

Good Friday Service – What Christ Accomplished

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(30 minutes before service, various candles are lit around room. Until service begins, keep up M/M Slide: "Please enter the worship center quietly. Use these moments for silent prayer.")

Opening Song: Uncreated One [D] Tomlin-Files V1-4
*(*7 Main Candles on Stage are Lit during Song.)*

Set the Pace: Good evening, and welcome to our Good Friday worship service. This year we reflect on the work of Christ for us.

This Good Friday service can be called "Tenebrae" which means darkness/gloom. After sharing the Lord's Table, you will notice that the room will progressively get darker. Seven individuals from our pastoral staff have written Scripture-based readings, which are included in your devotional booklets. After each of the readings, one of seven candles will be snuffed out. When the last candle is out, we will be left in silent darkness. After a time of solitude, we will be prompted to soberly leave in silence and to return on Easter Sunday to celebrate Christ's resurrection.

Tonight, please reflect on what Christ has accomplished by way of his perfect life and glorious death on the Cross. We will explore 5 theological terms: Propitiation (a wrath bearing sacrifice appeasing the offended party), Atonement (full satisfaction of payment due), Redemption (to be bought from the slave market), Expiation (the complete removal of the guilt of sin), and Reconciliation (restoring the relationship of enemies).

Special thanks to Ted Manby for his efforts in study and organization of these terms. He writes: "Because of the wrath bearing sacrifice of Jesus Christ, God the Father has been fully satisfied, and declared His people righteous, and has bought His own people with the death of His own Son. He has ransomed them from everlasting punishment, removed their guilt as far as the east is from the west, established a new relationship with them, as Father and son or daughter (covenant and adoption), having forgiven all their sins based on the just substitutionary payment of His son, Jesus."

(On the Screen, Project the 7 "Let us" italics statements below).

On Screen:

- 1) Let us **reflect** on what Christ accomplished on the cross: Propitiation, Atonement, Redemption, Expiation, and Reconciliation.
- 2) Let us **remember** the sacrifice of Jesus Christ.
- 3) Let us **recognize** the seriousness of sin.
- 4) Let us **repent** and turn to God for forgiveness.
- 5) Let us **realize** the greatness of our Triune God.
- 6) Let us **respond** to the Lord in reverent worship, prayer, and obedience.
- 7) Let us **return** on Easter Sunday in hope of the resurrection.

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We have 7 goals tonight: 1) Let us **reflect** on what Christ accomplished on the cross: Propitiation, Atonement, Redemption, Expiation, and Reconciliation. 2) Let us **remember** the sacrifice of Jesus Christ & the suffering he endured. 3) Let us **recognize** the seriousness of sin & penalty that we deserve. 4) Let us **repent**, turn from sin, and turn to the Lord for forgiveness. 5) Let us **realize** the greatness of our Triune God – To see His character, holiness, justice, wrath, love, mercy & grace. 6) Let us **respond** to the Lord in reverent worship, singing, prayer, and obedience. 7) Let us **return** on Easter Sunday in hope of the resurrection. (*Screen goes black*). **Prayer.**

(*Cross Light Fades ON.)

***Reading for Dark Candle 1 (Jordan Branch)**

1. Luke 23:33-38,44-47 (ESV)

33And when they came to the place that is called The Skull, there they crucified him, and the criminals, one on his right and one on his left. 34And Jesus said, "Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do." And they cast lots to divide his garments. 35And the people stood by, watching, but the rulers scoffed at him, saying, "He saved others; let him save himself, if he is the Christ of God, his Chosen One!" 36The soldiers also mocked him, coming up and offering him sour wine 37and saying, "If you are the King of the Jews, save yourself!" 38There was also an inscription over him, "This is the King of the Jews."

44It was now about the sixth hour, and there was darkness over the whole land until the ninth hour, 45while the sun's light failed. And the curtain of the temple was torn in two. 46Then Jesus, calling out with a loud voice, said, "Father, into your hands I commit my spirit!" And having said this he breathed his last. 47Now when the centurion saw what had taken place, he praised God, saying, "Certainly this man was innocent!"

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(Reader then snuffs out Dark Candle #1 [on far stage right] and is seated).

Lord's Table: The Bread

Behold the Lamb (Communion Hymn) *KG-Files*

V1-4

Lord's Table: The Cup

There is a Fountain [Bb]

CH-336

V1-5

(After Communion, All Stage/House Lights fade OFF.)

(*5 Readers are Seated on Platform.)

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***Reading for Dark Candle 2 (by Zach Nelson)**

2. Isaiah 53:1-12 (ESV)

1Who has believed what he has heard from us?
And to whom has the arm of the LORD been revealed?
2For he grew up before him like a young plant,
and like a root out of dry ground;
he had no form or majesty that we should look at him,
and no beauty that we should desire him.
3He 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 despised, and we esteemed him not.

4Surely he has borne our griefs
and carried our sorrows;
yet we esteemed him stricken,
smitten by God, and afflicted.
5But 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.
6All we like sheep have gone astray;
we have turned—every one—to his own way;
and the LORD has laid on him
the iniquity of us all.

7He 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 shearers is silent,
so he opened not his mouth.
8By oppression and judgment he was taken away;
and as for his generation, who considered
that he was cut off out of the land of the living,
stricken for the transgression of my people?
9And they made his grave with the wicked
and with a rich man in his death,
although he had done no violence,
and there was no deceit in his mouth.

10Yet it was the will of the LORD to crush him;
he has put him to grief;
when his soul makes an offering for guilt,
he shall see his offspring; he shall prolong his days;
the will of the LORD shall prosper in his hand.
11Out of the anguish of his soul he shall see and be satisfied;
by his knowledge shall the righteous one, my servant,
make many to be accounted righteous,
and he shall bear their iniquities.

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12 Therefore I will divide him a portion with the many,
and he shall divide the spoil with the strong,
because he poured out his soul to death
and was numbered with the transgressors;
yet he bore the sin of many,
and makes intercession for the transgressors.

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(Reader then snuffs out Dark Candle #2 [on far stage left] and is seated).

Song: By His Wounds [G] (Mac Powell & SCC Arr.) VCVCC

***Reading for Dark Candle 3 (by Dwayne Milioni)**

3. Propitiation – a wrath bearing sacrifice appeasing the offended party

I was coaching a soccer match the other day and one of my players raised his hand, calling for a substitute. My son was ready to go in the game, but I had to wait until we had possession of the ball to put him in. As time went on, my player grew more tired and kept looking to me for help. Finally, I was able to provide my son as a substitute to take his place. As invincible as we would like to believe we are, there are times when we need someone else to take our place.

Propitiation teaches us that when we were helpless and facing a divine death sentence because we are so blatantly guilty of sin, Jesus died in our place in order to appease the wrath of God's judgment.

This, of course, was a decision that the Father and the Son had made from the beginning. Listen to the strong language of Romans 3:25, "Christ Jesus, whom God himself put forward to be our atoning victim" (my translation).

God is the supreme judge of his universe, and his judgments always reflect his holiness and perfection. By his nature, he must judge, condemn, and punish sin. Because our sins are real, real punishment must be dealt out. The wonder of the cross is that the death penalty deserving of the many was taken on by the One.

Perfect justice and perfect love come together as the perfect Savior became our substitute on the cross.

I am awestruck to realize that Christ exchanged his righteousness for our sin so that by faith I can exchange my sin for his righteousness (2 Corinthians 5:21). God the Father made his Son to be sin so that we might become the righteousness of God.

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We see this great exchange in Isaiah 53:4,5:

Our griefs	became His suffering
Our sorrows	became His burden
Our transgressions	became His wounds
Our iniquities	became His bruises
Our peace	became His punishment
Our healing	became His stripes

Now we who are united with Christ have been acquitted of our sins and gladly forgiven by God who joyfully has accepted Christ's payment on our behalf. Jesus knows how helpless we are and he also knows his Father. How amazing is our Good Shepherd who chose to lay down his life for his sheep.

Let us give thanks for Propitiation – a wrath bearing sacrifice appeasing the offended party

(Reader snuffs out Dark Candle #3 [2nd candle in from stage right] and is seated).

***Reading for Dark Candle 4 (by Mark Armstrong)**

4. Atonement – full satisfaction of payment due

Our atonement consists of the work Christ did in his life and sacrificial death to earn our salvation. First, we should ask:

- What was the ultimate cause of the atonement?
- Why was the atonement necessary?
- What was the nature of the atonement?

The ultimate cause of the atonement is both the love and justice of God:

God loved the world and He gave his only Son (John 3:16).

God presented him as a sacrifice of atonement, through faith in his blood to demonstrate his justice (Romans 3:25).

Even though God had been forgiving sins in the Old Testament, there remained a penalty to be paid. Wouldn't a just God require a penalty? The animal sacrifices appeased God for a time, but ultimately a penalty would be required if God was going to accept us into fellowship with himself. Romans 3:26 tells us, "*he did it to demonstrate his justice at the present time, so as to be just and the one who justifies those who have faith in Jesus*".

Was there any other way to save human beings apart from sending His Son to die in our place? No, and even then God was not obligated to save anyone. Consider the angels that "*God did not spare when they sinned, but cast them into hell*" (2 Peter 2:4). God could have done the same to us, and still have been

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perfectly just. But once God in His love decided to save us, Scripture indicates that the death of His Son was required: *“But God, being rich in mercy, because of His great love with which He loved us, even when we were dead in our transgressions, made us alive together with Christ (by grace you have been saved), and raised us up with Him, and seated us with Him in the heavenly places in Christ Jesus, so that in the ages to come He might show the surpassing riches of His grace in kindness toward us in Christ Jesus.” (Ephesians 2:4-7)*

Our atonement also demanded that Jesus live a life of perfect obedience to the Father before he died in our place. Both were necessary to secure for us an eternal relationship with God. How grateful are we that Jesus was fully obedient to his Father’s will?

Christ’s atonement makes way for our justification. Rather than facing the judgment and wrath of God, he considers us not guilty. Justification is an instantaneous act. When a person places saving faith in Christ and his work of redemption, God immediately imparts Christ’s righteousness to us: *“Therefore, having been justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ” (Romans 5:1).*

Not only is justification instantaneous, but it is final. God will never make us pay the penalty for our sins. Christ did that for us. Can you think of a greater gift? This Easter season, take some time to reflect on what Christ has done for you. Don’t take it for granted. He suffered in your place. He suffered...in your place...so that you could enjoy fellowship with God forever.

Let us give thanks for Atonement – full satisfaction of payment due

(Reader snuffs out Dark Candle #4 [2nd candle in from stage left] and is seated).

Song: Once Again / When I Survey [E] (MSPW-?) V1,C,V2,C,B,C,C

***Reading for Dark Candle 5 (by Scott Lorenz)**

5. Redemption – to be bought from the slave market

“For there is one God, and one mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus; Who gave himself a ransom for all, to be testified in due time.” 1Tim 2:5-6

I once met an inmate whose name was “Ransom.” “An old southern name,” he explained, “reaching far back” into his family history, back to a time of slavery. A name like Ransom has strong biblical overtones, and this quickly opened the door to talk about the Scriptures, our common salvation, and the Lord’s love for us.

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Our time to talk was limited to the noon hour, but that soon became impractical and his work-release program allowed little contact with others. Ransom was genuine. He looked forward to the day when, once out of prison, he could share his faith with his family.

I never saw Ransom again yet his name remains an irony to me – one whose name means “a price paid for freedom,” was himself a prisoner. Scriptures use the term “ransom” to mean, “a covering or freedom.” It is also considered as a “price paid for freedom.” My friend knew his outward life did not illustrate redemption, but he surely understood and experienced the inward freedom of having been ransomed by Christ.

A wonderful illustration of redemption is found in the book of Hosea (Hosea 3:1-3). The Lord tells his prophet Hosea to go and love again his wife, a mother of two, who had turned back to adultery. He searches for her and finds her in the market place. He buys her for fifteen shekels of silver and nine bushels of barley—a cheap price for a slave. This was done in order to reveal the nature of the Lord’s love for rebellious Israel. It is a love that takes the initiative; it is the kind of love that on its own accord will go and seek out the object of its love. This love would search every secluded village or the busiest market. This love regards not what men think—for Hosea found his adulterous wife in the slave market, and this love is for all to see for Hosea bought her back, he redeemed her; he ransomed her. Simply put, godly love goes out after us.

And godly love pays for us. Hosea ransomed his wife back to himself. The Scriptures teach us that godly love is more than an emotion but is comprised of things like compassion, value, commitment, ownership, and even identification. In ransoming his wife Hosea illustrated all of these qualities of godly love, the kind of love that God had for Israel – the kind of love He now has for us.

But there is one quality of godly love that Hosea could not illustrate—a quality that only the Lord could—*willingness*. Hosea could not illustrate willingness to redeem his wife for he was commanded to do so. But when Scriptures says of the Lord that “He gave His life as ransom for many,” we see the growing quality of a willing heart to pay the ransom. Think of it; God would seek you out and there is no place he would not go to find you and willingly pay the ransom for you in order to bring you to himself.

For our Lord, the price he paid for our redemption, our ransom cost him his life. A life for a life--His life given for us. And to add to this wondrous payment of ransom, He made the Great Exchange willingly.

Let us give thanks for Redemption – to be bought from the slave market

(Reader snuffs out Dark Candle #5 [3rd candle in from stage right] and is seated).

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***Reading for Dark Candle 6 (by Wesley Price)**

6. Expiation – the complete removal of the guilt of sin

I made a bad trade once - a really bad trade. I traded a saxophone - one that my parents paid hundreds of dollars for - for an electric guitar amplifier. It was big and loud and impressive looking, but it was a bad trade. The value of the big, loud amplifier was nothing to the value of the saxophone, and my parents' hard-earned monetary investment was totally devalued upon the finalization of the trade. To make matters worse, eventually I traded that amp for another...and another...and another. That was nearly twenty years ago, but I still look back at it and remember it as the worst trade ever.

It makes me wonder about the grace of God. In I Peter 2, the scriptures tell us that Jesus "bore our sins in his own body on the tree, that we, having died to sins might live for righteousness." Now that, to me, is a bad trade. Think of the investment - the Much-Loved Son, the rightful king and ruler over God's entire creation, Jesus, the sinless Messiah. Then, think about the object of the trade - me, a rebel, a hostile, a foreigner to the covenant and an outsider to the grace of God that came from Abraham through the sons of Israel; me, inimical, angry, spiteful, unworthy - a kid who doesn't even know a good deal when he sees one! To me this is a raw deal - not for me, I get to live and live for righteousness, but for God!

But oh the Love of God in Jesus Christ! God's wisdom and mercy found a way to make a trade that would be good for both parties - never in equal measure - but in the fact that his grace brings him glory. Christ's sacrifice benefits me most but does not make God a fool. You see, God's trade is nothing like my terrible trade. I squandered my father's investment. Jesus is making his Father's investment pay rich dividends, both for us and for his namesake. I have lost all the value of the saxophone that I foolishly traded. But the grace of God through Jesus obtains value in every age and, in the endless ages to come, the exchange of my sin for Christ's death will bring immeasurable value to the honor due the name of Jesus. This is the beautiful paradox of expiation: through an unfair exchange, I have peace with God, and he receives immeasurable glory for his grace! Oh, the depth of the riches both of the wisdom and knowledge of God! How unsearchable are His judgments and His ways past finding out! "For who has known the mind of the Lord? Or who has become His counselor?" "Or who has first given to Him And it shall be repaid to him?" For of Him and through Him and to Him are all things, to whom be glory forever. Amen.

Let us give thanks for Expiation – the complete removal of the guilt of sin

(Reader snuffs out Dark Candle #6 [3rd candle in from stage left] and is seated).

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Song: The Power of the Cross (Oh to See the Dawn) [Bb-C] (*KG-Files*)

*(*At close of song, musicians turn OFF all lights on music stands).*

*(*Cross Light Fades OFF . . . All stage/house lights are already OFF).*

***Reading for White Candle 7** (by Robert D. Jones)

7. Reconciliation – restoring the relationship of enemies

“I believe in the forgiveness of sins.” That simple sentence from the ancient Apostle’s Creed has summarized the faith of millions of Christians for nearly two millennia. “I believe in the forgiveness of sins.” Why? On what basis can sinners like me and you—people who have failed to fully obey God—ever hope to have our many sins forgiven? We find the answer in the cross of Jesus Christ. The Bible says, “In him we have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of sins, in accordance with the riches of God’s grace” (Eph 1:7; also Col 1:13-14). God’s forgiveness comes through the blood of his Son—his violent, self-sacrificing death as our substitute. Our forgiveness is wrapped up in Jesus our Redeemer.

What does it mean to be forgiven? Simply this: Based on Jesus’ death, God has decided, declared, and promised to not hold our sins against us. God has decided, declared, and promised to release us from our debt against him, to not charge us with our guilt, and to remove the penalty our sins deserve.

How does Jesus’ death do this? Because the God who decided to not hold our sins against us did decide to hold our sins against his own Son. In other words, all our sins must be punished; each of our sins deserves judgment and death. God cannot maintain his holy purity and simply overlook them. So what did God do? He did punish our sins, but not on us, but on Jesus our substitute instead of us. As 1 Peter puts it, “He himself bore our sins in his body on the tree... For Christ died for sins once for all, the righteous for the unrighteous, to bring you to God” (1 Peter 2:24; 3:18a).

My friend, do you wallow in your sins? Do you struggle with self-recrimination? Do you wrestle with accusations from others, or from your conscience, or from the devil? Jesus’ words to all who trust in him are plain: “Son (or daughter), your sins are forgiven” (Mark 2:5; Luke 7:48). Instead of the endless drip, drip, drip of guilt, God now showers you with forgiveness. His promises of daily grace cascade upon you like a brisk cool fountain.

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What are his promises? By faith, listen to God's Word to you: "I have removed your sins as far as the east is from the west. Though they were like scarlet, I have made them white as snow. I have put all your sins behind my back. I, even I, am he who blots out your transgressions, and remembers your sins no more. I have swept away your offenses like a cloud, your sins like the morning mist. I have tread them underfoot and hurled them into the ocean depths" (Ps 103:12; Isa 1:18; 38:17; 43:25; 44:22; Micah 7:19). "I believe in the forgiveness of sins." Do you?

Let us give thanks for Reconciliation – restoring the relationship of enemies

(Reader turns off lecturn light).

(Reader then snuffs out White Candle #7 [stage center] and is seated).

*(After 1 minute of silent darkness, Bring up last M/M Slide: **"You are dismissed. Please leave the worship center in silence. Let us return on Easter Sunday remembering the hope of the resurrection."** Bring up House Lights a little.)*

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