

JOHN 3: 16-17
Celebration of Life Weekend
What was so good about Friday?

Introduction: On December 7, 1941, the Japanese armed forces bombed the US Naval base in Pearl Harbor, Hawaii. President Roosevelt delivered a radio address the next day that described the event as a **"day that will live in infamy."**

Webster's Dictionary describes infamy as, "disgrace, dishonor, great wickedness."

Now, there is no one who will deny that what the Japanese did that day was an act of extremely great wickedness. In fact, it led to the deaths of hundreds of thousands of soldiers all over the South Pacific.

The assassination of President Kennedy described as the most "infamous" day in the history of our great nation.

However, I would like to take you back in time to a Friday 2,000 years ago that will forever stand as the most infamous day in the history of humanity. On that day, the creature took steps to kill its Creator. On that day, mankind raised its rebellious fist against the God himself. On that day, the Son of God became the Lamb slain from the foundations of the world. In my opinion, the day Jesus Christ was crucified is the most infamous day in the history of the world.

TITLE: What was so good about Good Friday?

The first 18 verses of John describe the groups of people that wanted Jesus killed.

A. V. 2-3 **The Ruthless Men (The Soldiers)** - These verses tell us that these hardened men took the Lord Jesus, scourged Him and then mocked Him by placing a crown of thorns upon His head and treating Him cruelly. These were some of the same men who would later take the Lord Jesus to Calvary, nail Him to a cross

and gamble over His garments as He died for sin. These men were directly responsible for the death of Jesus Christ!

B. V. 4-7, 15 **The Religious Men** - The chief priests and scribes were involved in the death of Jesus in that they arrested, accused and condemned Him under false charges. These same men would later walk by the cross and mock Jesus as He died, Mark 15:29. These men were directly responsible for the death of Christ!

C. V. 6-16 **The Ruling Men** - Both Pilate and Herod were guilty of ignoring what they knew to be true about Jesus. It would appear from the story that Pilate tried everything short of bravery to get Jesus released. Be that as it may, these men had the power and the ability to set Jesus at liberty, yet they chose to let Him die. Therefore, they are directly responsible for the death of the Lord Jesus.

D. V. 18 **The Rebellious Men** - The Bible tells us that Jesus was crucified between two thieves. The Bible also tells us that these men ridiculed Jesus and rejected Him vocally that day, Luke 23:39. Even though one of the thieves came to Jesus later, they were both indirectly responsible for the death of Jesus Christ.

Jesus Is Crucified JOHN 19:17-30

17 Jesus carried his own cross out of the city to the place called "The Skull," which in Aramaic is Golgotha. 18 And there they nailed him to the cross. He was crucified, along with two others, one on each side with Jesus in the middle. 19-20 Pilate had them post a sign over the cross, which was written in three languages

—Aramaic, Latin, and Greek. Many of the people of Jerusalem read the sign, for he was crucified near the city. The sign stated: “Jesus of Nazareth, the King of the Jews.”

21 But the chief priests of the Jews said to Pilate, “You must change the sign! Don’t let it say, ‘King of the Jews,’ but rather—‘he claimed to be the King of the Jews!’ ” 22 Pilate responded, “What I have written will remain!”

23 Now when the soldiers crucified Jesus, they divided up his clothes into four shares, one for each of them. But his tunic was seamless, woven from the top to the bottom as a single garment. 24 So the soldiers said to each other, “Don’t tear it—let’s throw dice to see who gets it!” The soldiers did all of this not knowing they fulfilled the Scripture that says, “They divided my garments among them and gambled for my clothing.”

25 Mary, Jesus’ mother, was standing next to his cross, along with Mary’s sister, Mary the wife of Clopas, and Mary Magdalene. 26 So when Jesus looked down and saw the disciple he loved standing with her, he said, “**Mother, look—John will be a son to you.**” 27 Then he said, “**John, look—she will be a mother to you!**” From that day on, John accepted Mary into his home *as one of his own family*.

Jesus’ Death on the Cross

28 Jesus knew that his mission was accomplished, and to fulfill the Scripture, Jesus said: “**I am thirsty.**”

29 A jar of sour wine was sitting nearby, so they soaked a sponge with it and put it on the stalk of hyssop and raised it to his lips. 30 When he had sipped the sour wine, he said, “**It is finished,**

my bride!" Then he bowed his head and surrendered his spirit to God. ("finished" is from the Hebrew word *kalah*, a word that means "fulfilled, completed and bride" Jesus finished the work of our salvation for his bride!)

How can you describe this day that was so good? It was good for the Romans. It was good for the skeptics. It was good for the atheist, it was good for the religious. It was good for Lucifer. (or so they thought)

The Pain of The Cross - The Bible sums up the crucifixion in one verse. Actually, verse 18 simply says, **"they crucified him..."** However, we need to realize just what He suffered for you and me. Can you imagine having long, iron spikes driven through your hands and feet? Can you imagine hanging on a cross for 6 hours after you had been beaten and whipped by a band of soldiers?

I can't even begin to comprehend the pain that Jesus endured on the cross that day to atone for the sins of man. In fact, crucifixion is widely regarded as the most horrible form of execution ever devised by man. When a person was nailed to the cross, the nails would come into contact with the median nerve that runs through the forearms and into the hands. This would irritate this nerve and cause the body to undergo violent spasms, which would result in the body being slammed into the upright wood of the cross.

Also, the body would sag due to fatigue and weakness in the limbs. This collapsing of the body would result in the chest muscles preventing the lungs from expanding. The only way the condemned man could breathe would be for him to push against the nails in his feet as he pulled against the nails in his hands. This action would raise him up and allow him to fill his lungs. This would have to be repeated each time a breath was needed. Eventually the body would be so weak from the combined

influence of gangrene, blood loss, dehydration and exhaustion, that the victim would be unable to lift his body and would suffocate. Jesus Christ died a horrible death, a painful death, a death unspeakably cruel and vile, all because He loved you!

How can you visualize this day?

The wrongdoing of all humanity—putting to an end an innocent man. The Son of God

Death by way of the cross—all in one moment, bringing death to the bright light of the future. He never stopped loving us. And yet, this is the most powerful part.

Our sin stopped his heart—Our sin drove the nails firmly into the hands of Jesus. The brutal beating. The inhumane flogging, the naked humiliation as Heaven watched in horror as our rebellion, shame and guilt pinned him to the cross. Everyone witnessed this reality----Jesus was finally dead!

All hopes vanished and dreams crushed. People believed Jesus came to redeem the souls of mankind and usher in a lifetime of hope and possibility. A peace beyond understanding.

For many we can come to grips with this conclusion that the living God is encapsulated in this one realization: The single greatest sacrifice in human history is finished.

What was so good about Friday? THE BLOOD

The blood of Jesus can reverse the curse of sin and raise the dead to life.

How clearly we can see it! IT IS FINISHED!

The single greatest sacrifice in human history, encapsulated in this one realization: We can say that God is for us. Now we know better; there is a peace beyond understanding, there is a life of fulfillment, there is a way of redemption. We had almost believed

Jesus was dead. But now we are witnesses to this reality. The weak are made strong-the blind can see-the lost are found. We had heard the stories of old! Yes, this is what is true! The chains of mortality utterly broken. Behold freedom rising. Now God's people are unstoppable. There is no longer the sound of the enemy laughing, His plans obliterated. Here is our King Jesus!

Overcoming our sin and our debt, reconciling us with God, erasing the very notion of our rebellion, our guilt, our shame. Heaven watched and saw it all. The naked humiliation, the inhumane flogging, the brutal beating, and this was deemed sufficient for all of us. We told ourselves that we were in control. All along these were the plans firmly in the hands of God. Our sins stopped his heart. Our sins drove the nail and yet this is the incredible part of this; He never stopped loving us!

The bright light of our future, all in one moment, bringing death to death by way of the cross. This is the story of Jesus, the son of God, an innocent man, putting to an end the wrongdoing of all humanity. How can one describe such a day?

GOOD FRIDAY

<https://youtu.be/FzxXvEtf9D0>

THE CROSS

It was meant for humiliation and to horrify the world
It was meant to last for days-it was meant for prolonged torture
and agonizing asphyxiation

It was meant to stop a movement-but instead it became the way
It was meant to promote fear-but instead it awakened faith.

It was meant to be vicious and violent but instead it became our place of peace

It was meant to uproot hope but instead it became the seed of it

It was meant to punish captives but instead it unleashed freedom

It was meant to silence the believers but instead it ignited them

It was meant to kill Jesus for good but instead it was a set up for the Resurrection to rescue and redeem the righteous.

It was meant to criticize and mock him but instead it became the curtain call for his crowning glory

It was meant to erase a chapter but instead it became the story

It was meant to hold up convicts but instead it raised up a king

It was meant to shut up our mouths but instead it is why we sing

It was meant as a symbol of assignation but instead it became a symbol of Jesus invitation.

The invitation is to come to the cross

Instead of sin and stain you are meant to be made clean

Instead of being forgotten-you are meant to be forgiven

Instead of feeling empty-you were meant to be fulfilled.

Instead of being an accident you were created for a purpose

Instead of being abandoned you were chosen and hand picked

For all who said "I can't"-God says you can

You were cherished from the start- you were always on his mind and buried in his heart.

Instead of being the victim-you are meant to be the victor

It was meant to be a signal of death but instead it's a sign of living

It was meant to be the end but instead it was your beginning

So, What really happened on the cross beyond the crown of thorns embedded in his forehead? Beyond the sign that Pilate put over his head in 3 languages mocking him as King of the Jews.

The title that he used to mock Jesus openly was really an announcement of what was to come!!

Listen, sometimes the insults that people place on you to humiliate you is the greatest compliment they can give you!!
KING OF THE JEWS!

What really happened on Friday? Why did it happen? Was it Revenge? Was its restoration? Was its retribution?

I like the definition of retribution- “punishment inflicted on someone as vengeance for a wrong or criminal act.”

Punishment was not on Jesus, you or I! It was an in your face, direct lethal blow on Satan himself.

CLOSING:

In partnership with the Father, the Son demonstrated his love for us in that while we were still sinners, Christ died for us. (Rom. 12:8)
The cross was our ticket to liberation, freedom, Life and liberty. Your shackles of sin slipped off, your identity was revealed, your true citizenship was revealed no longer concealed. On the cross is where all my regrets are redeemed. On the cross is where all of you were nailed and the new you was created. I am a new creation- the old is gone!!

He could have dispatched 12 legions of angels, but he hung there for you and me! He could have looked at you like some do and say, you are not worth the effort and time!

You are useless, worthless, your sin is too bad, your habits to extreme. **It was his love that held him there.** Did you know he placed himself on the cross- no one put him there.