

Welcome to Worship at
Trinity Lutheran Church, Osceola, WI
Good Friday - April 10, 2020

P: In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit. Let the words of my mouth and the meditation of my heart be acceptable in Your sight, O Lord, my Strength and my Redeemer. Amen.

Hymn #452 (TLH) - *"The Son of God Goes Forth to War"*

The Son of God goes forth to war
A kingly crown to gain.
His blood-red flag streams wide and far
Who follows in his train?
All those who drink Christ's cup of woe,
Triumphant over pain,
And patient bear their cross below
They follow in his train.

Saint Stephen, looking to the sky,
Saw heav'n beyond the grave
The Son of Man by God on high,
And called on him to save.
Like Christ, the pardon rare displayed,
While on the cross in pain,
This saint for his assailants prayed
Who follows in his train?

A glorious band - the chosen few,
On whom the Spirit came
Because sure hope in Christ they knew
In peace met cross and flame.
They suffered ridicule and scorn,
With hatred they were slain.
Now crowns their faithful heads adorn
Who follows in their train?

A noble army, robed in white,
From ev'ry tribe and race,

Around the Savior's throne delight
To see his glorious face.
They held the narrow path to heav'n
Through peril, toil, and pain.
O God, to us may grace be giv'n
To follow in their train!

Confession of Sins:

P: Beloved in the Lord, let us draw near with a true heart and confess our sins to God our Father, asking Him in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ to grant us forgiveness.

C: **Almighty God, our Maker and Redeemer, we poor sinners confess to You that we are by nature sinful and unclean and that we have sinned against You in our thoughts, words, and actions. Therefore we flee for refuge to Your infinite mercy, seeking and imploring Your grace and forgiveness for the sake of our Lord Jesus Christ. O Lord, have mercy on us!**

P: Upon this your confession, I as a called servant of Christ and His Word announce to you the grace of God, and in the place of and by the command of my Lord Jesus Christ, I forgive you all your sins in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit.

C: **Amen.**

The Passion History - Part 7

When it was evening, there came a rich man from Arimathaea, named Joseph, who was also a disciple of Jesus, but secretly for fear of the Jews. Joseph of Arimathaea, a prominent member of the council, was a good and righteous man. He had not agreed with their plan and action. He was looking forward to the kingdom of God. He boldly went to Pilate and asked for the body of Jesus. Pilate was surprised that he was already dead. Summoning the centurion, he asked him if Jesus had been dead for a long time. When he learned it from the centurion, he granted the body to Joseph. Joseph bought a linen cloth, came and took Jesus' body away. Nicodemus, who earlier had come to Jesus at night, also came bringing a mixture of myrrh and aloes, about sixty-five pounds. They took Jesus' body and wrapped it along with the spices in linen cloths, according to Jewish burial custom. There was a garden at the place where Jesus was crucified. And in the garden was a new tomb in which no one had ever been laid. So because it was the Jewish Day of Preparation and since the tomb was nearby, they laid Jesus there. Joseph took

the body and laid it in his own new tomb that he had cut in the rock. He rolled a large stone over the tomb's entrance and left. The women who had come with Jesus from Galilee, followed after Joseph and observed the tomb and how his body was laid. Mary Magdalene and Mary the mother of Joseph were watching where he was laid. They returned and prepared spices and perfumes. On the Sabbath they rested according to the commandment. On the next day, which was the day after the Preparation Day, the chief priests and Pharisees gathered in the presence of Pilate and said, "Sir, we remembered what that deceiver said while he was still alive, 'After three days I will rise again.' So give a command that the tomb be made secure until the third day. Otherwise his disciples might steal his body and tell the people, 'He is risen from the dead.' And this last deception will be worse than the first." Pilate said to them, "You have a guard. Go, make it as secure as you know how." So they went and made the tomb secure by sealing the stone and posting a guard. (EHV)

The Apostles' Creed:

I believe in God, the Father almighty, maker of heaven and earth.

I believe in Jesus Christ, His only Son, our Lord, who was conceived by the Holy Spirit, born of the virgin Mary, suffered under Pontius Pilate, was crucified, died, and was buried. He descended into hell. The third day He rose again from the dead. He ascended into heaven and is seated at the right hand of God the Father almighty. From there He will come to judge the living and the dead.

I believe in the Holy Spirit, the Holy Christian Church, the communion of saints, the forgiveness of sins, the resurrection of the body, and the life everlasting. Amen.

Hymn #104 - "Go to Dark Gethsemane"

**Go to dark Gethsemane,
All who feel the tempter's pow'r;
Your Redeemer's conflict see.
Watch with him one bitter hour;
Turn not from his griefs away;
Learn of Jesus Christ to pray.**

**Follow to the judgment hall;
View the Lord of life arraigned.
Oh, the wormwood and the gall!
Oh, the pangs his soul sustained!
Shun not suff'ring, pain, or loss;
Learn of him to bear the cross.**

**Calv'ry's mournful mountain climb;
There, adoring at his feet,
Mark that miracle of time,
God's own sacrifice complete.
"It is finished!" hear him cry;
Learn of Jesus Christ to die.**

**Early hasten to the tomb
Where they laid his breathless clay;
All is solitude and gloom.
Who has taken him away?
Christ is ris'n! He meets our eyes.
Savior, teach us so to rise.**

**The Sermon: Matthew 27:45-50
 "The Greatest Battle Ever Fought"**

*Matthew 27:45-50 - From the sixth hour until the ninth hour, there was darkness over all the land. About the ninth hour Jesus cried out with a loud voice, saying, "Eli, Eli, lama sabachthani?" which means "My God, my God, why have you forsaken me?" When some of those standing there heard this, they said, "This fellow is calling for Elijah." Immediately one of them ran, took a sponge, and soaked it with sour wine. Then he put it on a stick and gave him a drink. The rest said, "Leave him alone. Let's see if Elijah comes to save him." After Jesus cried out again with a loud voice, he gave up his spirit.
(EHV)*

It was 12:00 **noon** - the **brightest** part of the day - and everything went **black** - **pitch** black. It was **so** dark that there was no sunlight at all - no moon - no stars. Just darkness. Everything came to a **stop**. And it was no eclipse. Historians tell us that as far away as Egypt, **everyone** was experiencing the same mysterious and frightening **darkness**.

We know what that **darkness** was all about. It came because of a **crucifixion** - the most **horrible** way for anyone to be put to death. It would often take **days** for a person to die from crucifixion, with their diaphragm working slower and slower, until finally the person wouldn't be strong enough to take in another breath at all.

On the day that we call **Good Friday**, Jesus was being crucified with two other men just outside of Jerusalem. During His 33 years here on the earth, thousands and thousands of people had **followed** Jesus. They had listened intently to His words, and they had sung **praises** to Him. Just 5 days earlier the crowds of people had called Him their **Savior**. Jesus was a special **warrior** who had been sent from God. But now that warrior was **dying**.

This battle would be the **final** battle. Everything Jesus had experienced up to this point helped to **prepare** Him for this battle. This was a battle that Jesus **had to win**, because the future of everyone who has ever lived was hanging in the balance. This would be **The Greatest Battle Ever Fought**.

Let's take a look at what **happened** when Jesus battled against His enemy, Satan, on the **cross**. We read, *"From the sixth hour until the ninth hour, there was **darkness** over all the land. About the ninth hour Jesus cried out with a loud voice, saying, 'Eli, Eli, lama sabachthani?' which means 'My **God**, my **God**, why have you forsaken me?'"*

We certainly don't want to **minimize** the **physical** agony which Jesus endured for us. It was **horrendous**. It had already **started** the night **before** in the Garden of Gethsemane. That was where Jesus was **arrested**, and then was led away to be put on **trial**. Even though He was totally **innocent** of all the charges which were brought against Him, Jesus was forced to wear a crown of **thorns** - but that was just the **beginning**. All through the night Jesus endured **mocking** and **humiliation** - with soldiers **pulling hair** out of His beard, **slapping** Him in the face, and **spitting** on Him. Jesus was **stripped** of His clothes, and was **whipped** with a **scourge** which ripped out chunks of skin and flesh right down to the bone. After He was condemned to **die** Jesus was forced to carry the heavy **crossbeam** for His cross until He **collapsed** with exhaustion. And then finally Jesus was **nailed** to the cross through His **wrists** and **feet**, and the cross was hoisted up and dropped into place. The **soldiers**, the Jewish **leaders**, and even the people who were **passing by**, continued to **mock** Him. As I said, it was **horrendous**.

But Jesus **endured** that pain and agony without **complaining**. In fact, He spoke some **amazing** words while He was hanging on the cross. First of all, Jesus offered a **prayer** asking the Father to **forgive** all those who were involved in **mocking** and **crucifying** Him. Then Jesus answered the desperate prayer of one of the **thieves** who was also being crucified - giving him the promise of eternal life in **heaven**. And with tender concern for His **mother**, Jesus told His disciple, **John**, to take care of her.

Through it all, there was **darkness** - thick, black darkness - darkness which shows us how much our God hates **sin**. Jesus endured all the internal **pain** and **pressure** of paying for the sins of the **world**, knowing that He hadn't committed **any** of those sins. But He was the **only one** who could bear the weight of the sins of **billions** and **billions** of people - sins which included all the **massacres**, all the **abortions**, all the **divorces**, and all the **other** horrible things which you and I have ever **thought**, **said**, and **done**. This was **The Greatest Battle Ever Fought**, and Jesus fought this battle **alone**.

But then comes the **worst** part. Not only did Jesus bear the burden of the **sins** of the whole **world**, but He also bore the white-hot **anger** of His heavenly Father, **burning** against Him because of those sins. We can hear it in Jesus' voice as His **tone** changes. A gut-wrenching cry came from His tortured body. We're told, "*About the ninth hour, Jesus cried out with a loud voice saying, 'Eli, Eli, lama sabachthani?' which means 'My God, my God, why have you forsaken me?'*"

Now, we know that the **three persons** of the Trinity - Father, Son, and Holy Spirit - are **one** eternal **God**. So it seems to be **impossible** that the **Son** could actually be **forsaken** by the **Father**. How can the Father, who is the source of **all** true love in this world, turn His **back** on the **Son** whom He so clearly declared, both at His baptism and on the Mount of Transfiguration, to be "*The son whom I love?*" But that's what **happened**.

On Good Friday, the Father **suspended** His relationship with His Son so that Jesus could pay for the **sins** of the entire world. It must have **torn** at the Father's heart to allow this separation. But His **wrath** was focused on the **evil** that Jesus carried to the cross, because God **hates** the malignant tumor of **sin**, which causes the human race, which He created, to **rot**.

I'd like you to **note** something here. At the beginning of His time on the cross, Jesus called out, "*Father, forgive them.*" There is a certain **intimacy** in

those words - a **closeness** between Father and Son. But as the minutes ticked away, Jesus' words changed to, "*My **God, my God, why have you forsaken me?***" It's obvious that the relationship between Jesus and the Father has **changed** - in fact, it's **broken**. But Jesus' faith is still **strong**, even as He is **forsaken** by His Father. This is a moment of sheer **horror** for our Savior - it's the **worst** moment of His life. Jesus' suffering has reached its **peak**, so while this is the **worst** moment in His life, it is also the **greatest**. This is the point in the battle against Satan, which will determine whether the battle will be **won** or **lost**.

Seven hundred years earlier the Prophet **Isaiah** explained what was happening in that battle. He wrote, "*Surely he was taking up **our** weaknesses, and he was carrying **our** sufferings. We thought it was because of **God** that he was stricken, smitten, and afflicted, but it was because of **our** rebellion that he was pierced. He was crushed for the guilt **our** sins deserved. The **punishment** that brought us **peace** was upon **him**, and by his **wounds** we are **healed**.*"

It was all because of **us**. Jesus Himself remained **perfect** and **holy** this entire time. But **our sins** were **charged** to Him, and Jesus was willing to pay for those sins with His **life**. It doesn't matter who we **are** - you and I are not always **aware** of how **much** we sin. But we **are** aware that we are **broken**. We know that our sins are too big for **us** to handle. We need a **warrior** who can **provide** forgiveness for us. And we **have** that warrior in **Jesus**.

Let's go back to our text once again. We're told that Jesus was **thirsty**. "*They put a sponge soaked in sour wine on a hyssop branch and held it to his mouth. When Jesus had **received** the sour wine, he said, "It is **finished!**" Then, **bowing** his head, he **gave up** his spirit.*"

In Mark's Gospel he tells us that at that time the temple curtain was "*torn in two from top to bottom.*" All the things which had kept God and His people **apart**, had been **removed** - the physical **curtain** in the temple, as well as the **sins** of the people. Because of Jesus, God and His people were **reunited**, and there was free and complete **access** to God for **everyone**,

Just one final note. Notice how the final words of Jesus show that His relationship with God has also been **restored**. In His very last words from the cross Luke tell us, "*Jesus cried out with a loud voice, '**Father**, into your hands I commit my spirit!*' When he had said this, he breathed his last." The battle was **over**. Every last sin had been **paid** for, and God's plan of salvation was **complete**. So, the beautiful and intimate Father-Son relationship **returned** again. God's anger

had been **appeased**. That loud cry, "*It is finished*" says it all. In **The Greatest Battle Ever Fought**, Jesus delivered the **knockout**. He **crushed** Satan's head. Oh, Satan is still walking around - he rattles his **saber**, and he makes his **threats** - but it's all just a big **show**. He no longer has **any power** over us, because "*It is finished*." Jesus' work is **done**, and we are **forgiven**. Amen.

Prayers:

O Father of all **mercy** and **love**, we humbly come before You on this anniversary of Christ's death, to thank You for taking **pity** on our lost condition, and for **loving** us sinners so much that You sent Your Son to the **cross** for us all. Because it pleased You to permit suffering and death to strike **Him** instead of **us**, we now have total **pardon** for our sins, and **release** from all punishment. Grant to each of us a true and enduring **faith** by which our sin-weary souls may find the **peace** our Savior promised - a peace which comes from being reunited with **You**, our heavenly Father.

Dear Savior Jesus Christ, with Your triumphant cry of **victory** from the cross, You brought to a close Your blessed work of **redeeming** us from our sins. Mortal tongues can never express all the **praise** which You deserve for this gift of Your love. What **joy**, what **hope**, what **comfort** is ours in the midst of our troubles and afflictions, knowing that our sins are **forgiven**, and that we are **redeemed** through Your sacrifice. May our hearts never **stray** from You, and may we never stop **praising** You. Sprinkle our sins with Your **blood**, and blot out our many **transgressions** from God's sight forever. As long as we live, shower us with Your **grace**, bestowing every needful blessing on our **bodies** and **souls**.

O Holy Spirit, since it pleases You to **keep us** in the one true faith, may it **also** please You to bring the Good News of Christ's **victory** over death to **others**, that together **with** us they may enjoy everlasting **life** and **salvation**, all to the glory of our Redeemer's name - the **only** name under heaven given to men by which we must be **saved**. Amen.

The Lord's Prayer:

**Our Father, who art in heaven,
Hallowed be Thy name;
Thy kingdom come,
Thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven.
Give us this day our daily bread.
And forgive us our trespasses
as we forgive those who trespass against us.**

**And lead us not into temptation;
But deliver us from evil.
For Thine is the kingdom and the power and the glory forever and ever.
Amen.**

Hymn #126 - *“Lord Jesus, You Are Going Forth”*

**(The Soul:) Lord Jesus, you are going forth
For me your life to offer,
For me, a sinner from my birth,
Who caused all you must suffer.
So be it, then, My dearest Friend;
I follow after, weeping,
Tears flowing free your pain to see,
Watch o’er your sorrows keeping.**

**(Jesus:) O soul, come hither and behold
The fruit of your transgression!
My burden is the curse of old
And for your sin my passion.
Now comes the night of sin’s dread might;
Your guilt I here am bearing.
Oh, weigh it, soul; I make you whole,
No need now of despairing.**

**(The Soul:) ‘Tis I, Lord Jesus, I confess,
Who should have borne sin’s wages
And lost the peace of heav’nly bliss
Through everlasting ages.
Instead you go to bear the blow,
My punishment to carry.
Your death and blood lead me to God;
By grace I there may tarry.**

**(Jesus:) O soul, I take upon me now
The pain you should have suffered.
My death will your release allow;
My gift is freely offered.
The curse I choose that you might lose
Sin’s curse and guilt forever.**

**My gift of love from heav'n above
Will give you blessing ever.**

**(The Soul:) What can I for such love divine
To you, Lord Jesus, render?
No merit has this heart of mine;
Yet while I live I'll tender
Myself alone and all I own
In love to serve before you.
Then when time's past,
Take me at last;
In heav'n I shall adore you.**

P: Lord, now let Your servant depart in peace, according to Your Word, for my eyes have seen Your salvation, which You have prepared before the face of all people, a light to lighten the Gentiles and the glory of Your people Israel. Glory be to the Father and to the Son and to the Holy Spirit! As it was in the beginning, is now, and will be forever. Amen.

The Blessing:

P: The Lord bless you and keep you,
The Lord make His face shine on you and be gracious to you.
The Lord look on you with favor and give you peace.
C: **Amen.**

Hymn #119 - "Were You There?"

**Were you there when they crucified my Lord?
Were you there when they crucified my Lord?
Oh, sometimes it causes me to tremble, tremble, tremble.
Were you there when they crucified my Lord?**

**Were you there when they nailed him to the tree?
Were you there when they nailed him to the tree?
Oh, sometimes it causes me to tremble, tremble, tremble.
Were you there when they nailed him to the tree?**

**Were you there when they laid him in the tomb?
Were you there when they laid him in the tomb?
Oh, sometimes it causes me to tremble, tremble, tremble.**

Were you there when they laid him in the tomb?