

April 15, 2022

Good Friday

John 19:31-42

This Good Friday, I challenge you to look beyond the things we usually hear and imagine about this day. To be a bit of a detective at a crime scene. We know we are looking for something to make some sense of the day. Have we overlooked an important clue that might be right in front of our eyes? Our hymn this morning invites us to do just that. That we should take another look at Calvary. We have all lived through and experienced many a Good Friday. What is it that Calvary holds?

I am suggesting that we look far and deeply into the background of the events at Calvary. That we should look past and through: the cross, the nails, the crown of thorns, the pain and suffering at Calvary. Try very hard not to get stuck there. Look for the love that is present in such a place of suffering and brutality. You might be very surprised at the love that is there and the ones showing it. They are not the usual people that we think of. Mind you our understanding of the love that is present will be limited strictly to Good Friday. Only because the resurrection has not happened yet.

The most obvious love that we can see when we search for it is amongst Jesus's family and a few friends. They are the ones bravely gathered at the foot of the cross. They are there out of love and respect for Jesus. The greatest act of love that day actually happens

when Our Lord dies. This strange but true. It is their care and concern for His body. Most of the time when someone died on the cross their body stayed there for days. It would rot and decay and be a warning to people passing by. There really was no regard for those bodies. Mind you if the bodies were taken down they were put in a communal heap. Again no respect for the dead bodies of those condemned.

At Jesus's death, His family and friends showed Him great love and respect in looking after His body. His body was taken down from the cross, washed and anointed for burial. They wrapped His body and placed it into a new tomb. Jesus was truly loved by His family and friends. They really showed that by how they cared for Him after He died. John's account of getting Jesus from the cross into the tomb moves with love and dignity, as well as being honest about the brutality of His death.

This is love to the gruesome end. Jesus being the person He was, inspired this kind of love among His family and friends. It is this love of Jesus which all His followers are called to give. We are to love without calculation or restraint. Just as His family and friends did on Good Friday. Until we can perfect this type of love within ourselves, we will be continuously called back to Calvary. We are to learn from the love that was shown to Jesus after He died.

So, take another look at Calvary. Look for the love that was there in the hearts of Jesus's family and friends. It is not the usual love that we see on Good Friday. This is a love that we should learn from and be shaped by. I would not have thought that Calvary would hold such a powerful lesson on love. One that was in the background, but needed to be pulled forward and learned from. We often think of the love between

God and Jesus and us. We only figure that out on Easter morning.
Strictly confined in the events of Good Friday is a great lesson of love.
God bless, Pastor D