

Coop's Scoops #17: GOOD FRIDAY, April 9, 2020



Scripture: John 19:16-30

The Wound of Sacrifice, the wound of Dying, and the Wound of Death

We should never underestimate the enormity of death. Paul calls death the “final enemy”, He speaks about “the sting of death”. He tells us that Christ has abolished death. And that God Himself has tasted death for every man so that through death He may destroy death. He says that God was put to death in the flesh. And finally the vision of John tells us that the two final enemies: death and hell will be cast out forever by the power of the Lamb. No more death. No more hell. And God has done it through Jesus the Son.

We must always remember that the death of Jesus is not at all the sacrifice of the Son at the hand of the Father. It is not Philicide. **It is God, in Christ, dying and reconciling the world to Himself.**

How can this be? How could God die and the universe not collapse? How could Jesus call out to the Father if the Father were dying there right inside of Him? We simply do not know. We **do, however, know** that murder is wrong, and violent death is terrible. We know that Jesus valued life. Perfected life. Healed broken lives. And we see that His actions show us that He valued the Father’s Will to save us more than anything else at all ever, more even than His own life.

In the Garden, **Jesus grieved for Himself**. Facing the prospect of death, He grieved. Jesus wants to live and see new sunsets and be with friends and feel the water of the sea and the sand of the shore. Just like us. Jesus who came to do the Father’s will, who loved to do the Father’s will, who made His very food and drink the doing of His Father’s will –Jesus prayed that God would take away this cup of Dying. Perhaps there was another way? **But the enemy had stacked the deck.** There could be no forgiveness without the shedding of blood. And Satan could only be defeated by costly love freely given. Jesus wrestled – if Jesus had not longed to live, His dying would have been no sacrifice. The measure of His Gift is what it cost Him. The One who came that we might have abundant LIFE, and that

our Joy could be full....that very One gave His life for us. And it a hard decision. Sometimes I think we miss that.

And you know, death really **hurt** for Jesus. When we come to die, there is hope for help...tender care and marvellous medication to ease our pain in all but the most dreadful circumstances. Gall and vinegar were not great sedatives at Calvary, and the dying of Jesus was amongst the most painful ways to die ever imposed by order of any state. **The wound of dying** in such a painful manner was added and heaped upon the **wound of sacrifice** for Jesus.

Jesus handled it all **so** magnificently. Heroically. There is no need to go into the separation of bone and the physical consequences of crucifixion to the body. Jesus bore it all, and while bearing unimaginable pain also managed to accomplish the forgiveness of enemies, the creation of a new family for His mother and His disciple John, the promise of spiritual life that very day for a penitent thief. He silently bore the sneers and the taunts and the mockery and the jokes and the macabre scene of soldiers gambling for His clothes right at His very feet. He thirsted. And He said so. It was a REAL death, not some metaphysical spiritual thing.

He bore it all **UNTIL, that is**, the Father placed upon Him the sins of the whole world, of all time and of all people. So much sin that it took Him over. We are told that He who Himself knew **NO** sin **became** sin for us. He traded places with every sinning person ever born that day. It not only almost squashed the life out of Him, it also caused something He could never have anticipated. Something the Son of God knew nothing about. It caused Him to lose His connection to the Father. And that is the greatest pain of all. “Eloi,Eloi, Lema sabachthani?” “My God, My God, why have you forsaken me? **A shriek of shock and horror.** . God His Father, the Creator, the Lord of everything that ever was made or ever will be made could **not** look upon His Son ...**imagine the shriek of horror in Heaven.**

Mystery, mystery, what does it mean? I don't know....I have never been sinless, so I have never had perfect union with God like Jesus did. I don't know...my mind can't conceive of it. **But my heart understands it.** And breaks. And can never be quite fixed. I will forever know that my sin was part of the pile

that separated Jesus from the Father in that timeless, spaceless reality I have not yet entered. **My part is to bear that sadness deep and still, and also to live with exuberant joy knowing that it will never, ever, ever have to happen again.**

You see, it really is finished. Nothing can UNDO what Jesus did at Calvary. The whole redemption is completed. The new Creation begins now at the foot of this Cross, and we will **see** it first when a huge stone rolls away from a simple Tomb. God's new Kingdom comes.... and will come and will come until a whole new order of creation is accomplished and achieved. There need be, and cannot be, any more sacrifice ever.

Jesus cries out: "Telestien! Telestien!" "It is finished. It is finished."

And, being finished, there was only the final wound of death to accomplish. Luke's gospel tells us that Jesus final cry was "Father, into thy hands I commit my spirit!" "Commit" is actually a small translation of a big Greek meaning: It means more like "throw", "cast", "hurl".

Even though Jesus did not understand the "separation", the abandonment, He still trusted in His Father with utter devotion. "I still trust You to catch My Spirit.....I'm leaping out...Here I come, Father!....Catch me!"

And He breathed His last. And the **Wound of Death prevailed.** And darkness covered all the land.

(Keep silence)

Surely This Jesus is the Son of God. Worthy is the Lamb who was slain to receive power, and riches, and glory, and wisdom, and strength, and honour, and glory and blessing.

Collect: Almighty God, we beseech thee graciously to behold this thy family, for which our Lord Jesus Christ was contented to be betrayed, and given up into the hands of wicked men, and to suffer death upon the cross; who now liveth and reigneth with thee and the Holy Spirit, ever one God, world without end. Amen.



A Prayer of Bishop Alcuin of York in the year 752 AD

Our brother from 1268 years ago...

Eternal Light, shine into our hearts

Eternal Goodness, deliver us from evil

Eternal Power, be our support,

Eternal Wisdom, scatter the darkness of our ignorance,

Eternal Grace, have mercy on us;

That with all our heart and mind and soul and strength

We may seek thy face and be brought by thine infinite mercy

To thy holy presence, through Jesus Christ our Lord.

To Lift Your Spirits.....

In my former parishes, I've always hosted tea and hot cross buns after the Good Friday service. Just so we don't leave the church awash in the grief of the suffering of our Lord. We couldn't do it this year, so I called in a whole new flock. Yes, you've been temporarily replaced, but only for an hour!



To your right, you will see Miss Alice...complete with her lovely Easter Bonnet. To her left is Miss Ruby, who has grown a lot of hair, and can't wait for the stylists to be back at work. Her dear friend Jacquie told her that soon everyone will know everyone else's natural hair colour. Oh my! Next of course is Rev. Judie. To her left is Mrs Tracy, a lamb who always loves to the smell the flowers, and the lovely family group is Rev.Kelly, Bill, Gregory and Claire who came by for a visit. Forbidden for the human flock, but I understand stuffed ones don't have to isolate or social distance. Now by "stuffed" I mean mostly with polyester. If you are also "stuffed" with Easter dinner you still can't get together. I was able to redo the Rev Kelly and Bill in separate format, the others just wouldn't do it. In the centre of the table, you can't see him well, but he is a little guy that needs to stay in the play pen. The one on my desk is just not feeling sociable today. Cheers to all of you! Have a cuppa and a hot cross bun at home, if you can. Together in heart! Be sure to drive by and look at the outdoor sign on Easter Sunday. Michele Bertin is doing her Easter artistry for all to see.

