

GOOD FRIDAY - COMMUNION

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Introduction

The Lord has been speaking to me a lot about intimacy - seeking Him without any agenda; without wanting anything in return but to know Him deeply. I've been pursuing Him in prayer and He's **been showing me that there's so much in Him. There's so much fulfilment** and so much peace in knowing Jesus.

Looking to today when we talk about the death of Jesus and what He did for us on the cross, the sacrifice that He made, I am reminded about the goodness of God. It is not something that we celebrate on a day called Easter, but it is something that we remember daily, because He saved us through that sacrifice.

Pursuit of intimacy – Communion

Communion is bringing it back to Him. The church has taken our eyes off Jesus, off the cross. The cross is something that changed our lives, and made us love people.

To know Him deeply - when last did we pursue Jesus just to know Him?

Matthew 6:33 NIV

"But seek first his kingdom and his righteousness, and all these things will be given to you as well."

Understand that He didn't just die so we could meet once a week in a building, He died so that we could be free, free from death and free from sin. He died so that we could have a relationship with Him for eternity. **It's time we remember the table. It's time we remember communion.** He paid the price. He stood in the gap.

That's what I love about Good Friday - It's about Him, it's about the cross. It's about what He did.

We are nothing without Him.

Because the reality is that we are broken people, lost people without Him. We live in an evil and unjust, selfish world that's full of sin and unjust behaviour. We live in a lost world, but through the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ, to all those that believe, through his sacrifice on the cross, through the blood shed we have been redeemed, and we have been saved by His grace.

Romans 3:23-24

"For all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God, and all are justified freely by his grace through the redemption that came by Christ Jesus."

We see here that all have sinned, all have fallen, but through Christ we are saved. But the sad part is that a lot of us after being saved have become stagnant, we have taken our eyes off Jesus and off the cross. It's actually become more about me, me, me. That's why the Lord has been saying that it's time that it becomes about Jesus again.

He didn't just die so we can go to heaven when we die and live how we want now. He died so that i) we can be free and ii) so that we can bring heaven to earth through the Holy Spirit, to be the light of the world. But everything begins with Intimacy. And this is where it starts. THE CROSS. Through intimacy with the Father we will bring the light to the world. We will bring the message of the gospel that Jesus died so that people can be free. It's all about Him. Everything has to begin with intimacy and the cross.

It took me a while to really understand the grace of God, something that I struggled with. That it was through his grace, not my works that I am saved.

Ephesians 2:8-9

"For it is by grace you have been saved, through faith and this is not from yourselves, it is the gift of God, not by works so that no one can boast"

You can't earn your salvation, it can't be worked for; no amount of good deeds will save you, it's only by His grace, by His sacrifice on the cross.

Jesus paid it all. The work is finished. When we look to the cross; we can take the pressure off of ourselves thinking that we can do it. For years I strived to "earn" God's love. Then I realised it's through His blood; through the finished work of what He did on the cross that I am saved. He paid it all. A lot of us are living like we still need to earn our salvation, when all we need to do is seek Him. There's no longer anyone on that cross.

Isaiah 53:3

"But he was pierced for our transgressions, he was crushed for our iniquities; the punishment that brought us peace was on him, and by his wounds we are healed."

You are healed if you give your life to Jesus – you are a son or daughter. Sit at His feet and let Him change your heart.

Reading this scripture made me realise the weight of this sacrifice.

Luke 22:39-44

³⁹ "Jesus went out as usual to the Mount of Olives, and his disciples followed him. ⁴⁰ On reaching the place, he said to them, "Pray that you will not fall into temptation." ⁴¹ He withdrew about a stone's throw beyond them, knelt down and prayed, ⁴² "Father, if you are willing, take this cup from me; yet not my will, but yours be done." ⁴³ An angel from heaven appeared to him and strengthened him. ⁴⁴ And being in anguish, he prayed more earnestly, and his sweat was like drops of blood falling to the ground."

He was literally sweating BLOOD. Jesus realised the weight of what he had to endure next, He knew the sacrifice. In that moment, he said "not my will but yours."

Now if you go to the book of Matthew, we read later in the story after Jesus prayed in the garden, Judas came to betray him, and after wanting to arrest Jesus, Jesus' disciples wanted to defend him and a fight started happening. After Jesus calmed the situation He said this:

Matthew 26:53–54

"Do you think I cannot call on my Father, and he will at once put at my disposal more than twelve legions of angels?" "But how then would the scriptures be fulfilled that say it must happen in this way?"

When I read this, I thought about how kind God is. How good is the Father that he sent us Jesus? To do what He did, when he could have sent angel armies, He instead decided to die for us, He did the will of the Father. He was one with the Father... It's about intimacy.

The scripture that blew me away was in the book of Hebrews.

Hebrews 12:1-2

¹ Therefore, since we are surrounded by such a great cloud of witnesses, let us throw off everything that hinders and the sin that so easily entangles. And let us run with perseverance the race marked out for us, ² fixing our eyes on Jesus, the pioneer and perfecter of faith. For the joy set before him he endured the cross, scorning its shame, and sat down at the right hand of the throne of God.

He counted it Joy to die for you, even though he was in anguish and he sweated blood. He considered it joy because you were His mission. He died for you so you could be free, so you can have a relationship with Him. In a world that is broken, in a culture where we see that people hate God, hate the church; He died for those people as well. He died for the people that would one day reject Him because **that's** how kind He is, **that's** how good He is. He prayed earnestly to do the will of the Father. He considered it joy to die for you!

When we look back at the table, how many of us are striving to earn the love of God, when He has done it all?

Conclusion

I remember when I stopped following Jesus for two years - I backslid and chased after the world, constantly pursuing it, and thinking I would find happiness and fulfillment in the world.

Even then he chased after me, even though I didn't want him, He pursued me. When I decided to reject Jesus, he came after me because He loved me.

John 3:16

"For God so loved the world that he gave his one and only Son, that whoever believes in him shall not perish but have eternal life."

On this day when we remember what Jesus did for us, let's remember His goodness. Before Jesus was arrested and taken, He had the last supper with His disciples. One of the last things He decided to do with his disciples was have a meal with them. He decided to eat with them... It speaks of relationship, intimacy.

Communion Scripture:

Mark 14:22-24

²² While they were eating, Jesus took bread, and when he had given thanks, he broke it and gave it to his disciples, saying, "Take it; this is my body."

²³ Then he took a cup, and when he had given thanks, he gave it to them, and they all drank from it.

²⁴ "This is my blood of the[a] covenant, which is poured out for many," he said to them. ²⁵ "Truly I tell you, I will not drink again from the fruit of the vine until that day when I drink it new in the kingdom of God.

This is a significant moment in history. Remember the goodness of God, His faithfulness, His love for us. **He's** a good and faithful Father. The Father loves YOU.

Let's become a church that loves Him deeply, that seeks first His kingdom and His righteousness, so that we can be the light of the world, so that we can be one with the Father. When we seek Him first, peace, love and joy will follow. It is finished.