

What's so good about Good Friday?

As Christ-followers, we believe the crucifixion of Jesus marks the darkest moment in human history. The goodness of Good Friday is seen in THE CROSS. This ancient instrument of Roman execution has become one of the most recognizable symbols on the planet. In it, we see not just a commemoration of death, but an invitation to life.

In the cross, we see Jesus pleading for God's grace both for the Jews who willfully rejected Him but also for the Romans who brutally executed Him. He did not use the last of His energy to call out for personal assistance from His heavenly Father, but rather, He pled the case of men who were strangers and enemies. *[Luke 23:34 - Jesus said, "Father, forgive them, for they do not know what they are doing."]*

In the cross, we see a significant picture of the welcome God offers to us amid trauma and tragedy. Speaking would have been extremely difficult because of the cruel process of crucifixion. Jesus chose to use some of His last painful breaths to speak words of comfort and compassion to a stranger. *[Luke 23:43 - Jesus answered him, "Truly I tell you, today you will be with me in paradise."]*

In the cross, we see a completed work. When Jesus uttered His final words: *'It is finished'* *[John 19:30]*, you & I were granted a glimpse into the most significant story ever told.

- Jesus' own suffering is finished; He identified with the pain of humanity to the utmost extreme.
- Our captivity to sin is finished with the necessary payment to liberate us from being in bondage to sin.
- The Passover is finished as Jesus, the Lamb of God who takes away the sins of the world, fulfilled all that God's rescue of his people from Egypt symbolized.
- The battle with evil is finished as Jesus the conquering King won victory by dying in our place. Our exclusion from God's presence is finally over.

The consequence of Jesus carrying the crushing weight of the world's sins on His shoulders was that He and His Father were estranged *[Matthew 27:46 - "My God, my God, why have you forsaken me?"]*. Christ's greatest pain wasn't the physical pain of crucifixion, but the relational pain from being forsaken by the Father because our sin was upon Him. BUT! Jesus had to be forsaken by His Father, so that we could be forgiven. He was rejected so that we could be accepted. He was excluded from the mercy of God so that we could be included.

P2R [Point 2 Remember]: What makes Good Friday so good is that because of all that Christ endured, we don't have to pay for our own sins.