

A. Today’s Remembrance

1. in a few moments we will be partaking together of the Lord’s supper and in it will hear the repeated command of the Lord Jesus Christ: ‘Do this in remembrance of Me’
 - a. today, let us spend a few moments in remembrance of our Lord’s death, in remembrance of His crucifixion on the Hill called Golgotha, being punished on our behalf
 - b. Spurgeon said “Christianity rests on three great pillars, the Incarnation, the Crucifixion, and the Resurrection of the Lord Jesus Christ.” –{2}.
2. today, we are considering that central pillar
 - a. the Crucifixion
 - b. yet the Incarnation is just as important for without God’s entrance into humankind as Jesus, there could have been no perfect Sacrifice for sin, no Mediator to stand between God and man, pleading our case
 - c. yet also is the importance of the Resurrection, for in it God unmistakably and inalterably demonstrated His acceptance of that perfect Sacrifice, and by faith in that Resurrection we are justified – but we will have more to say on that on Resurrection Sunday

B. Good Friday is Unpopular in this World

1. People ask, ‘How can we call it “good”?’
 - a. ‘no one standing there that day would have called that Friday "good." The best man that history ever knew was nailed to a Roman cross and murdered. For His enemies it was a victory of sorts; for the soldiers it was simply another day's work; for His followers it was the death of their brightest hopes and greatest dreams.’ –{3}.
 - b. and many go further, demanding in unbelief, ‘what kind of god is it that would kill his own son?’
 - c. the fact of Jesus Christ’s death in our place, for our sins, taking our punishment, is unpopular; but its true!
 - d. He {God the Father} made Him {God the Son} who knew no sin to be sin on our behalf, that we might

become the righteousness of God in Him {God the Son}. (2 Corinthians 5:21 NAS)

e. it is Good Friday because its outcome was to make us acceptable before God in Christ

2. Paul had already preached the message of the gospel in many places and to many people of many different cultures

a. when he wrote these words to the church at Corinth

b. 18 For the word of the cross is to those who are perishing foolishness, but to us who are being saved it is the power of God. ... 23 but we preach Christ crucified, to Jews a stumbling block, and to Gentiles foolishness, 24 but to those who are called, both Jews and Greeks, Christ the power of God and the wisdom of God. (1 Corinthians 1:18, 23–24 NAS)

(A) the Jews ... a scandal ... what use a dead Messiah?

(B) the Gentiles ... silly ... what could a dead man do?

c. it was good because it was part of God's eternal plan for our salvation; a plan made before the world was created

C. Is a 2000-Year Old Event Important Today?

1. maybe not to a lot of people

a. but it does to God

b. when Jesus cried out on the cross, "It is finished"

c. it brought to a completion the work which God had sent His Son into the world to carry out

d. and that word, "It is finished" – Τετέλεσται – has been found on many ancient bills of sale – "paid in full"

2. and it does to those who know Jesus as their Saviour

a. because all of our lives we have been incurring debt

b. a debt to God on account of our sin

c. which not all the good works can ever counter-balance

d. but on the cross Jesus stamped those debts, "paid in full"

D. Let God's Redeemed People Rejoice in this Day

1. Paul could rejoice in Christ's crucifixion, saying

- a. "I have been crucified with Christ; and it is no longer I who live, but Christ lives in me; and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me, and delivered Himself up for me." (Galatians 2:20 NAS)
- b. "14 But may it never be that I should boast, except in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ, through which the world has been crucified to me, and I to the world. 15 For neither is circumcision anything, nor uncircumcision, but a new creation." (Galatians 6:14-15 NAS)
- c. because in the death of Jesus Christ on the cross he had found which all the works of righteousness of the law had never brought him – a new life of peace with God

2. We, too, can rejoice in our remembrance this day, perhaps in some of the hymns we know

a. as by Ovens and Roberts ^{-{5}}.

Wounded for me, wounded for me,
There on the cross He was wounded for me;
Gone my transgressions, and now I am free,
All because Jesus was wounded for me.

Dying for me, dying for me,
There on the cross He was dying for me;
Now in His death my redemption I see,
All because Jesus was dying for me.

b. or by Bowring ^{-{6}}.

In the cross of Christ I glory,
Tow'ring o'er the wrecks of time,
All the light of sacred story
Gathers round its head sublime

3. What does the Crucifixion mean to me this morning?

- a. You may have heard on the radio or read the books of Garrison Keillor. He wrote of his Lake Wobegon days. In one place he recalls his childhood Thanksgiving dinners, as the family gathered around the table and remembered the blessings of the past year. Uncle John usually gave the prayer, which caused everyone to squirm. As Keillor said, "Everybody in the family knew that Uncle John couldn't pray without talking about the cross and crying ... Sure enough, Uncle John prayed, talked about the cross, and cried. Meanwhile, the rest of us shifted nervously from one foot to the other and longed for the prayer to end." Then Garrison Keillor adds this powerful observation: "All of us knew that Jesus died on the cross for us, but Uncle John had never gotten over it." ^{7}.
- b. Have I gotten over the crucifixion? Or, do my eyes tear over when I think of the Lord Jesus Christ dying for me?

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Various English versions of the Holy Bible are used in this sermon. Some (for example, the AV, ASV, and NAS) seek to be strictly translations, while others (and especially PHIL) contain paraphrasing which involves a certain amount of subjective interpretation. Nevertheless, there is little material difference in meaning among these. Some prove slightly clearer on some verses than others. Looking at more than one version sometimes sheds additional light on any particular verse. Explanatory additions to the Bible text are shown in [square brackets]. The versions are identified as:

ASV	American Standard Version of 1901
AV	Authorized (King James) Version
NAS	New American Standard version © 1975 The Lockman Foundation
NIV	New International Version © 1984 by the International Bible Society
NKJV	New King James Version © 1979 Thomas Nelson Inc., Publishers
NLT	1996 New Living Translation © 1996 by Tyndale Charitable Trust
PHIL	New Testament Translation © 1972 by J. B. Phillips
RSV	Revised Standard Version © 1946, 1952 by the National Council of the Churches of Christ in the U. S. A.
WEY	The New Testament in Modern Speech © 1902, 1912 R. F. Weymouth

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2. Charles Haddon Spurgeon – Kerux illustrations #21130
3. ‘Triumph In Tragedy’ from Our Daily Bread, April 14, 1995 – Kerux illustrations #18203
4. Kenneth Boles, College Press INV Commentary, Galatians & Ephesians, *et alii* – Kerux illustrations #18153
5. W. G. Ovens (1870-1945) and Gladys Westcott Roberts (1888-?)
6. John Bowring (1792–1872)
7. Garrison Keillor (probably from “Lake Wobegon Days”) – Kerux illustrations #17065