

Good Friday

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[0 : 00] The soldiers led him away inside the palace, and they called together the whole battalion. And they clothed them in a purple cloak, and twisting together a crown of thorns, they put it on him. And they began to salute him.

Hail, King of the Jews! And they were striking his head with a reed, and spitting on him, and kneeling down in homage to him. And when they had mocked him, they stripped him of the purple cloak, and put his own clothes on him.

And they led him out to crucify him. And they compelled a passerby, Simon of Cyrene, who was coming in from the country, the father of Alexander and Rufus, to carry his cross.

And they brought him to a place called Golgotha, which means the place of the skull. And they offered him wine mixed with myrrh, but he did not take it.

[1 : 20] And they crucified him, and divided his garments among them, casting lots for them to decide what each should take. And it was the third hour when they crucified him.

And the inscription of the charges against him read, the King of the Jews.

And with him, they crucified two robbers, one on his right and one on his left. And those who passed by, derided him, wagging their heads and saying, Aha, you who would destroy the temple, and rebuild it in three days, save yourself and come down from the cross.

So also the chief priests with the scribes mocked him to one another, saying, He saved others, he cannot save himself. Let the Christ, the King of Israel, come down now from the cross that we may see and believe.

Those who were crucified with him were also reviled him. And when the sixth hour had come, there was darkness over the whole land until the ninth hour.

[2 : 39] And at the ninth hour, Jesus cried with a loud voice, Eloi, Eloi, lama sabathani, which means, My God, my God, why have you forsaken me?

And some of the bystanders hearing it said, Behold, he is calling Elijah. And someone ran and filled a sponge with sour wine, put it on a reed, and gave it to him to drink, saying, Wait, let us see whether Elijah will come and take him.

And Jesus uttered a loud cry and breathed his last. And the curtain of the temple was torn in two from top to bottom. And when the centurion, who stood facing him, saw that in this way he breathed his last, he said, Truly, this man was the Son of God.

The question that I have is how did it ever get to this point?

How did it ever get to a cross? A cross which was considered to be such a vile way to die that Rome had actually instituted that no Roman citizen could be put to death in this manner.

[4 : 05] Is it just because he committed murder? Perhaps it was a murder as in a cane killing Abel type of situation?

No, this is not the type of murder that happened. What we are talking about here is a government-sanctioned execution.

Because it was government-sanctioned, we know it must have included some type of court proceedings that proved without a shadow of a doubt that he deserved a crime, a capital punishment.

There must have been mountains of evidence that demonstrated that he was complicit in some heinous crime, right? We know that in Jewish law, to falsely accuse someone of a crime that made you guilty of that crime if you were found to have lied.

So it's doubtful anyone would have bore false witness. He was, after all, executed by the state. Was it treason?

[5 : 20] Maybe it was insurrection. Possibly an assassination, maybe on Caesar himself. Well, what's really great about recorded history is we can go back.

We can read and find out the answers to why did Jesus die. Let me read to you about these outrageous actions that Jesus committed.

The first chapter of the Gospel of Mark tells us that the reputation of Jesus went far and wide. In fact, it even went into other countries.

Now, we all know from history that certain actions merit all sorts of attention. We have heard of Al Capone. Bunny and Clyde, Jesse James, people who committed great murders and are somehow venerated because of their crimes against the state.

Often, it's the extent of their crimes and the fears that they cause that makes someone so deserving. What's interesting is that Jesus was known throughout his country not because he robbed stagecoaches or held up banks or fomented rebellion where women and children were murdered or hung out with a band of cutthroats.

[6 : 57] Mark 1.33 begins to tell us that the whole city was gathered together outside a house where Jesus was staying.

It appears that we have some sort of rebellion being fermented here. Jesus must have been preparing to lead a revolution. Who else was there?

What kind of people were there with him? Well, Mark tells us that evening at sundown, the people who brought to him were sick.

They must have been sociopathic type of sick, right? Scripture also tells us it brought demon-possessed men. Ah, if you're going to lead a revolution, you want a really band of cutthroat evil men, what better than to have demon-possessed men by your side?

Sadly, Mark 1.34 tells us he healed many who were sick with various diseases and cast out the demons.

[8 : 07] So with such extraordinary injustices that Jesus committed, the law shows up. The ruling authorities, they had come from all over Galilee and as far as Jerusalem to gather good intelligence on this government rebel.

The crowd was crazy for this man. So crazy that they would cut holes in the roofs of homes to lower their friends who were paralyzed to be next to Jesus.

And Jesus would do stuff that no one who has ever walked this earth had ever done. He looked at this paralyzed man who was lowered by his crazy friends, cared for by his family, did something that nobody expected.

This man expecting to be healed like the hundreds before him was told by Jesus this, your sins have been forgiven.

What? Nobody was there to see a soul set free. Nobody was there to see a guilty conscience made right.

[9 : 33] Nobody was there to see a jail door opened and a prisoner set free. And nobody was there to see the deepest longing for a man seated before God to be forgiven.

But they did. And in that declaration, they heard a man do what only God could do.

The crimes of Jesus would certainly stack up. His disciple, fishermen and tradesmen, even had a tax collector by his side. All religious outsiders.

Along with them, he healed and they devoted themselves to God. They were accused of eating on the wrong religious days.

You know, he also ate with those people, the prostitutes, the tax collectors, and those other social outsiders.

[10 : 31] Those who never experienced acceptance and friendship ever from a stranger. Yet he fed them. He gave them sight.

To some, he gave them hearing. He healed legs that never knew what it was to walk before. And Jesus simply loved and healed all those who came to him.

Maybe it was because Jesus didn't file his taxes that he was crucified on that cross. Well, it turns out that this man never demanded money.

He never demanded respect and actually anything in return. He included the outsiders, the sick, the lepers, the foreigners, the poors, the outcast.

Yet he found rejection from those in power, those who govern both politically and religiously. So somewhere along the line, a plot was hatched.

[11:37] hatched. Jesus was betrayed by one of his closest companions. And Jesus was taken in the middle of the night, not as he planned a rebellion, but as he simply prayed before his father.

It's told that the only hand that he lifted was to prevent one of his companions from striking those who came to hurt him.

It's interesting. He was given a trial. Must have been before the greatest court, all the great religious justices. Scripture says that it happened in a home.

Witnesses were brought forth, but they were found to be unable to get their story straight. He was struck, beaten, battered and bruised, all because he was simply willing to forgive a man and do what no man could do.

The arrest was illegal. The trial was illegal. The accusations were illegal. Yet it went on without anyone ever crying out, injustice, injustice, injustice.

[13:07] Arguments about as to who really killed Jesus, who was the cause of this great misuse, trial, who was the cause of this great miscarriage of justice, who is responsible for killing the man who ever, who oversaw his death.

Simply say, truly this man was the son of God. Was it really the petty Jewish leaders? Was it really the fearful Roman occupiers?

There must have been some sort of conspiracy. This must have been God's default plan. He must have adjusted it on the fly.

As people did not accept him for who he was, they had to come up with some other plan. The Jews were supposed to accept Jesus, right?

He was their Messiah, their deliverer. Wasn't he the one to lead them from the Roman occupation? Wasn't he just a week ago declared king on Palm Sunday?

[14:23] something horribly must have gone wrong with God's plan. Well, the Bible actually tells us who's responsible for all of this.

A prophet named Isaiah 500 years before named the culprit of this crime. Isaiah writes in Isaiah 53, he was despised and rejected by men.

A man of sorrows and acquainted with grief and as one from whom men hide their faces, he was so despised and we esteemed him not.

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. Upon him was the chastisement that brought us peace and with his wounds we are healed.

[15:38] 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.

He was oppressed and he was afflicted, yet he opened not his mouth like a lamb that is led to the slaughter and like a sheep that before its shears is silent.

So he opened not his mouth. By oppression and judgment he was taken away, and as for his generation, who considered that he was cut out of the land of the living, stricken for the transgression of my people.

And they made him a grave with the wicked and with the rich man in his death, although he had done no violence and there was no deceit in his mouth.

yet it was the will of the Lord to crush him. He has put him to grief.

[16:47] When his soul makes an offering full guilt, he shall see his offspring. He shall prolong his days. The will of the Lord shall prosper in his hand.

Note what I read in verse 10. Yet it was the will of the Lord to crush him.

That word will can also be understood as delight. It was the delight of the Lord to crush his son.

This collides with our modern sensibilities, does it not? How could God, a loving God, or one who would dare call himself God, do such a thing?

Two modern age questions seem to arrive when presented with this truth. One, could God really do this? And two, why would God do such a thing?

[17:59] Just to be clear, Acts 2.23 says very clearly, this Jesus delivered up according to the definite place and foreknowledge of God.

this was planned. Let me share with you six reasons why God would do such a thing.

Such as to kill his son on a cross. The first reason is the gospel, the good news will be known as the message of the cross.

1 Corinthians 2.2 says, for I decided to know nothing among you except Jesus Christ and him crucified. The cross will forever be associated with Jesus Christ.

This week, I find it interesting, a sad occurrence happened. I did not know him, but a close friend of many of you was killed in an accident up in the mountains.

[19 : 18] What I find really interesting about every picture that appeared in every national newspaper has him with a ski helmet, and what's on that ski helmet? A cross.

There is no mistaking what Dave Treadway stood for, amen? This symbol doesn't need any other explanation except that the good news comes from an understanding that it should have been me and you hung on that cross.

It should have been me and you with nails driven through our hands and feet. It should have been me and you to die of asphyxiation.

It should have been me and you with a spear piercing our sides. This cross will forever be a symbol for the love that God has for you and me.

The second reason is the cross redeems from the curse of the law. You and I are guilty. We are sinners and guilty before a just and perfect God.

[20 : 32] If Jesus doesn't die on this cross, you and I are cursed forever and there is no hope. The fact of the matter is there isn't enough good works for us to do to outweigh the bad works.

In fact, what we will soon learn is that we don't need someone to outweigh our bad works. We need someone to blot out all our sins.

Galatians 3.13 says, God, Christ, redeemed us from the curse of the law by becoming a curse for us. For it is written, cursed is anyone who is hanged on a tree.

The third reason is the cross brings reconciliation and justification. Romans 4.25 says, it will be counted to us who believe in him, Jesus, who raised from the dead, Jesus our Lord, who was delivered up for our trespasses and raised for our justification.

Now, there's some legal theological terms being used here, but what this simply means is because Jesus died on the cross, you and I are now made right before God.

[21 : 55] The list of our sins have been blotted. out forever. God is, in fact, has taken that list and tossed it into the deepest parts of the ocean, as far as from the east to the west, never to be accounted for again.

We are not just talking about we are now on speaking terms with God, but we can now embrace him as father, and us as sons, and daughters.

For, the cross destroys the power of Satan. Colossians 2, 13 reads, in you who are dead in your trespasses, that is us, and the uncircumcision of the flesh, us again, God made alive together with him, having forgiven us all our trespasses.

How? By canceling the record of debt that stood against us with its legal demands that he set aside, nailing it to the cross.

He disarmed the rulers and authorities and put them to open shame by triumphing over them in him.

[23 : 11] Before there was a reason to accuse us, guess what? No more. There's nothing for the evil one to say about us.

The fifth reason is the cross unites believers with Jesus Christ. Paul would write in Romans 6, 4, we were buried therefore with him by baptism into death in order that just as Christ was raised from the dead by the glory of the Father, we too might walk in newness of life.

For if we've been united with him in a death like his, we shall certainly be united with him in a resurrection like his. We know that our old self was crucified with him in order that the body of sin might be brought to nothing so that we would no longer be enslaved to sin.

For one who has died has been set free from sin. Because Jesus died, we're free.

sin. And the cross is a symbol of discipleship.

[24 : 33] Jesus 16, 24, Jesus speaking to his disciples said, then if anyone would come after me, let him deny himself, take up his cross and follow me.

me. It's interesting because later in Matthew, on the night before he was betrayed, he gathered his apostles in a room, disciples like you and I, and he gave them a very simple command.

That command is what we are going to follow here this evening. It's the commandment of communion. It's inviting you to come forward and take part in the body and blood that was broken for you and I.

We're going to do it a little bit differently than we traditionally do it here at SBC. What we're going to do is I'm going to invite the worship team up.

They may come up. I would like you to take the time to meditate, to pray before God on what happened that night over 2,000 years ago.

[26 : 16] and when you're ready Dave Nandery and I will be at the front and you can come and take communion at the front and then return to your seat whenever you are desiring to do so.

If you do not know Jesus Christ you do not have to come up. In fact I would encourage you not to.