

**Good Friday: Was It Good?**  
**John 18:4-8, 12-18; Genesis 3:6-8; 2 Corinthians 5:2-5; Hebrew 3:8-9, 4:13-16.**  
**John 19:17-18; John 16:7; Matthew 27:50-51.**

When we call Friday “good,” we mean 'pious, holy.' The idea is that God is working to make things good between us and him.

Good Friday begins late Thursday night in the garden of Gethsemane. Jesus has been praying with his disciples when Judas shows up with a small detachment of soldiers. John 18:4-8, 12-14

Notice what happened here. First, when Jesus said, “I am He,” everyone fell to the ground. Second, Jesus made sure the disciples were not harmed. While these are incredible in and of themselves, the greatest thing that happened in this narrative is what Caiaphas the High Priest said. Caiaphas was to be a mediator between God and his people. It was his job to make the sacrifice for the people of Israel on the Day of Atonement.

However, in the gospels, we see that these religious figures had become more political than pious. At times, more hurtful than holy. Here, we have this religious leader who opposes Jesus. This man is living in fear of what the rebel rabbi from Nazareth will do. Yet, he is the one God uses to speak the truth,

*“It would be good if one man died for the people.”*

That wasn't Caiaphas' immoral idea; that was God's perfect plan. God created this plan for the hurting and the hiding.

While the story of Good Friday begins in the garden of Gethsemane, our hurting and hiding begins in the garden of Eden. Genesis 3:6-8

This is the root of our hurting and the first time we see ourselves hiding.

### **The Hurting**

The apostle Paul sheds light on the hurts of this life. He ties it into the story we see in the Garden of Eden, how we are found naked and ashamed in this life. 2 Corinthians 5:2-4

We tend to groan because we go through life trying to clothe ourselves with fig leaves. We look around and try to sew together whatever is available. We cover our hurts with a smiling face, a funny joke, a substance of choice. We buy the next great gadget or the most popular clothes. Yet none of it works. Nothing truly covers up the hurts of going through life naked and ashamed. We long for something more.

2 Corinthians 5:5 Here, Paul says that God is still in the business of clothing his hurting children. In this case, he clothes us with purpose. God reminds us that he has a plan. He gives us the Holy Spirit as a deposit of what is to come. It shows that he understands this life is filled with hurts, many of which we have brought on ourselves, but there is hope and a promise for something good to come.

### **The Hiding**

In the story of the fall of humanity found in Genesis 3, we see Adam and Eve trying to hide from God. Just like a good father, God knew where his children were hiding. He called out to them, giving them the opportunity to confess to him.

We still tend to try and hide from God, don't we? We hide from him by avoiding him. We choose not to talk to him. We choose not to associate with his followers. We choose to ignore him by staying too busy to spend time with him. We fill our lives so full of stuff to hide under everything.

Hebrews 4:13 Our attempts to hide from God is futile. He calls us today just as he did Adam and Eve, giving us the opportunity to come out of the shadows we are hiding in and be truly seen by him as we are.

Hebrews 3:7-8 God's Holy Spirit prompts us and reminds us to listen for the voice of the loving Father calling for his children to come out from hiding and to be seen and loved. A Father who knows where you're hiding. Who sees what you hope hHe doesn't see. The Father you think sees you as bad, yet He called you good when He made you.

The key to God dealing with the hurting and the hiding is found on the hill.

### **The Hill**

John 19:17-18 Jesus Christ took our suffering and shame up a hill and paid the price for the debt we incurred in the Garden of Eden. This is the story of redemption. This is the story of a loving God giving his only son to take what would cause us to hurt, to take what would cause us to hide, to take what was bad, and to make it good. It was a brutal day, but it was good in God's eyes.

John 16:7 Jesus knew how ugly and painful that day would be. He knew he would need to endure the suffering and shame of that day to make it good. He knew he would have to pay the price and make the way for "the Advocate" .... the Holy Spirit.

YES! God deposits the same Holy Spirit in our hearts to help us endure this life of hurts and groaning—the same Holy Spirit who reminds us to respond to the God who calls us out of hiding.

### **A New High Priest**

When Caiaphas called the death of Jesus "good," he didn't know that the death of this one certain man would mean the end of his job.

Matthew 27:50-51 The "curtain" mentioned here separated God's presence on earth from his people. One time a year, the High Priest could go inside there and offer a sacrifice for all the people. However, on that fateful Friday, Jesus was the sacrifice of all sacrifices. In response to that, it seems that God ripped the curtain open from top to bottom, essentially saying, "All are welcome!"

Not only did Jesus pay the way for us to be in constant communion with God, but the writer of Hebrews says he took over the role of being our High Priest. Hebrews 4:14-16

Jesus, who took our sin and shame, could have sat back and demanded us to live perfect lives in response to his sacrifice: "Do not make a mistake; do not sin, or you are history." Good news folks...He doesn't! He empathizes with our weaknesses. He understands the challenges of our temptations. He sees why we hurt and why we tend to hide and through the Holy Spirit, calls us to come in and receive mercy and find grace in our time of need! Good Friday? I think we might want to start calling it Great Friday.