

Passion Week *Devotionals*

Good Friday
by Sammi Turley

Read | Matthew 27:1-3

It was a day filled with betrayal, false accusations, political injustice, humiliation, and unimaginable physical pain. What looked like tragedy was actually the unfolding of God's redemptive plan.

What Jesus said while on the cross is an important piece because of the amount of strength it took to lift himself up to get the breath to speak words.

Luke 23:34 Jesus prayed 'Father Forgive them, for they don't know what they are doing.'

Jesus was actively forgiving the very people who hated him while in his worst moments. His first response was forgiveness. I think this gives us the standard for forgiveness that Christ calls us to. This is the bar that Jesus set for the church. We fall short every day. I'm sure you can think of many times in your life, maybe even happening right now that someone has hurt or betrayed you. It's easy to hold onto it and protect yourself from getting hurt or offended, but mostly it's trapping your heart. We've seen it cause community division and it only weakens our effort to share the word. I need to remind myself of that forgiveness he gave on that cross and still graciously gives to me today. I don't deserve it by any means.

It is finished. Paid in Full.

Matthew 27:51, "The curtain of the temple was torn in two from top to bottom."
This was the moment we gained direct access to the Father.

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Jesus willingly suffered a sacrificial death to redeem humanity from sin. It was the ultimate act of love. All for you and I. I can't imagine anyone who loves us more deeply.

I recently had double jaw surgery that I underestimated the recovery. It was the most physically and mentally challenging thing I've ever gone through. No one could understand what I was feeling. I remember lifting my arms and worshipping in the middle of the night pleading with God to come to my rescue, just for a moment of no pain. And I would pray 'if you won't do that Lord stay right here with me.' He did just that, he stayed near to me and that's the lifeline I needed for the following days. I didn't need to be proper, or well spoken. I went to him just as I was, anxious & helpless.

My prayer was no longer Lord take away the trial, but rather be close to me in it. It was a spiritual rescue. I am so thankful that Jesus opened that line of communication for me. That I can go to him in a time of desperation and he will meet me right where I'm at.

Prayer & Reflection:

- *When was the last time you called on your Heavenly Father to help you through a season you weren't prepared for? Maybe your season was a loss of a loved one, addiction or financial instability. Will you trust and surrender all your worries to him today?*
- *Can you think of a time where you chose forgiveness or held onto it. Which response brought you closer to God?*
- *Whatever it is, you don't have to carry it alone. Because of the cross, the door to the Father is open.*