

Jesus' Sacrifice (Good Friday)

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[0 : 00] Welcome again everyone, my name is Chris, for those of you who don't know me, I'm the youth minister here at Holy Trinity, been here for just over a year now and tonight we're here not to listen to me, not to sing, but to remember and worship God for what he did on Good Friday 2,000 years ago.

Now if you've been in this church building before you might remember there's not always this big cross here and that's here tonight because Good Friday is all about what Jesus has done on the cross and it's on Good Friday in particular that Christians remember Jesus' death on the cross for us.

And so what I'm going to do tonight is just talk about what his death, the sacrifice of his life means for us, what it changes for us and I want us to then have that in our mind as a bit later on we're read the story of Jesus' last day on earth before he was killed.

So there are four things tonight that I want us to look at. Four things and I have conveniently made them all start with L so that you can remember them unless you hate the letter L.

So there are four things, they all start with L and these are the four things that I want us to have in our brains as we think about what Jesus' sacrifice means for us. Jesus' sacrifice firstly has left a mark on history.

[2 : 08] It happened 2,000 years ago and there aren't really that many things that happened 2,000 years ago that we still remember, that still play such a prominent role in society.

We'll talk a bit more about that in a moment. It lets us know God. That is because Jesus was killed on a cross, we can know God.

That might seem strange to some of you. Jesus' sacrifice, his death on the cross, also, and this is a bit of a fudge to get to start with L, but love is redefined.

So his death redefines love. Love is redefined by Jesus' sacrifice on the cross. And the fourth thing that we're going to look at tonight is how Jesus' sacrifice redefines life.

That's the fourth L, redefines our lives and the way we should live them. So we go back to the first one, the first L, it left a mark on history.

[3 : 11] Now, perhaps you think this or some of your friends think this, but lots of people think that Jesus didn't really exist, or if he did exist, he didn't really die on a cross, or a whole range of things that they believe are true.

They believe, lots of people believe Christians have just made up the story of Jesus dying on a cross and then rising again three days later. But they are lying.

Jesus really did die on the cross. He really was a real person. He's a true person in history. It is bad history to deny the existence of Jesus.

It is bad history to deny that he lived and that he died on a cross. And in case you're not convinced that Jesus and his death has left a mark on history, I don't know about you, but I ran out of butter today, which was annoying.

And I thought, oh, it's all right, I'll just go to the supermarket and get some butter. But when I got to the supermarket, I found that the supermarket was closed.

[4 : 29] And I was like, the supermarket never closes, ever, except for two days a year. Today, the day Jesus died, and in December, the day Jesus was born, Christmas Day.

That's a pretty significant impact 2,000 years later to be able to close the supermarkets two days a year because you died and because you were born. That's significant.

That's a significant guy we're talking about here. Our calendars, you might have heard BC, AD, that's all about Jesus as well. That's about when he lived.

And many, many good things that we take for granted are a result of people living out their faith in Jesus who died on a cross.

And it's because he really did die that they were really able to do many of the good things that they did. Much of modern-day nursing is a result of Christians way back when starting to care for the sick, when others would just leave them for dead in the plagues and things.

[5 : 38] More recently, the Royal Flying Doctors, a great Australian icon, was started by Christian people who were acting because Jesus was a real person who left a real mark on history.

He died on a real cross in a real place. Jesus' sacrifice, his death on the cross has left a mark on history.

But it's through his death on the cross that we're able to know God. Jesus' death, his sacrifice lets us know God.

And so I've got a few verses that we'll look at tonight. And they're from the Bible and they're going to come up on the screen.

And I'll just talk through them. And I've got up there where they come from, which book of the Bible they come from. And then that's the page number. So if you've got Bibles in front of you because you can't read the screen or whatever, they're black Bibles in front of you.

[6 : 42] That's the page you'll find these verses on. And that's just to prove to you that I'm not making this stuff up, that it's really in the Bible. I'm really talking about the truth. But actually, I need the second one on the slide first, the Peter one.

Awesome. So 1 Peter 3.18 says, For Christ also suffered for sins once for all, the righteous for the unrighteous.

Here's the key bit that I want us to think about. In order to bring you to God. Christ also suffered for sins once for all, the righteous for the unrighteous, in order to bring you to God.

You see, Jesus' death on the cross was done in order that we sinners could be brought to God.

That's how we know God, through Jesus' death on the cross.

So we'll keep unpacking this as we go along. 1 Timothy 2. The top one there says this. You've probably already read it. For there is one God, there is also one mediator between God and humankind, Christ Jesus, himself human who gave himself as a ransom for all.

[7 : 56] The key there is that word mediator. And maybe some of you have experienced this, but sometimes when people get divorced, they have to go to mediation or when they're about to get divorced.

They go to mediation to see if they can try and sort things out. And usually, not always, but usually when people are getting divorced, they're a bit angry at each other.

And that's usually why they're getting divorced. Communication is broken down. They can't talk to each other. They get a bit angry with each other. And because of that, they have this person called a mediator who sort of sits between them and controls their conversation so that they can approach one another without scratching each other's eyeballs out and punching each other where it really hurts.

That's why they have a mediator. And sometimes this mediator and this session can actually work for good. That is, they've just forgotten how to talk to each other.

The mediator helps them have a constructive conversation and they're able to sort things out. And Jesus doesn't work like the guy who sits in between us and God and constructs our conversation.

[9 : 19] But he is a mediator in the sense that our relationship with God is broken, like a divorce means the marriage relationship is broken.

And we need Jesus to be able to approach God again. And the way Jesus does that is through dying on a cross.

Jesus' death brings us to God. It mediates our relationship between God. It allows us to come to God. It allows us to know God. When we look at Jesus and how he lived, the Bible tells us that we are looking at God.

And if we understand what Jesus said and what he did, then we will be better able to understand God, our Father in heaven. The third thing is that Jesus' death, his sacrifice on the cross, redefines love.

And by redefine, I mean it changes the way humans normally think about love. See, when I think about the world and I think about, well, how does it see love?

[10 : 36] I think that mainly we see a society that is obsessed with a love that is self-serving. A love that is all about me and what I can get out of that relationship with the other person.

It's about feelings, what I feel for other people. It's about uncontrollable passion. And it's something that, you know, can just stop.

You just stop being in love. And I think in the world's view of love, when we think of boy-girl love, it's often mixed up with lust.

And people often think that they love someone when actually they just want to be naughty with someone. Love, as the world sees it, the perverted view of love, is self-serving, selfish love.

But Jesus, dying on the cross, he shows us a new way. He redefines how we should see love. So I've got another verse here.

[11 : 48] This is a really famous verse. If you've had friends who've got married in a church setting, they may have read this verse at their wedding. Or most of you probably don't have friends who've got married.

It's fair to say. But anyway, if you do, when they do get married, they'll read this probably. Alrighty, moving on. Love is patient.

This is from 1 Corinthians. Love is patient. Love is kind. Love is not envious or boastful or arrogant or rude. It does not insist on its own way.

It is not irritable or resentful. It does not rejoice in wrongdoing, but rejoices in the truth. It bears all things, believes all things, hopes all things, endures all things.

Love never ends. That verse shows us a different picture of love to the self-serving, confused with lust world's view of love that we are bombarded with.

[13 : 01] That shows us a love that is about action, that is about doing things. And you know the greatest thing you can do for someone, the greatest way you can show that you love someone, is to die for someone.

If I'm willing to die for you, and there ain't that many people in this room I'm willing to die for, no offense. But if I were, that would be an amazing, amazing show of my love for you.

That I valued your life more than my own. That I wanted you to be spared from death at the sake of my own life.

That is amazing. I wish that I could honestly say I could do that for all of you. But I think that would be a struggle. But you know, that's exactly, exactly what Jesus is doing when he comes to earth and he dies on the cross.

He is giving up his life for all of us, for all of our lives. See, in John 3.16 it says, For God so loved the world that he gave his only son, so that everyone who believes in him may not perish, but may have eternal life.

[14 : 34] God sent his son Jesus to die on a cross so that his death would spare us. Obviously, Christians die.

But what we're talking about here is eternal death. He saves us from the eternal consequence of sin, which is death and hell and separation from God.

That is the kind of death that we're talking about. But God loves us so much that he was willing to send his own son to take that death for us.

So that we, if we believe in Jesus, might be able to have life. But, the other thing I want to say about Jesus and the way he redefines love, is that it's not just, you know, it's pretty easy to love a good, you know, a good bloke.

You're a good bloke. I love you, man. Cool. Just don't cross me and then I won't love you anymore. I'll hate you, in fact. And I'll try and make your life a misery. I'm not actually that vindictive, so don't worry about that.

[15 : 54] But Jesus gives us a different picture of love. He doesn't give us just a, I really like, God wasn't sitting up in heaven thinking, I really love you. Well, he was.

But, at the same time, he wasn't just sitting there going, what good people, they do such good things, they really deserve me to give up my life. They deserve this.

You know, I might think my friend, who I really, really like and I've known all my life, deserves my love. Jesus' love is much more radical than just being for people who may deserve it.

In fact, Jesus tells us that love is for all people, including our enemies. So, in Matthew 5, it says this, You have heard it said, You shall love your neighbour and hate your enemy.

But I say to you, love your enemies and pray for those who persecute you, so that you may be children of your Father in heaven, for he makes his sun rise on the evil and on the good, and sends rain on the righteous and on the unrighteous.

[17 : 04] But the top part of that, But I say to you, love your enemies and pray for those who persecute you. Jesus' love, not only is it about doing things for people, it's not just about how you feel or what you can get out of a relationship, it's about doing things for other people, but it's not just about doing things for people you like, it's about doing things for people who you dislike intensely, who are your enemies, doing good things for them.

And the reason, it's not like God just says, that's what I want you to do, so you should do it. He wants us to do that, because that is what he has done for us.

You see, in Romans, it says this, next verse to come up there. God proves his love for us, in that while we were still sinners, while we were doing the wrong thing, while we were living life our own way, Christ died for us.

Much more surely then, now that we have been justified by his blood, we will be saved through him from the wrath of God. And this is the key bit.

For if while we were enemies, that is enemies of God, we were reconciled to God, through the death of his son, that's through Jesus, dying on a cross 2,000 years ago, much more surely, having been reconciled, we will be saved by his life.

[18 : 41] You see, while we were God's enemies, while we were sinners, he loved us, he loved his enemies, loved us so much, in fact, that he sent his son to die, so that if we believe in him, we might have life eternal.

See, sometimes we think, if you're my enemy, I hate you, and if you're my friend, I love you. And so we think, how can God, how can I be God's enemy?

Because God hates, you hate enemies. But actually, what we see is, God calls us to love everyone, as he does, no matter what the context, of the relationship is, whether it's hostility, or whether it's correct.

It happens in our case, before we put our faith and trust in the Lord Jesus, that we are considered the enemies of God, but he loves us so much, that he sent Jesus to die on a cross for us.

Love is redefined, through Jesus' sacrifice on the cross. And the other thing, the fourth thing, is life.

[20 : 03] Life is redefined, because Jesus died on a cross 2,000 years ago. Again, the world, sees life, a bit like it sees love, about me.

It's all about me. Sometimes, sometimes I have to grant the world this, sometimes, it does think about other people. You know, today is Good Friday, and I think in Melbourne, the second most famous thing, on Good Friday that happens, is the Royal Children's Hospital Appeal.

And the first most famous thing is the supermarkets close, and the real reason is that Jesus died on the cross. But the, one of the really important things in Melbourne, I didn't even realise this was going on last year, was that in Melbourne is this children's hospital appeal.

So the world can gather together, and help others apart from themselves. The bushfire appeal, that was a great example of how the world, sometimes helps other people, instead of themselves.

But I have to say, I was watching some of the Good Friday Appeal, on the TV today, and I have no idea how it is worthy of so long on television.

[21 : 19] It makes my eyes bleed with boredom. But, it's a great, it's not saying the cause isn't great, just saying the television show. Hmm.

Anyway, was watching it on television, and couldn't help but notice, that, along the bottom of the screen, it was like, Chris Bowditch has given, \$400, John Smith has given \$20, like, that guy sucks. Bill has given \$800, and then people would be like, I'll give \$6,000, but I'll give \$12,000, if Chris Bowditch takes his top off. That's seriously, I saw this guy take his top off, so someone would give him more money.

That was, everything was, seemed conditional, there were all these companies giving money, and they were giving money, and they were saying, yeah, yeah, I'm awesome, I'm Mr whatever from, such and such a company, and, I'm going to give \$10,000, isn't that good?

One guy, I couldn't believe this, he was, he owned a taxi company, and he, he stood there, on TV, and said, guess what we're doing?

[22 : 34] We're giving \$1, from every taxi fare, that gets taken today. I thought, well that's, nice, \$1, not really that much, and he said, so what everyone should do, is just ring up a taxi, and just go for

a trip around the block.

And I'm like, or, just give \$20 to the appeal. Well, I mean, everything was, so, so mixed up, so full of, sort of, this, self-serving, within this, sort of, altruistic, idea of, helping the hospital.

And look, I'm not saying, those people's motives, they weren't there, to promote themselves, but that, I mean, that's how, it looked, that's how it came across, and I think, if maybe they thought about it, some of them, if they couldn't have got TV time, or whatever, may not have been willing, just to quietly, give money.

The world, thinks life, is all about me, what I can get out of things, what my house can be like, how I can make it nicer, how I can get a better car, how I can have a better job, how I can have, this many kids, and this much that, and whatever, and whatever.

It's all about what I want, my plans, my life. How much stuff do I have? How many DVDs do I have? How many CDs do I have? What kind of pet do I have? Do I have the nice breed dog, or do I have the crappy dog, from the pound?

[24 : 06] That's what it's all about. But Jesus, when he came to this earth, 2,000 years ago, and because he died, on a cross, he redefines what life, is all about.

Let me read, to you from Matthew again. For those of you, who want to save their life, must lose it. And those of you, who lose their life, for my sake, will find it. You see, what Jesus is saying there, is not necessarily, if you want to, if you want to be saved by Jesus, you've got to die.

He's saying, that you have to lose control, of your own life. That you can no longer be, Lord of your life, but that Jesus, has to be, in control.

Jesus, is the one in control. You lose control, of your life, which was the name, of our youth group, and give it, to Jesus. And just before, the very verse before that, he says this, if anyone wants, to become my follower, let them deny themselves, take up their cross, and follow me.

[25 : 23] If you want to follow Jesus, you have to, deny yourself, you have to deny, your own wants, your own dreams, about where your life, might be going, and you have to be willing, to take up your cross, not walk around, with one of those things, on your back, all day, but to take up your cross, to be willing to suffer, to be willing to go through, whatever it takes, for the sake, of following Jesus, who loved you so much, that, he died, when you were God's enemy, so that you could be made, God's friend.

And Paul, who is, one of the apostles, wrote lots of the New Testament, he's so sold out, to this idea, of denying yourself, and following Jesus, by picking up your cross, that he says this, in Philippians, for to me, living, is Christ, and dying, is gain, he's saying, I live, the way Christ, wants me to live, Christ, that's Jesus, I live for Jesus, 100%, and if I die, that's a gain for me, because I'll go be, with Jesus, but while I'm still, on this earth, I'm here, I'm doing whatever Jesus, wants to me, I'm denying myself, I'm taking up my cross, and I'm following, him.

You see, life, is not about, you, that's what the world says, everything's about you, life, is not about, what you do, if you gave, 200 bucks, to, Good Friday, Appeal the Day, and 100 bucks, to the Bushfire Appeal, two months ago, that's great, but that ultimately, means nothing, what Good Friday, teaches us, or what Jesus, teaches us, is that, our lives, are meant to be spent, honoring, and worshipping, Jesus Christ, a man who lived, 2,000 years ago, who came to this earth, to live, and to die, for us, so that we, could be called, God's friends, that's what, is so amazing, that's why, this guy, is still having, an impact, and closing, supermarkets, 2,000 years, later, that's why, this guy, still, creates, heated discussions, if you want, to talk about Jesus, that's why, people try, and mislead, you, about the truth, about Jesus, because Jesus Christ, was a real guy, who told us, it's not about us, it's not about me, it's about him, and it's about, following him, and laying your life down, because he died, on the cross, for you, there are three things, that,

I want you, to think about, do you, know God, these questions, hopefully, will appear, do you know God, and if you don't know God, then it's, it's actually not that hard, to get to know him, all you have to do, is read, the stories of Jesus, found in the Bible, and if you do know God, how well do you know him, are you satisfied, with a kind of, he's like my, next door neighbor, two doors down, who's got red hair, kind of knowing, of Jesus, or, is it an intimate, I know Jesus, right here, in my heart, second thing, I want you to think about, do you know, God's, love, so like I said before, love is redefined, by,

Jesus' death, on the cross, he died, for, us, because he loved us, even though, we were living in sin, we were living, as his enemies, he still died for us, do you know, that love, that God has for you, and if you do, what are you going to do, about it, how will you respond, and perhaps, thinking about

that, can lead you, to this third question, who is, running your life, because I think, sometimes, we think, Jesus can run, the quarter of my life, that's about religion, and I'll run, the rest, but that's not actually, the picture we get, when we read the Bible, we get a picture of, Jesus, saying, you've got to lose your life, if you want to save it, and follow me, you've got to deny yourself, pick up your cross, and follow, me, so who is running your life, are you running your life, or is,

[30 : 48] Jesus running your life, that's the big question, and that's what I want us, to think about now, just be, a few minutes, to mull that over, then we're going to sing a song, and then, the Bible, is going to be read to us, we're going to read the story, of Jesus, how he came to this earth, and how he died, we'll just read, the part of his story, about him being, crucified, on the cross, and I want you to think, about those questions, as you read that, as we read that, verse, think about, what Jesus has done for us, and whether we are, living, appropriately, because of what he's done, so I'm going to pray, for us, and then we'll just think about that, and the band will come up, shortly, and we'll sing, Lord Jesus, Jesus, you are an awesome, awesome God, and we just thank you, that 2,000 years ago, you came to this earth, to live, and Lord, we thank you, that you were willing, to die for us, even though we were your enemies, you still loved us,

Lord, we pray, that tonight, you might, reveal yourself, even more to us, Lord, we pray, that tonight, you might, show yourselves, to us, more clearly, Lord, if we, don't know you, help us, to get to know you, Lord, if we do know you, but, not intimately, not closely, Lord, help us, to get more serious, about, our faith, and Lord, if we are, intimately connected, to you, if we really know you, deeply, Lord, continue, to sustain us, as your disciples, as your followers, Lord, thank you, that you love us, and thank you, that you teach us, what love is, and Father, please help us, to realize, your love for us, and to respond, to that love, and Lord, help us, to give control, of our lives, to you, Lord, we don't want to run, our own lives, we don't want to, take control, we want to lose control, and give, our lives, over to you, so Jesus, please, help us, to do that, in your mighty name, we pray, Amen.