

Good Friday Service – Stations of the Cross

Come walk the way of Jesus with me. Jesus had entered Jerusalem in triumph knowing that the way he began with Praises and palm branches would lead to crucifixion and death. Come walk the way of Jesus. We begin the final part of his journey in the Garden of Gethsemane...

First Station: Jesus in the Garden of Gethsemane

Then Jesus came with them to a place called Gethsemane, and he said to his disciples, "Sit here while I go over there and pray." He took along Peter and the two sons of Zebedee, and began to feel sorrow and distress. Then he said to them, "My soul is sorrowful even to death. Remain here and keep watch with me." He advanced a little and fell prostrate in prayer, saying, "My Father, if it is possible, let this cup pass from me; yet, not as I will, but as you will." When he returned to his disciples he found them asleep. He said to Peter, "So you could not keep watch with me for one hour? Watch and pray that you may not undergo the test. The spirit is willing, but the flesh is weak." Matthew 26:36-41

Are we not like Peter, James and John?

Do we not let our attention wander away from our Lord?

Have we not failed to keep watch?

- To keep watch over our faith
- To keep watch over this creation with which God has blessed us.
- To keep watch over each other.

Have we fallen asleep as his disciples and God's world has suffered because of it?

Second Station: Jesus is betrayed by Judas and arrested

While Jesus was still speaking, Judas, one of the Twelve, arrived, accompanied by a crowd with swords and clubs, who had come from the chief priests, the scribes, and the elders. His betrayer had arranged a signal with them, saying, "the man I shall kiss is the one; arrest him and lead him away securely." He came and immediately went over to him and said, "Rabbi." And he kissed him. At this they laid hands on him and arrested him. Mark 14: 43-46

Have we sold Jesus to the highest bidder?

Have we sold him to our priorities that have not included him...

- Our families
- Our work
- Our leisure
- Our friends
- Our drive for success
- Our dreams and desires

Have we sold out Jesus to our lifestyles and ambitions?

Third Station: Jesus is Condemned by the Sanhedrin

When day came the council of elders of the people met, both chief priests and scribes, and they brought him before their Sanhedrin. They said, "If you are the Messiah, tell us," but he replied to them, "If I tell you, you will not believe, and if I question, you will not respond. But from this time on the Son of Man will be seated at the right hand of the power of God." They all asked, "Are you then the Son of God?" He replied to them, "You say that I am." Then they said, "What further need have we for testimony? We have heard it from his own mouth." Luke 22: 66-71

Jesus is the Messiah!

But we live in a world who will believe in anything and anyone but Jesus.

People will use his name in vulgar expression.

People will use his name in times of anger or exasperation, but they will not use it to proclaim him as Lord.

We think that it is beneath us to call him Lord, to call him Master, to call him Saviour.

But that is who he is.

Fourth Station: Jesus is Denied by St. Peter

Now Peter was sitting outside in the courtyard. One of the maids came over to him and said, "You too were with Jesus the Galilean." But he denied it in front of everyone, saying, "I do not know what you are talking about!" As he went out to the gate, another girl saw him and said to those who were there, "This man was with Jesus the Nazorean." Again he denied it with an oath, "I do not know the man!" A little later the bystanders came over and said to Peter, "Surely you too are one of them; even your speech gives you away." At that he began to curse and to swear, "I do not know the man." And immediately a cock crowed. Then Peter remembered the word that Jesus had spoken: "Before the cock crows you will deny me three times." He went out and began to weep bitterly. Matthew 26: 69-75

Everyday people watch us.

We have proclaimed our faith and people watch. But so often our words, our actions - they show what we really believe and we like Peter deny Jesus.

Our words, our actions say,

I do not know him...

I am not like him...

I am not one of his disciples...

And our spirit weeps. And our faith withers and we become less than God wants for us.

Fifth Station: Jesus is Judged by Pontius Pilate

The chief priests with the elders and the scribes, that is, the whole Sanhedrin, held a council. They bound Jesus, led him away, and handed him over to Pilate. Pilate questioned him, "Are you the king of the Jews?" He said to him in reply, "You say so." The chief priests accused him of many things. Again Pilate questioned him, "Have you no answer? See how many things they accuse you of." Jesus gave him no further answer, so that Pilate was amazed.... Pilate, wishing to satisfy the crowd, released Barabbas and handed Jesus over to be crucified. Mark 15: 1-5, 15

The world wants to get rid of Jesus. Many have said that if it weren't for Jesus being the Son of God then all religions could be one.

Jesus the Son of God said, I am the way, the Truth and the life, no one comes to the Father, but by me. And the world says, we want to define how we will come. And so the world accuses Jesus of many things thinking that it can bring him down to its level. But it can't. It will never be able to do it for He is the Son of God, the Messiah, our Lord, our Master, our Saviour.

Sixth Station: Jesus is Scourged at the Pillar and Crowned with Thorns

Then Pilate took Jesus and had him scourged. And the soldiers wove a crown out of thorns and placed it on his head, and clothed him in a purple cloak, and they came to him and said, "Hail, King of the Jews!" And they struck him repeatedly. John 19: 1-3

My God, the pain, the agony begins. My Lord is beaten, mocked and ridiculed. The Romans tried to break him, just as the world tries to break us. The modern holocaust is the massacre of Christians in developing countries and in Middle Eastern countries who will not allow their faith to be broken. But filled by God's Holy Spirit, we will not be broken. We will take the mocking and ridicule and still proclaim Jesus as Lord.

Seventh Station: Jesus Bears the Cross

When the chief priests and the guards saw [Jesus] they cried out, "Crucify him, crucify him!" Pilate said to them, "Take him yourselves and crucify him. I find no guilt in him." ... They cried out, "Take him away, take him away! Crucify him!" Pilate said to them, "Shall I crucify your king?" The chief priests answered, "We have no king but Caesar." Then he handed him over to them to be crucified. So they took Jesus, and carrying the cross himself he went out to what is called the Place of the Skull, in Hebrew, Golgotha. John 19: 6, 15-17

It's happening again today, a large number of religious leaders deny Christ. They turn their backs on him and follow religions of human making.

They follow the timely instead of the timeless. Jesus has always been a stumbling block for religious leaders to do and think the way they want. Crucify him, get him out of the way, and move him off into a corner of human thinking, then they can do what they want. If Jesus really revealed God to us, if he really was God incarnate, if he really revealed the truth about us and life and how to live, then we have no excuse for not following him. But if we can crucify him, get him out of the way, move him off into a corner of human thinking then the way is clear for our own thinking, our own doing, our own lifestyles, our own way of treating people. And we crucify him again.

Eighth Station: Jesus is Helped by Simon the Cyrenian to Carry the Cross

They pressed into service a passer-by, Simon, a Cyrenian, who was coming in from the country, the father of Alexander and Rufus, to carry his cross. Mark 15: 21

As unwanted as it might have been, Simon shared the burden of Jesus.

As inconvenient as it might have been, Simon shared the burden of Jesus.

The burden of Jesus.

The lost, the homeless, the hungry, the poor, the grieving, the suffering, the emotionally distraught, the faithless, you and me - these, all these are the burden of Christ, the burden he calls us to share.

As unwanted as it might be

As inconvenient it might be

You are called to share his burden. Not forced as was Simon, but out of your of Love for your Lord and his Love for you.

Ninth Station: Jesus Meets the Women of Jerusalem

A large crowd of people followed Jesus, including many women who mourned and lamented him. Jesus turned to them and said, "Daughters of Jerusalem, do not weep for me; weep instead for yourselves and for your children, for indeed, the days are coming when people will say, 'Blessed are the barren, the wombs that never bore and the breasts that never nursed.' At that time, people will say to the mountains, 'Fall upon us!' and to the hills, 'Cover us!' for if these things are done when the wood is green what will happen when it is dry?" Luke 23: 27-31

These women would have been women who had accompanied Jesus in his three years of ministry, but there would have also been women who made it their task to comfort and administer drugs to the person on the way to crucifixion.

But notice, Jesus took no notice of his agony, he sought to console those who were grieving for him or trying to console him. Jesus' first thought was always for others, their needs, their concerns.

This is so unlike the vast majority of people today. Yes when crises and disasters come we rise to the challenge, but to the day to day concern for others we seem oblivious. It is easy to walk by the homeless, the poor. It is easy to ignore the elderly. It is easy to ignore the jobless. We think we have to look after our own first. But that was and is not the way of Jesus. He could have simply focused on his pain, his agony, but no, he looks to the pain of others first. So should we.

Tenth Station: Jesus is Crucified

When they came to the place called the Skull, they crucified him and the criminals there, one on his right, the other on his left. [Then Jesus said, "Father, forgive them, they know not what they do."] Luke 23: 33-34

Do you remember Jesus' words to Nicodemus the Pharisee who came to him under cover of darkness to ask him about being born again. Jesus told him he did not come to judge or to condemn, but to save and offer eternal life. So on the cross, Jesus' first thought is not to judge or condemn, but to forgive.

What is your first thought when a mistake is made, a word misspoken, an act wrongfully done. Is it to judge, to condemn, to centre out, to hold up to ridicule or scorn. Or is it to forgive, to look to making things work better the next time.

We are so quick to lash out at others or to think negative about the actions of others.

Perhaps we need to look at ourselves first. Perhaps we need to realize that we are not so different from those we condemn, or mock or ridicule even in the simplest of things and in the most innocent of circumstances.

Eleventh Station: Jesus Promises His Kingdom to the Good Thief

Now one of the criminals hanging there reviled Jesus, saying, "Are you not the Messiah? Save yourself and us." The other, however, rebuking him, said in reply, "Have you no fear of God, for you are subject to the same condemnation? And indeed, we have been condemned justly, for the sentence we received corresponds to our crimes, but this man has done nothing criminal." Then he said, "Jesus, remember me when you come into your kingdom." He replied to him, "Amen, I say to you, today you will be with me in Paradise." Luke 23: 39-43

Two men deserving death hang on either side of our Lord. One bitter and scornful, the other repentant. Sometimes we think it is too late for us to be forgiven. Sometimes we think that our lives have been too corrupt for Jesus to care about us. Sometimes we think that we have just been doing our own thing for so long that we can't change. But here we see that it is never too late, we are never too bad, we are never too old for Jesus to forgive us. Others may never forgive us, but Jesus knows our hearts and if we come to him really wanting a new beginning then he never, never turns us away. The criminals on the crosses beside Jesus suffered their human judgment, but Jesus knowing the heart of each man, welcomed the one asking for forgiveness back into a relationship with him and into eternal life with him. If there is hope for that criminal, surely we can believe that there is hope for us.

Twelfth Station: Jesus Speaks to His Mother and the Beloved Disciple

Standing by the cross of Jesus were his mother and his mother's sister, Mary the wife of Clopas, and Mary of Magdala. When Jesus saw his mother and the disciple there whom he loved, he said to his mother, "Woman, behold, your son." Then he said to the disciple, "Behold, your mother." And from that hour the disciple took her into his home. John 19: 25-27

Again, Jesus does not think of himself. He thinks of others. He puts his mother's care into the hands of a disciple. So it is in the community of believers, Jesus places us into the care of each other. The Church is more than a place to fundraise to keep the doors open. As a matter of fact, the church is not a building, it is people who have received the forgiveness of Jesus supporting, encouraging, enabling each other to live life the way God intended it to be lived. It is a gathered community of people who are to be loving and compassionate and understanding and forgiving of each other. Is this our church? Is this how we act and treat each other? It is easy to tell. Just listen to how we talk to and about each other. Our words always, always betray or support our actions.

Thirteenth Station: Jesus Dies on the Cross

It was now about noon and darkness came over the whole land until three in the afternoon because of an eclipse of the sun. Then the veil of the temple was torn down the middle. Jesus cried out in a loud voice, "Father, into your hands I commend my spirit"; and when he had said this he breathed his last. Luke 23: 44-46

Our Lord dies. Our Lord dies, but he dies having fulfilled the will of his Father. He has accomplished his purpose for coming into this life.

We live our lives, do our work, love our families, but is that our purpose in life?
The Bible is clear, our purpose is
to Love God with our whole being,
to Love our neighbour as ourselves
to teach others about this Love and
to invite them into a new life of Love in and through Jesus.
Our ultimate purpose is to have people enter into a loving relationship with God.
For us who believe there is no other purpose than this. Everything we do, everything
we say is for this purpose alone. Everything else is simply to be the supports that allow
us to fulfill this purpose - to have people know the love of God and to fall in love with
him.

Fourteenth Station: Jesus is Placed in the Tomb

When it was evening, there came a rich man from Arimathea named Joseph, who was himself a disciple of Jesus. He went to Pilate and asked for the body of Jesus; then Pilate ordered it to be handed over. Taking the body, Joseph wrapped it [in] clean linen and laid it in his new tomb that he had hewn in the rock. Then he rolled a huge stone across the entrance to the tomb and departed. Matthew 27: 57-60

Good Friday ends in the dark, in death.
But that is not the end. Come to worship on Easter morning for the story of the new beginning that is available to everyone who will come to God through Jesus Christ - our Lord, our Master, our Saviour.

The following short video is by Rev. Dr. S. M. Lockridge – it is a powerful image that will stir your heart for the Easter Story that is unfolding. The next page is about who this powerful man of faith was.

[It's Friday, but Sunday's Coming! \(S.M. Lockridge\)](#) (3:38 minutes to watch)

If the link doesn't work, please copy and paste the following into your browser.
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=uCZh9rxUL_gthe

Rev. Dr. Shadrach Meshach Lockridge



Beloved Local Pastor

Shadrach Meshach Lockridge was born 1913 in Robertson County, Texas, and was the oldest of eight children. Attending schools in and around Waco, Texas. Dr. Lockridge graduated Bishop College, Marshall, Texas and Southwest Baptist Theological Seminary in Fort Worth and received several Divinity Degrees from Schools of Theology in California, including California Graduate School of Theology, Glendale, California; Doctorate of Divinity. Baptized into the Mt. Olive Baptist Church in Waco, Texas, he acknowledged the call to preach in 1940, at the Munger Ave. Baptist Church, Dallas, Texas.

Dr. S.M. Lockridge and Virgil May Thompson Lockridge were married in 1941 in Dallas. After pastoring several churches in Texas in the 1940s, he became the Pastor of the Calvary Baptist Church, San Diego in August 1952. While Pastor of Calvary, Dr. Lockridge also served as Moderator of the Progressive Baptist District Association, President of the California Missionary Baptist State Convention, and the National Missionary Baptist Convention of America. He was a faculty member of the Billy Graham School of Evangelism as well.

Rev. Dr. S.M. Lockridge was indeed renown in the US and abroad. Calvary Baptist Church was one of the largest congregations in San Diego's African American community. Under his leadership, the church hosted such civil rights leaders as Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., and other dignitaries affiliated with the church and civil rights. His friendship and travels with the famed Evangelist Billy Graham further accelerated his renown.

Some of his publications include, "The Challenge of the Church", Zondervan Press, 1968, 1969; "Rekindling Holy Fires" and "The Lordship of Christ." His notoriety and travels included preaching in several countries in Europe, Asia, Latin America, and

Africa where he was featured during revivals, rallies, crusades, and conferences. In the fictional and New York Times best seller series Left Behind, which was based on Biblical accounts of the world's end, Rev. Dr. S.M. Lockridge is referenced by the authors and noted as having been one of the greatest of preachers. His best remembered sermon is perhaps "That's My King" which can be found on YouTube. It is a popular sermon from a minister whose message continues.

Rev. Dr. S.M. Lockridge passed away April 2000 and is remembered as a great preacher and mentor to many who were or who became ministers. He was a civil rights activist, community leader and advocate, and a beloved Pastor.