

OH HAPPY DAY!

Rev. Tom Parrish

John 19:16-30

The most somber music I have ever heard, as a child, was on Good Friday in my German Lutheran Church.

What we call “Good Friday” is viewed by too many as “Bad Friday.” In fact calling it Good Friday is correct for one simple reason: It is A Really A Great Day for You and Me! IT IS TRULY “OUR HAPPY DAY!”

John 19: 16 So he delivered him over to them to be crucified. 23 When the soldiers had crucified Jesus, they took his garments and divided them into four parts, one part for each soldier; also his tunic. But the tunic was seamless, woven in one piece from top to bottom, 24 so they said to one another, “Let us not tear it, but cast lots for it to see whose it shall be.” This was to fulfill the Scripture which says, “They divided my garments among them, and for my clothing they cast lots.”

28 After this, Jesus, knowing that all was now finished, said (to fulfill the Scripture), “I thirst.” 29 A jar full of sour wine stood there, so they put a sponge full of the sour wine on a hyssop branch and held it to his mouth. 30 When Jesus had received the sour wine, he said, “It is finished,” and he bowed his head and gave up his spirit.

What does the Bible say about that first Good Friday, 600 years before it happened? The Prophet Isaiah wrote: *But he was wounded 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.*

Big Question today is: So What best identifies the meaning and purpose of your life in light of Good Friday and Easter? Tonight he is going to tell us what he wants written on our tombstone and what we need to do to make sure it comes true. Matt. 16:24 *Then Jesus told his disciples, “If anyone would come after me, let him deny himself and take up his cross and follow me.*

What does that mean?

- Jesus, on this Good Friday, is calling to you and me, “*come follow me.*”
- To follow Jesus is not a casual decision or a weekend proposition.
- To follow Jesus means that we give up everything and make Jesus the pursuit of our lives.
- That pursuit is a journey to death of ourselves, our wants and our desires.
- That pursuit is a giant “YES” to what Jesus says, wants and calls us to do.
- However few follow Jesus even though many know all about him.
- This is precisely why we have to make a daily choice to follow Jesus again and again and again.

So Let’s Clarify Why We Call This Good Friday? The answer is quite simple: It was a very bad Friday for Jesus. It was a Great Friday for Sinners!!!!

Isaiah 53: 4 *Surely he has borne our griefs and carried our sorrows; yet we esteemed him stricken, smitten by God, and afflicted. 5 But he was wounded for our transgressions; he was crushed for our iniquities; upon him was the chastisement that brought us peace, and with his stripes we are healed.*

Listen to one of The Most Profound Verse in the Bible

2Cor. 5:21 God made Jesus who did not know sin to be sin for us, so that in him we would become the righteousness of God.

That is the point: •We are powerless to heal our broken and bent nature. •We are lost in ourselves and desire to be god. •We are entangled in sin to the point where it is strangling us to death.

The Good News of Good Friday can be summarized in these words: Rom. 5:8 *But God demonstrates his own love for us, in that while we were still sinners, Christ died for us.*

- An invitation to the greatest adventure in the universe.
- But it is unlike any invitation you have ever received.
- It is an invitation written in blood.
- An invitation asking you and me to die to ourselves.
- An invitation not just for a moment but for a lifetime.
- An invitation to make Jesus the purpose of your life.
- An invitation asking you and me to be his ambassadors.
- An invitation that calls us to follow him.

Here is what Jesus says: *Mark 8:35 For whoever wants to save his life will lose it, but whoever loses his life for my sake and for the gospel will save it. Daily you stand before Jesus and declare: "Today Jesus I live for you again. I want to think your thoughts, I want to do you will, I want to act as you act, see as you see and respond as you respond."*

Following Jesus Requires two things from you and me:

•**BOLDNESS FOR JESUS** *For I am not ashamed of the gospel, for it is God's power for salvation to everyone who believes, to the Jew first and also to the Greek. For the righteousness of God is revealed in the gospel from faith to faith, just as it is written, "The righteous by faith will live."* Romans 1:16-17

•**OUTSPOKEN PROCLAMATION:** Jesus says in Matthew 10: *"So have no fear of them, for nothing is covered that will not be revealed, or hidden that will not be known. What I tell you in the dark, say in the light, and what you hear whispered, proclaim on the housetops."*

DARE WE DO ANY LESS? Jesus put it this way: *36 For what benefit is it for a person to gain the whole world, yet forfeit his life? 37 What can a person give in exchange for his life? 38 For if anyone is ashamed of me and my words in this adulterous and sinful generation, the Son of Man will also be ashamed of him when he comes in the glory of his Father with the holy angels."* Mk 8:36-38

INTERESTING STATEMENTS FROM BOTH BELIEVERS AND UNBELIEVERS REGARDING JESUS:

University professor and Father of Modern Creation Science Movement Henry Morris

~ *The bodily resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead is the crowning proof of Christianity. If the resurrection did not take place, then Christianity is a false religion. If it did take place, then Christ is God and the Christian faith is absolute truth.* ~



~ *As the centuries pass, the evidence is accumulating that, measured by His effect on history, Jesus is the most influential life ever lived on this planet.* ~ Kenneth Scott Latourette was the first, and until recent years, almost the only major historian to write the history of Christianity in a way that dealt seriously with its presence in all six continents.



Famous writer H.G. Wells ~ *I am an historian, I am not a believer, but I must confess as a historian that this penniless preacher from Nazareth is irrevocably the very center of history. Jesus Christ is easily the most dominant figure in all history.* ~



~ *The message of Christ is not Christianity. The message of Christ is Christ.* ~ Gary Amirault is a Unitary Universalist and a harsh critic of Christianity.



Without question or rival Jesus has had the greatest impact on the history of the world.

Therefore, Good Friday, is not a black Friday, not just a Brutal Friday, not merely a Grieving Friday or Sad Friday or even a Bitter Friday

IT IS A HAPPY DAY. A GLORIOUS DAY. A REALLY GOOD FRIDAY FOR YOU AND ME.