

Good
FRIDAY



worship guide

A Liturgy of Praise for Christ who Conquered Death

© 2020 Douglas McElvey, *Every Moment Holy, Vol. II*

First reader: *Hear the word of the Lord: Since the children have flesh and blood, he too shared in their humanity so that by his death he might break the power of him who holds the power of death—that is, the devil—and free those who all their lives were held in slavery by their fear of death.*

—Hebrews 2:14-15 (NIV)

Leader: We, your creatures, O Christ, once endured the cringing lives of slaves, in a long bondage bereft of hope, bowed by the weight of grief, subjected to futility, fettered to our fear of death. But you did not abandon us.

You were not content to cede one speck of ground to the enemy of souls, or to the cruel kingdom of death. You were ever mindful of our plight.

All praise to you, Lord Christ!

For it was your intention from creation's dawn, not only to make all things, but to make all things right. When your works were despoiled and wrecked by sin and death, you undertook to save and to reclaim what you had first made good. You entered into this—our space and time—to act on our behalf.

You took on body, blood, and breath, that you, clothed in our condition, might move in sympathy to save and shelter us. For in the living temple of your flesh, perfect justice and perfect mercy were met and there—in the shedding of your blood—

they were forever reconciled in love. So you subdued the sting of sin.

By death, you conquered death.

You rescued us from the fear of death, and from its power.

You have made all things well, O Christ!

You have made all things well.

Second reader: *Hear the word of the Lord:*

This grace was given us in Christ Jesus before the beginning of time, but it has now been revealed through the appearing of our Savior, Christ Jesus, who has destroyed death and has brought life and immortality to light through the gospel.

—2 Timothy 1:9b-10 (NIV)

Leader: The powers of darkness sought to swallow you, in death's black waters, O Christ. But going under that flood, you drank death down like a river. You drank death's reservoir dry.

All praise to you, Lord Christ!

You swallowed death for us, and by that act of willing sacrifice, you pushed death back upon itself, like the last lapping wave at the turning of the tide; that high water mark now fading, as death's dominion ebbs out for all time, its power to terrorize God's people forever destroyed by God's own passage through it.

Through death, O Lord, you gave us life!

You have made all things well, Eternal King!

You have made all things well, O Christ!

Reading of John 18:1-19:42

“The Cross Was for Me”

Testimony from Laurie Hill

The Cross Exposes Us

‘Does not the sinner now feel in his inmost soul, that if Sinai be dreadful, Calvary has its terrors too; that if “by the law is the knowledge of sin,” the Gospel adds its sublime and harmonious commentary; that the cross of Christ is the most awful monument of Heaven’s justice, the most solemn memorial of the sinner’s danger . . . The cross, the cross of a crucified Saviour, is the most powerful, the most impressive demonstration of sin, and righteousness, and judgment.’

_James Buchanan

Reflection:

Consider the image of a mirror. Before the cross, what is exposed about your heart?

Ask the Holy Spirit to search you. Resist the urge to look away too quickly or to become defensive.

_What sin do you soften or justify to ease the blow to your pride that you’re “not that bad”?

_What have you called good that God has declared evil?

_What keeps you from staring at your natural reflection (the “old person”) and receiving God’s word about your sin?

_How does the work of Jesus on the cross free us to be exposed, healed, and irrevocably loved and accepted?

“My denial of my sin protects, preserves, perpetuates that sin! Ugliness in me, while I live in illusions, can only grow uglier. Mirrors that hide nothing hurt me. But this is the hurt of purging and precious renewal – and these are the mirrors of dangerous grace. . . . So that’s what I see reflected in the mirror of Christ’s crucifixion: my death. My rightful punishment. My sin and its just consequences. Me. And precisely because it is so accurate, the sight is nearly intolerable.”

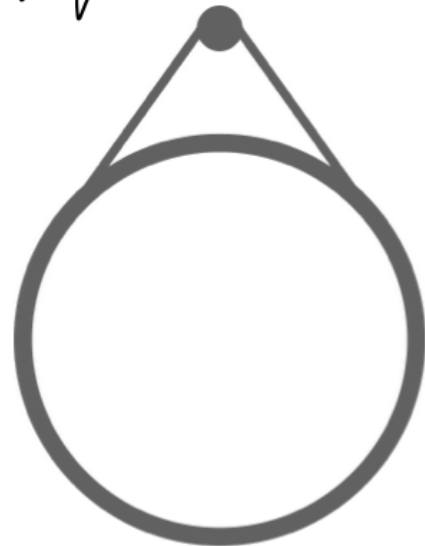
// Walter Wangerin

Parents, help your kids think about ways they soften or justify sin, or hide when they know they’ve done wrong.

When you’re ready, go up and take a mirror. Write whatever has come to mind in the circle, then adhere the mirror over it.

Acknowledge your sin as it is. Rejoice that Christ endured the cross and scorned its shame so that you could be called “righteous,” renewed after the image of Christ.

Exposed BY THE CROSS



A Liturgy for Those Who Have Done Harm

© 2020 Douglas McElvey, *Every Moment Holy, Vol. II*

My soul is chastened within me, O God.
Yet even in this crush of conviction
There flickers a spark of hope,
For you have told us you discipline those
Whom you love.

I have run from your presence
And from my conscience, but
I would run no more, O Lord.
I have hidden myself in shadows,
Seeking to avoid your face,
Even as did my father Adam and
My mother Eve in their first guilt.

I have drawn away from the sound of your voice,
Fearful of what you might speak, fearful
Of what obedience might require,
For I have sinned, O Father, and I am pained
At this thought, and shamed
To bring my faults into the light.

Forgive me, most merciful Father,
For by sinning against on that you have placed
In my life for me to love and be merciful toward,
I have sinned against you.
I confess, O God, that I have broken faith,
Broken trust, wounded another,
And for this I repent.

Quiet reflection and confession.

Restorer of all things, redeem
The damage I have done.
Restore, remake, rekindle, rebuild.
Heal, comfort, and repair.
Knit together that which I have rent.

I know that my tendency is to hide
My ill desires and temptations,
Allowing them to give birth to sinful action.
Therefore bless me with the fellowship
Of a true community, bonded by holy love,
That walks together in transparency,
Conviction, and generosity of spirit,
Wherein I might daily avail myself
Of such means of grace
That I would live more accountable
And less likely to harm again.

Forgive me, O Lord, lest I despair.
Restore me, lest I be forever lost.
For your pardon alone
Is sufficient to my peace;
And your death to my resurrection.
Embrace me again to life
And to right standing with you, O God,
And to the fellowship of love
And compassion that is your church.

I am always, every moment, in need of you.

Amen.

The Cross Heals Us

'Look once more; for the same cross which wounds will also heal; the same conscience which is pierced by the arrows of conviction may be pacified by the Gospel of peace; and thus all that is terrible in the cross, when combined with the tenderness of God's mercy, and the amazing, the self-denying, the self-sacrificing love of the Savior, will then only awaken convictions in the conscience, to melt and change them into sweet contrition of heart.'

_James Buchanan