

Isaiah 52:13 – 53:12

Psalm 22

Hebrews 10:16-25

John 18:1-19-42

## Sermon Good Friday

### *In Jesus' Suffering We Experience New Life*

Throughout Jesus' ministry we see that Jesus has come to offer us a new way of being community (**Image One**: a group of people caring for the vulnerable). A community that welcomes and gives hope to the oppressed and rejected. A community that tears down the social barriers that keep people from being all that they are created to be. A community, where its generosity challenges the greed that dominates our world communities. A community where its forgiveness challenges the violence that is way too prevalent in our world communities. A community that is in constant conflict with our world communities.

Unfortunately, when someone comes around like Jesus, and wants to change things, wants to offer us a new way of being community. They are often confronted by those who have benefited from the current system of power (**Image Two**: someone being persecuted). By those who have benefited from the current way of being community.

As we reflect on the passion narrative of Jesus, we see that some people react violently to Jesus' way of being community. Like, the person who strikes Jesus on the face, because they didn't like what Jesus had to say. Or those who flogged and mocked Jesus, because they didn't like what Jesus was trying to change. Or the Empire who decided to crucify Jesus with the intention of stopping this change from happening (**Image Two**).

As we reflect on the passion narrative of Jesus, we see that some people who have been following Jesus, run away when they face pushback from the authorities. We see that one of his closest followers denies Jesus on three different occasions when confronted.

As we reflect on the passion narrative of Jesus, some people continue to welcome Jesus' invitation to be this community that stands in contrast to the Empire. Despite the push back. Following Jesus to the foot of the cross and beyond.

Like Jesus, other Christian leaders throughout history, Paul, Peter, Mary Magdalene, Martin Luther, Martin Luther King Jr., Tommy Douglas, Rosa Parks, Diana Eck, to name a few, have challenged their communities to be more like the community Jesus proclaims in the gospels. A community that is welcoming, generous, forgiving. A place where people experience healing (**Image One**).

Unfortunately, many of them too suffered the consequences of living out this vision in their communities (**Image Two**).

But like Jesus, their movements didn't die. They continued to breath life in their communities even after their deaths.

As the church we are called to proclaim this community Jesus envisions in the communities we live in (**Image One**). To challenge those systems, we live with that continue to oppress and reject people. To tear down those social barriers that keep people from being all that God created them to be. To be generous. To be forgiving. Challenging the greed and violence that tries to stop Jesus from changing the world through us, the body of Christ.

We name this day Good Friday, because as we grieve the suffering and death of Jesus, we also, hope with anticipation for the resurrection where we see that the powers that oppress do not claim victory over Jesus and his movement.

Instead, Jesus' movement keeps living and breathing through the church. Instead, the disciples witness of the resurrected Christ, the disciple's reception of the Holy Spirit, energizes them to keep living out their calling to be a community that proclaims and lives out God's grace, hospitality, generosity, and healing (**Image One**).

In our baptisms, in our belief in the witness of the resurrected Christ, we too live out our calling to be a community that proclaims and lives out God's grace, hospitality, generosity, and healing. Giving hope to the oppressed and rejected. Giving hope to the people who become vulnerable due to the social barriers that exist. Giving hope to the victims of greed and violence.

Let us pray, gracious God, keep living and breathing through us. Help us confront those systems that continue to oppress and reject people. Help us tear down social barriers that limit people's ability to be all you created us to be. Help us be generous and forgiving, challenging the greed and violence we see happening in our world.

**Amen.**

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