before, "*all the disciples deserted him and fled*" (Matthew 26.56b). Some disciples "followed at a distance" but Peter would deny Jesus, swear no knowledge and vehemently deny with cursing. And when presented to the crowds, many of whom heard Jesus teach, witnessed His miracles or may have even experienced a miracle called out, "*Crucify Him!*". The people Jesus created in His image are calling for their creator to be crucified... that is the depth of sin and this is why Jesus chose to die because there was no other way to accomplish salvation of those who bear His image.

Prayer and Reflection Upon Jesus Sacrifice - Read Scripture: Isaiah 53.1-12. Page #660

[PRAY] "LORD, have mercy; God the Father of Heaven, God the Son, God the Holy Spirit, One God, One Holy Trinity. Hear our prayer. Jesus, the Redeemer of the Word, the Word made flesh, hated by the world, sold for thirty pieces of silver, sweating blood in Your agony, betrayed by Judas, forsaken by Your disciples, struck upon the cheek, accused by false witnesses, spit upon in the face, denied by Peter, mocked by Herod, scourged by Pilate, rejected for Barabbas, burdened with the cross, crowned with thorns, stripped of Your garments, nailed to the tree, reviled by the people, scoffed at by the criminal next to You, wounded in the side, shedding Your last drop of blood, forsaken by Your Father, dying for our sins, taken down from the cross, laid in the sepulcher, rising gloriously, ascending into Heaven, sending down the Spirit, Jesus our Sacrifice, Jesus our Savior, Jesus our Mediator, Jesus our Judge, Jesus our Messiah - Lord have mercy on us. Graciously we pray, hear us, O Lord. Amen."

The Goodness of God Displayed on Good Friday

Read Scripture: Hebrews 10.1-18. Page #1086

Good Friday is good because it settled, once and for all and beyond any shadow of doubt, the question, "What is God like?" And the answer is better than we ever imagined: Jesus said, "*He who has seen me has seen the Father*" (John 14.9). And the writer to the Hebrews tells us that Jesus is "*the radiance of God's glory and the exact representation of his being*" (Hebrews 1.3). In other words, if you want to know what God is like, look at Jesus. Watch him have compassion on those who are lost, hear him teach about a kingdom that is radically different from our very best efforts to build a free and fair society, and see him heal the sick and raise the dead. But, if you really want to know what God is like, you must observe Jesus as He fulfills the very purpose of what He came to do. Watch Him on that Friday two thousand years ago, as He stands silent while His accusers charge Him with blasphemy; see the flesh torn from His back by the cruel lash; witness Him mocked, spat upon and forced by callous soldiers to wear a crown of thorns; see Him stagger and fall under the crushing weight of a Roman cross; hear Him cry out in pain as the crucifixion's hammer falls; behold Him hanging there, "King of the Jews", bloodied, beaten, despised and rejected of men.

Jesus Died as the Sacrifice for All Sin

Excerpts from Matthew 27.45-50 & John 19.30: "*From noon until three in the afternoon darkness came over all the land. [Turn off your lights] About three in the afternoon Jesus cried out in a loud voice, "My God, my God, why have you forsaken me?". When some of those standing there heard this, they said, "He's calling Elijah." Immediately one of them ran and got a sponge. He filled it with wine vinegar, put it on a staff, and offered it to Jesus to drink. The rest said, "Now leave him alone. Let's see if Elijah comes to save him." And when Jesus had cried out again, "It is finished" He gave up his spirit.*"

[PRAY] "Jesus, You alone have authority to over life and death; deliver us we pray from the darkness our own sin, from the evil around us, from anger, malice and revenge, from unbelief and hardness of heart, from blasphemy, hypocrisy and covetousness, from the blindness of not understanding, from rejecting your loving guidance and warnings. Lord, keep us from returning to sin after Your judgments, our repentance, and Your forgiveness. Lead us we pray from darkness into Your Light of salvation, sanctification and ultimately glorification. Amen."

Honoring Jesus in Our Life - Read Scripture: Romans 12.1-21. Page #1021

[PRAY] "O perfect and unblemished Lamb of God, who takes away the sins of the world, Have mercy on us. We pray as sinners, asking You, O Lord, to hear us, spare us, pardon us, unite us. You were born to be betrayed and rejected, to be slaughtered, to be a sacrifice for my sins - past, present and future. You have died for sins I have not yet committed and yet You bear with me and love me as a Father loves His child even knowing my heart and my future. May this day remind me of Your holiness and may I endeavor to seek holiness above all other things, may I seek to cherish the relationship I say I have with You in a way which glorifies You in heaven and in my community. May others know by my words and my deeds, You are the Lord of Heaven and Earth. Amen."