

Good Friday Service

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Date: 18 April 2025

Preacher: Kirk van der Swaagh

[0 : 0 0] One. Welcome. Welcome to this time of worship that we have together. And I'm so encouraged! to see you here. I know we don't talk about the weather in Scotland much, but today it's! something to talk about. It's a miserable night. But we are here in God's house to give God praise and glory for what we consider here this evening, a really vitally important time that we spend together. Let me, just a couple of announcements about what we're going to be doing tonight. First of all, that there will be an opportunity afterwards for tea and coffee right out here after this service, so don't run away. We'll get a chance to hang out for a little bit together. The structure this evening is going to be a little bit different, but we're going to have a long reading from the Gospel of Luke. We're going to include a lot of his account of Christ's arrest and trial and up to and through the crucifixion.

Interspersed with that will be various pieces of music. So there'll be some hymns, there's a psalm in the midst of it as well. And what I'm going to ask you to do is that when it'll be clear because the musicians will start playing an introduction for us and the IT folks up there, the visual crowd, will, putting it up, just stand up and sing. You don't have to have me direct you to stand up and sit down. The only time I will ask you to do something different than that is when we get to Psalm 22. We'll be seeing parts of that. And that's going to have just a very brief reading between that and the closing hymn prior to the sermon, the hymn prior to the sermon. So if you're able, we'll stand for the psalm, stand for that bit of reading, and then stand continuing for the final hymn before we sit down and consider God's Word together.

Yeah? So, you know, I won't point you out if you make mistakes. We're not going to like, you know, take count. How many people don't stand up when they're supposed to stand up? That kind of thing.

But just to have it sort of hopefully a kind of a flow to what we're doing here this evening, yeah? So let's have our call to worship is going to be from Isaiah 53.

Surely he has borne our griefs and carried our sorrows. Yet we esteemed him stricken, smitten by God, and afflicted. But he was pierced for our transgressions. He was crushed for our iniquities.

[2 : 4 1] Upon him was the chastisement that brought us peace. And with his wounds we are healed. All we like sheep have gone astray. We have turned everyone to his own way. And the Lord has laid on him the iniquity of us all. Let's pray. Lord, we ask your blessing upon this time that we have here tonight. We've gathered to mark this extraordinary act of love on the part of our gracious Savior who willingly gave himself to a plan of redemption that in our mystery, in our wonder, in our awe includes us. That we might know Christ and we might benefit from all that he did.

So we pray, Lord, your blessing upon this as we consider your word, as we sing, as we pray. God, would you be glorified in it all? And would you be present by your Holy Spirit, working a new work in us?

Even if we've sat through multitudinous worship services, Lord, for this one tonight, a fresh work. A fresh work of grace in our hearts. And Lord, we look to you because, Lord, we need it.

We know, Lord, we carry into this time that we have together our sin, our failing, our stumbling. And so, Lord, we don't come with arrogance. We don't come just polarizing ourselves in here, Lord God. We come with humility, with wonder, with awe at your graciousness, at your mercy, at your kindness, your steadfast love. And so, Lord, be pleased, Lord, to lift us up. Lift us up. Hold us fast.

[4 : 2 6] So that as we leave here, we'll be that much more prepared to gather again on Easter, on Resurrection Day, to give praise to the victory over sin and death.

So, God, we come at this time again into your care, and we do so all in the name of Jesus. Amen. When I survey the wondrous cross. When I survey the wondrous cross.

What makes this great and smile? He made the lame to her He made the blind Their sight Sweet injuries Yet all is peace Their hatred He's wicked In Christ They rise and peace Till now My dear Lord Made away A murderer They say The prince Don't fly They say Get Filling He To suffering For That he Is Those From Bless My Dream!

In life No Power Stone My Lord On And My Time In death No Friend Return And What A Danger Gain What May I Say Death Was This Born And Like The Tomb Where In He Lay Here Might I Stay And Sing Those Glories Of The I Never Was Come Here In Never Once Be Like I This Is My Friend In Your Sweet Praise I

All My Days Will Have Me Spend And As They Led Him Away They Seized One Simon Of Cyrene Who Was Coming In From The Country And Laid On Him The Cross To Carry It Behind Jesus And There Followed Him A Great Multitude Of People And Of Women Who Were Mourning And Lamenting For Him But Turning To Them Jesus Said Daughters Of Jerusalem Do Not Weep For Me But Weep For Yourselves And For Your Children For Behold The Days Are Coming When They Will Say Blessed Are The Barren And The Wombs That Never Bore And The Breasts That Never Nursed And They Will Begin To Say To The Mountains Fall In Us And To The Hills Cover Us For If They Do These Things When The Wood Is Green What Will Happen When It Is Dry Two Others They Crucified Him And The Criminals One On His Right One On His Left And Jesus Said Father Forgive Them For They Know Not What They Do And They Cast Lots To Divide His Garments And The People Stood By Watching But The Rulers Scoffed At Him Saying He Saved Others Let Him Save Himself If He's The Christ Of God His Chosen One The Soldiers Also Mocked Him Coming Up And Offering Him Sour Wine And Saying If You Are The King Of The Jews Save Yourself There Was Also An Inscription Over Him This Is The King Of The Jews One Of The Criminals Who Were Hanged Railed And Got Him Saying Are You Not The Christ Save Yourself And Us But The Other Rebuked Him Saying Do You Not And

[23 : 45] We Indeed Justly For We Are Receiving The Due Reward Of Our Deeds But This Man Has Done Nothing Wrong And He Said Jesus Remember Me When You Come Into Your Kingdom And Jesus Said To Him Truly I Say To You Today You Will Be With Me In Paradise My God My God Oh Why Have You Forsaken And Abandoned Me Why Are You The From Giving Help From Listening To My Anguished Be My

God I Christ To You I Take You To Love Hear When I Complain I Call To You Throughout The Night In Silence I Cannot Remain Yet You Are Holy On The Great Of Israel You Are Throne In You Our Fathers Would They Trust They Trusted And Were Not This Own They Called And You Delivered Them You Listened To Them When They Cry Our Fathers Were Not Good To Shame Because On You They Had Relied But I Am A Worm And Not A Man By People Storm Reproached By All And Those Who See Me Shake Their Head They Sneer At Me And

Thus Make All This Man Has Trusted In The Lord So Let Him Save Him From His Blight Now Let His God Deliver Him Because In Him He Takes Delight Yet You Lord Brought Me From The Wom When I Was At My Mother's Rest You Give You Give Me Cause To Trust In You From Earth Upon You I Was Cast Come Quickly Rescue Me My Strength Do Not Be Far From Me O Lord Save Me From Power Of Evil Lost My Precious Life From Cruel Swords Now About The Sixth Hour And There Was Darkness Over The Whole Land Until The Ninth Hour While The Sun's Light Failed And The Curtain Of The Temple Was Torn In Two Then Jesus Calling Out With A Loud Voice Said Father Into Your Hands I Commit My Spirit And Having Said This He

[28 : 47] Breathed His Last And When A Centurion Saw What Had Taken Place He Praised God Saying Saw What Had Taken Place Return Home Beating Their Breasts And All His Acquaintances And The Women Who Had Followed Him Galilee Stood At A Distance Watching These Things!

Amen!

! God God Sin But Lighting What Supposed Evil Praise Here They Feel This Nature Riding Here It Still May Excellase On The Sacrifice Appointed Secret Verity Of The Lord Is The Word Of Lord Amointed Son Of Man And Son Of God Here We Have Our Foundation Here The Refuge Of The Lost As The Rock Of Our Salvation Is The Name Of Which We Post Have All God For Sin Is Loved Satisfied To Cancel Him One Shall Ever Be Affounded Till I Hit Their Home And Hill There

Are Seven Words Attested To Jesus As He Is On The Cross Often Called The Seven Last Words And These Are Sayings And Three Of Them Show Up In The Account That We Just Read From

Luke In Fact They're Unique To Luke's Account And Tonight We're Going To Consider The Last Of The Seven Father Into Your Hands I Commit My Spirit Now Jesus Quotes Psalm 31 With That Word And One Thing We Can Be Confident Of When Jesus Quotes Scripture He Does So Appropriately And Here Is No Exception What's Remarkable About This Particular Quotation Is The Contrast In Situations Of Its Two Occurrences They Are Alike And Yet They Are Dissimilar In Psalm 31 Attributed To David David Is Looking To God For Deliverance From Dire Circumstances Here's Some Of His Language Be Be Gracious To Me O Lord For

[33 : 30] I Am In Distress My Eye Is Wasted From Grief My Soul And My Body Also For My Life Is Spent With Sorrow My Years With Sighing Because Of All My Adversaries I Become A Reproach Especially To My Neighbors An Object Of Dread To My Acquaintances Those Who See Me In The Street!

Flee From Me And He Goes On To Say That He Sensed Terror On Every Side And At One Point He Is So Undone That He Reports That He Felt Cut Off From The Sight Of God He Feels Forgotten Like One Who's Dead Like A Broken Vessel He Is Whispering Object Of Scheming And Plotting For His Life!

There Are Lying Lips To Speak Into The Hand Of God For You Are My Rock He Says And My Fortress And For Your Name's Sake You Lead Me And Guide Me You Take Me Out Of The Net They Have Hidden From Me For You Are My Refuge Into Your Hand I Commit My Spirit You Have Redeemed Me Oh Lord Faithful God Now Whatever The Particular Circumstances That Were Troubling David And We Don't Know What They Were But God Proved Himself Faithful To Preserve David's Life He Says This Blessed Be The Lord For He Has Wondrously Shown His Steadfast Love To Me When I Was In A Besieged City I Had Said In My Alarm I Am Cut Off From Your Sight But You He He!

To You For Help So He Committed His Spirit To The Hand Of God And He Lived To See Another Day Now We Read The Account Of The Scene In Which Jesus Quotes David's Words And I Think If We Go Back And Look At It Again We Can See The Appropriateness Of Jesus Referencing This Song The Distressing Scene That David Paints Is Echoed In Jesus Own Experience Scheming A Net Snare A Net Set To Ensnare Him Surrounded By Enemies Mocked The Oppression And Persecution Is Even Similar To The Point Of Feeling Cut Off From The Sight Of God One Of The Words That He Utters From The Cross My God My God Why Have You Forsaken Me But Like David Jesus Commits His Spirit Into The Hands Of His Father Father Into Your Hands I Commit My Spirit Because Like David He Has Experienced The Father's Steadfast And Ever Present Love He Says At One Point Behold He's Talking To His Disciples Behold The Hour Is Coming Indeed Has Come When You Will All Be Scattered Each To His Own Home And Will Leave Me Alone Yet I Am Not Alone For The Father Is With Me So Jesus Quoting David Points To A Similar!

[36 : 30] Time When The Servant Of God Was Persecuted Yet Despite The Similarities There Is A Profound And Vitally Important And Glorious Difference David Commits His Spirit Into The Hand Of God And He Lives To See Another Day Jesus Commits His Spirit Into The Hand Of God As He Breathes His Last Now I'm Sure All Of Us In Some Way Shape Or Form Have Sought God For Deliverance Vindication Relief From Some Troubling Earthly Circumstance A Prayer That We Might Live To See Another Day Either Literally Or Figuratively That Is To Wake Up Free From The Troubles That Perplex And Distress Us And Perhaps You've Even Faced Something As Dire As David Did But What Is The Desire Of Your Prayer In Those Circumstances Is It Not To Return To A Peaceful Unbeset Life To Resume Some Sense Of Normalcy Some Evenness We

Are Praying To God That Our Future In This Life That Has Been Threatened In Some Way Would Be Restored To Us And When God Proves Himself Faithful If We're Like David And Observant And Not Forgetful The Next Time Such A Circumstance Rolls Around We Remember God's Faithfulness And Say Father Into Your Hand I Commit My Spirit With The Confidence!

That He Will See Us Through At Least That's The Way It's Supposed To Be Often We Are Forgetful And We Have To Start All Over Again But The End Goal Is Still The Same To Live To See Another Day But That's Not How Jesus Is Using His Language He's In A Similar Circumstance Indeed Much Worse Given That He's Suffering Persecution!

That Has Nailed Him To A Cross So His Committing His Spirit Is Not To Live Another Day But Anticipation Of His Breathing His Last Consider The Confidence With Which He Approaches His Imminent Death He's Suffering Tremendous Pain Hanging There On The Cross His Breathing Is Inevitably Labored He's Surrounded By Those Who Mock Him All Of These Things He's

Experiencing Yet One Thing He Does Not Experience And Dissimilarity With David Is Fear His Confidence In What Awaits Him After He Breathes His Last Is Undiminished By What He Is Going Through Now You know We like to Just think Wow You know This Is Jesus I Mean It's God Incarnate God In The Flesh Right So He Can Face Death Not Worry About It But We Must Not Think Like That Because He Is God Incarnate He Is God In The Flesh But This Suffering Is Not A Mere Show This Is True Human Suffering See He Fully Assumed Our Existence And He Was Tested In Every Way Including Having To Endure The Wickedness Of Violent Men And The Threat Of Death He Knew What Awaited Him And He Did Not Look Forward To Going Through It Remember Father If You're Willing Remove This Cut For Me Nevertheless Not My Will But Yours Be Done But His Confidence His Confidence Not I've Got This Not That Kind Of Confidence It Was A Confidence That Grew Out Of His Knowing That All He Had Been Given To Do He Had Done All That He Had Been Given To Do He Had Done He [40 : 21] The Confidence That Christ Has As He Faces Death It Means That He Knew That That all that needed to be accomplished had been accomplished. He had been obedient to the point of death.

And as Paul says, even death on a cross. So he could say, therefore, Father, into your hand I commit my spirit. You see, we, apart from faith in Christ, are in no position to speak so confidently in the face of imminent death.

We cannot claim an obedience in all that has been expected of us by God. We, like all others, fall short of that glory. Listen to this litany of Paul.

Both Jews and Greeks, that's shorthand for everybody, are under sin. As it's written, none is righteous, no, not one. No one understands. No one seeks for God. All have turned aside. Together they become worthless.

No one does good. Not even one. Their throat is an open grave. They use their tongues to deceive. The venom of asps is under their lips. Their mouth is full of curses and bitterness.

[41 : 28] Their feet are swift to shed blood. And their paths are ruin and misery. In the way of peace they have not known. There is no fear of God before their eyes. See, if you or I are depending on our own obedience as being sufficient to satisfy the righteous demands of God, we are headed for disaster.

Eternal, unending disaster. Disaster. God is the last person you and I want to see when we breathe our last. Unless, unless one looks to the one who did speak with such confidence.

Let's Paul say, For all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God. And we are justified by His grace as a gift.

Through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus, whom God put forward as a propitiation by His blood to be received by faith. Propitiation. That word, right? We don't use that.

It's a strange word. But it is a glorious word. It shows up twice. Only twice in the New Testament. Here and in the epistle to the Hebrews.

[42 : 37] And there, it's really interesting. It refers to the mercy seat that's on the cover of the Ark of the Covenant. Yeah, see, this was the cover of the Ark of the Covenant.

It was, it was there once a year that the high priest, having entered behind the curtain which separated the Holy of Holies from all the others, he enters the Holy of Holies with the blood of a sacrifice that he would sprinkle on the mercy seat to atone for sin.

To turn away God's wrath. The mercy seat was the place of propitiation. Now, lest one think that God is not angry with our sin.

Indeed, wrathful. Listen to this language from theologian Donald McLeod. The wrath of God is the great cloud that hangs over the human race.

And it has to be dealt with. The process by which it is dealt with is propitiation. And the one who has to be propitiated is none other than God Himself.

[43 : 37] God is angry with our defiances, blaspheming and idolatry, angry with the way that we treat our neighbors, angry with the way we treat the poor, the alien, the marginalized, angry with the way we treat our enemies.

And far from ignoring or indulging such a lovelessness, God deplores it. And this is no irrational evanescence or intemperate fury. It is deliberate, measured, judicious response of God to our collective revolt against His rule and to the systemic injustice which marks human society.

We may pretend that our denials of the rights of our fellow human beings, our abuse of other creatures with whom we share the planet, or our ruining of our common habitat are but peccadilloes, only small, trivial sins.

But in God's eyes, in God's eyes, the earth is filled with violence and it appalls Him. What does the psalm say?

God is a righteous judge and a God who feels indignation every day. If a man does not repent, God will wet his sword. He has bent and readied his bow. He has prepared for him his deadly weapons, making his arrows fiery shafts.

[44 : 47] Is God angry? God is angry with sin. Is He wrathful? He is wrathful. But He is also so gracious.

Because He has provided a means to propitiate His wrath. He has provided the means to propitiate His wrath. Consider how He devised a whole sacrificial system to that end for Israel.

He appointed the high priest. He gave instructions on how to build that ark of the covenant with that mercy seat on top. Then in the fullness of time, He sent forth His Son. He provided a lamb, the Lamb of God, as the final sacrifice who would take away the sin of the world.

And this would be done by the blood sprinkled on the mercy seat, that is the cross that stood on that hill outside of Jerusalem. All this was done so that sinners like you and me might have confidence in the face of death.

Remember what Paul said? For all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God and are justified with His grace as a gift to the redemption that is in Christ Jesus, whom God put forward as a propitiation to His blood to be received by faith.

[46 : 06] Because of what God has done through Christ, what we are marking here tonight, in the face of death, we can say with confidence, Father, into Your hand I commit my spirit.

Propitiation. A glorious word. Good Friday is called good because of what we've been speaking about.

It's good because God's design was to propitiate His own wrath. It's good because Jesus willingly obeyed to carry out that design, even to the point of suffering death on a cross.

It's good because the Holy Spirit is present to take the fruit, the finished work, the complete righteousness of that design and credit it to you and credit it to me.

That goodness, that goodness is of persons when having seen how desperately they need it. They trade their failed obedience for the obedience of Christ.

[47 : 12] When they put aside their imperfect righteousness for the perfect righteousness of Christ, when they stop fooling themselves, that all will be well when they breathe their last.

Because it will only be well when that one faces that moment, not trusting in their own obedience, but in the obedience of Christ and Christ alone. So, propitiation, a glorious word.

Because what it allows us to do is to pray, Father, into your hand, I commit my spirit. But don't wait. Don't wait until that moment, that last breath.

Because if you pray that now, Father, into your hand, I commit my spirit. That as you yield your life to the God who has made you, who has created you, has redeemed you, if you would yield your life then, then you will possess the confidence of Jesus.

Not just because, not because you will have done all that needed to be done, but because He did all that needed to be done. And with that future hope set before you, you'll discover that same God who gives you reason to be confident when you breathe your last, but will also show Himself faithful to help you to live another day.

[48 : 35] That is that David's prayer and Jesus' prayer will be your prayer. There's a theologian, Gresham Macom, Jay Gresham Macom, famous statement that he made.

Just as he was about to breathe his last, he said, I am so thankful for the active obedience of Christ. No hope without it. There's a man saturated in the propitiatory sacrifice of Christ and saw in it the wealth of his hope, the only hope that he had, not relying on his own obedience, not relying on his own goodness, but relying solely upon Christ, Christ's obedience.

Obedience in all that God had called him to do. Even to the point of death, even death on a cross. Wouldn't that be your prayer? Wouldn't you want that to be your confession at that last moment?

I'm so thankful for the active obedience of Christ. No hope without it. But again, don't wait till then. Tonight, tonight, commit your life, commit your spirit into the hands of the Father.

And then we'll have confidence for that day when it comes. We can echo Jay Gresham, Macon's language, but we could also have confidence like David that in the midst of difficult and dire circumstances, we will know that God, who has gone so far as to send his only begotten son to die for us, to shed his blood, that we can have confidence that will he take me out of this scrape?

[50 : 08] Will he take me out of this difficult circumstance? Will he be with me? Will he be for me? Yes. If God has given us his son, how shall he not freely give us all things?

Yeah? Let's pray. Lord, we thank you for Good Friday. It is so good. It's so good. Lord, that you look upon our failed estate and righteously, justly, appropriately, you look upon sin and it provokes our righteous anger that we can't even really begin to comprehend.

We like to think we have righteous anger, but we don't get anywhere close to it. But yet, God, in order to have for yourself a people out of love, you designed the system, as it were.

You set up the means by which your wrath will be turned away. And so, it's so good that you did that. And Lord Jesus, it's so good that you're willing to submit to the will of the Father, to take upon yourself our human flesh with all of its frailty and to walk along the dusty roads of Palestine and just be misunderstood just without really, really the kind of comfort, the kind of hope, the kind of love that only your Heavenly Father could give.

and yet, you did it. You did it. You went around casting out demons and healing people, even raising people from the dead, but most of all, you were obedient, obedient to all that the Father asked of you.

[51 : 51] And it's so good. We thank you. And Holy Spirit, we are so grateful that you stand ready, ready to take that accomplished work and put it on the account of a sinful person like myself, to take all of that and awaken faith within a soul that they might reach out in faith and hold fast to Christ and His obedience, His perfection, His righteousness, knowing that God will never let go of them.

We thank you, Holy Spirit. It's so good. And Lord, we ask then for each one in this room, Lord, that you would help us, Lord, to hold fast to who you are and what you have done so that each day we might commit our spirit into your hand and particularly as we are about to draw our last breath to know, to know that it is done, it is accomplished, that glory awaits, the hope set before us is real and it is ours all by your grace.

So I pray for myself and for everybody here for that we will embrace the goodness of this Friday all to your glory in Christ's name. Amen.

Let's stand and sing again. Come behold the wondrous mystery. singing singing!

Amen. Amen.

[54 : 34] Amen. Amen.

Amen. May the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God, and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit be with you all now and forever. Amen.