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St. Paul's Lutheran Church
2100 16th Street SW
Austin, MN 55912-1749
Pastor Ted Barthels
Sermon preached on
March 30, 2018
Good Friday

Scripture Lessons: Psalm 22:1-19, Pasion Jesus died and was buried
Hymns: 172; 153; 167; 151:5-7

Grace be unto you and peace from God our Father and our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. Amen.

Sermon Text: John 19:31-42

Therefore, because it was the Preparation *Day*, that the bodies should not remain on the cross on the Sabbath (for that Sabbath was a high day), the Jews asked Pilate that their legs might be broken, and *that* they might be taken away. ³² Then the soldiers came and broke the legs of the first and of the other who was crucified with Him. ³³ But when they came to Jesus and saw that He was already dead, they did not break His legs. ³⁴ But one of the soldiers pierced His side with a spear, and immediately blood and water came out. ³⁵ And he who has seen has testified, and his testimony is true; and he knows that he is telling the truth, so that you may believe. ³⁶ For these things were done that the Scripture should be fulfilled, "Not *one* of His bones shall be broken." ³⁷ And again another Scripture says, "They shall look on Him whom they pierced."

³⁸ After this, Joseph of Arimathea, being a disciple of Jesus, but secretly, for fear of the Jews, asked Pilate that he might take away the body of Jesus; and Pilate gave *him* permission. So he came and took the body of Jesus. ³⁹ And Nicodemus, who at first came to Jesus by night, also came, bringing a mixture of myrrh and aloes, about a hundred pounds. ⁴⁰ Then they took the body of Jesus, and bound it in strips of linen with the spices, as the custom of the Jews is to bury. ⁴¹ Now in the place where He was crucified there was a garden, and in the garden a new tomb in which no one had yet been laid. ⁴² So there they laid Jesus, because of the Jews' Preparation *Day*, for the tomb was nearby. (NKJV)

This is the Word of God.

Sanctify us, oh Lord, through Your truth. Your Word is truth. Amen.

In Christ Jesus, our crucified Savior, dear fellow Redeemed:

INTRO: Many downplay the actual events surrounding Jesus' crucifixion.

Some regard the events surrounding Jesus' crucifixion to be too bloody, too gory for civilized company and conversation. It was horrific. We must grant them that. However, the Scriptures themselves do not dwell on the gore any more than is necessary to establish the truth of the gospel. It is the truth of a crucified Savior that has actually been the focus of attack since the very early days of the New Testament Church. The events themselves were attacked as not actually happening. A little later it was suggested that Jesus didn't actually die, but was only in a state of unconsciousness when He was taken down from the cross, and later He simply revived. Still later there arose those who taught that Jesus didn't die according to His divine nature but only according to His human nature. It was just His humanity that suffered, was crucified and was buried.

The devil is the father of lies and down through the ages has deceived many, and stolen the assurance of forgiveness and everlasting life from many through his deceptions. So on this Good Friday let us once again look at the facts as they have been faithfully recorded for us by inspiration of the Holy Spirit, and indeed find comfort in the truth that --

THEME: The Redeemer of the World Died and was Buried.

There is no doubt that --

I. Jesus was dead upon the cross.

In our Passion reading this evening we also read of the wonders and miracles that surrounded Jesus' death. Our text picks up a little after this when the day was growing late. Since it was a special Sabbath connected to the Passover the chief priests were concerned that there not be any dead bodies hanging that would cause ceremonial uncleanness on that special Sabbath. That this is was their concern after all the evil and lies and blasphemy that they had engaged in earlier that day reveals the hypocrisy of their spirituality. Everything was for show. However this did indeed serve the purposes of the God to demonstrate beyond doubt that Jesus, the Redeemer of the world, had died.

The priests' request that the legs of the condemned be broken was a brutality that was granted them. Without the ability to support oneself with one's legs, breathing would become so difficult for the condemned that one would soon die, but in an exacerbated agony. Pilate ordered that the legs be broken, and the criminals on the each side of Jesus suffered that brutality. However when the soldiers came to Jesus they saw that He

was already dead. It was evident that Jesus had died. There was no point to breaking His legs. One of the soldiers made sure Jesus was dead. He stabbed Jesus in the side with his spear. It was a spear thrust, not a little poke to see if there was a response, but a thrust that in itself would have killed. The wound was large enough that one could put one's hand within it. (John 20:27) Jesus was dead. The evidence is clear. The Apostle John was standing there and saw all this with his own eyes. He affirms that what he writes is accurate and true.

But then John goes on to make a larger point and one of great spiritual significance. Jesus' death was foretold by the prophets, and details concerning the Messiah's death would either verify that Jesus is the Christ our Redeemer, or He that was not. John saw the Scriptures fulfilled. David had prophesied, "**He guards all his bones; Not one of them is broken.**" (Psalm 34:20) and the Scriptures were fulfilled. Jesus was a complete fulfillment of the picture of the Passover Lamb. He was unspotted by sin, and in all He suffered no bones were broken. This was a clear sign beyond the soldiers' knowledge, evidence to Jesus being the Lamb of God who takes away the sins of the world, (John 1:29) as John the Baptist had testified. This brings to mind the inspired words of the Apostle Paul: "**Christ, our Passover, was sacrificed for us.**" (1 Corinthians 5:7)

The other part of this event that is such a stunning fulfillment of Scripture is the soldier's action to thrust his spear into Jesus' side. Who could predict such an action? It seemed simply impulsive and not routine, or premeditated. This also was foretold by the Spirit through the Prophet Zechariah who wrote by inspiration: "**Then they will look on Me whom they pierced.**" (Zechariah 12:10)

And so we are granted a blessed assurance that this gospel of God's love and forgiveness in Christ, the Redeemer of the world, is real and true and certain. Paul wrote in definitive language to the Romans: "**In due time Christ died for the ungodly.**" (Romans 5:6) and again, "**God demonstrates His own love toward us, in that while we were still sinners, Christ died for us.**" (Romans 5:8); and yet again Paul testified: "**When we were enemies we were reconciled to God through the death of His Son.**" (Romans 5:10)

And so it was that

II. The Redeemer of the World Was Buried.

It is an amazing testimony to the power of the Spirit working in the hearts of men. Two members of the Jewish council called the Sanhedrin, the council that had condemned Jesus, stepped forward in faith to claim

the body of Jesus. These men had not consented to the actions of the council. Both Joseph of Arimathea and Nicodemus had been believers but had kept it quiet for fear of the Jews, and the reprisal they might experience if it were known that they believed in Jesus. Now with the death of Jesus it no longer mattered to them what their colleagues might think or do. It was Joseph who first stepped forward to claim the body of Jesus. Joseph also made his own new tomb available for Jesus' burial, a great and noble offering. Nicodemus bought a great deal of spices that they might use for a quick burial as they quickly wrapped the Lord's body in burial cloths. Things were done hastily only because of the constraints of time. It was necessary for them to finish their labor of love, and seal the tomb before the Sabbath began at 6:00 p.m.

As the Redeemer of the world it was necessary for Jesus to die for us, according to the Scriptures, and to be buried, also according to the Scriptures. As we find the comfort of our redemption in Jesus' death, we also find assurance in Jesus' burial. Jesus went before us into death and the grave. While Jesus endured the cross and suffered death for us, He also went before us into the grave to show us that we need not fear the grave. It is but a resting place for our mortal remains. Even as Jesus committed His spirit to His heavenly Father, so our spirits also shall return to God who gave them and only our dust shall return to the ground from which it came.

Remember Jesus' words of promise and how clear and marvelous they are.

John 14:1-3 "Let not your heart be troubled; you believe in God, believe also in Me. ²In My Father's house are many mansions; if *it were* not so, I would have told you. I go to prepare a place for you. ³And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again and receive you to Myself; that where I am, *there* you may be also.

So it is that today, on Good Friday, we gather in solemn observance of what it actually took to gain for us salvation. With grateful hearts we bow before the Lord in praise and thanksgiving, knowing *The Redeemer of the world died and was buried.*

AMEN.

And the peace of God which passes all understanding shall keep your hearts and minds in Christ Jesus. Amen.