

STONE HARBOR

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Good Friday -- 2009

Good Friday in its largest setting

This afternoon we have come to honor God and be reminded of His perfect plan to restore all that was lost in mankind's rebellion against Him in the garden. This is never a show and certainly not today. It is about God and you, God and us...our relationship which He has gone to such great lengths to restore. Let the Word of God wash over you today in its simple elegance. These words have been spoken to us by our God who loves us.

His plan centers on and is fulfilled in Jesus and in His death and resurrection. Yet God had set His plan in motion thousands of years before Jesus was born in a manger – really it has been God's plan from the very beginning.

God created all that is out of nothing...

Gen 1:1-5 – Paul &/or Russ

¹In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth. ²The earth was formless and void, and darkness was over the surface of the deep, and the Spirit of God was moving over the surface of the waters. ³Then God said, "Let there be light"; and there was light. ⁴God saw that the light was good; and God separated the light from the darkness. ⁵God called the light day, and the darkness He called night And there was evening and there was morning, one day.

Gen 1:26-31

²⁶Then God said, "Let Us make man in Our image, according to Our likeness; ... ²⁷God created man in His own image, in the image of God He created him; male and female He created them. ²⁸God blessed them; and God said to them, "Be fruitful and multiply, and fill the earth, and subdue it; and rule over the fish of the sea and over the birds of the sky and over every living thing that moves on the earth." ... ³¹God saw all that He had made, and behold, it was very good. And there was evening and there was morning, the sixth day.

But all was not 'very good' for very long...

God placed man in the Garden of Eden with all they needed and gave them this instruction:

Gen 2:16-17

¹⁶The LORD God commanded the man, saying, "From any tree of the garden you may eat freely; ¹⁷but from the tree of the knowledge of good and evil you shall not eat, for in the day that you eat from it you will surely die."

Gen 3:1-6

¹Now the serpent was more crafty than any beast of the field which the LORD God had made. And he said to the woman, "Indeed, has God said, 'You shall not eat from any tree of the garden?'" ²The woman said to the serpent, "From the fruit of the trees of the garden we may eat; ³but from the fruit of the tree which is in the middle of the garden, God has said, 'You shall not eat from it or touch it, or you will die.'" ⁴The serpent said to the woman, "You surely will not die!" ⁵"For God knows that in the day you eat from it your eyes will be opened, and you will be like God, knowing good and evil." ⁶When the woman saw that the tree was good for food, and that it was a delight to the eyes, and that the tree was desirable to make one wise, she took from its fruit and ate; and she gave also to her husband with her, and he ate.

This rebellion against God warranted His curse and tarnished all of creation. Mankind suffered the most tragic loss – intimacy with God was replaced by estrangement from Him. We should rightly see this distance as death. We live, but not as God intended -- not in vital communion with Him.

Yet, as the perfect Father responding to His child's injury, even while the dust of the tragedy was still settling, God implemented His plan to restore the order He intended for all of creation. Most importantly to us, God declares His plan to recapture His lost communion with mankind.

We see the germinal form of this plan declared as a promise in Gen 3:15... God says to the serpent and records here for all of us to hear:

Gen 3:15

¹⁵... I will put enmity
Between you [serpent] and the woman,
And between your seed and her seed;
He [the seed of the woman] shall bruise you [serpent] on the head,
And you shall bruise him on the heel."

The bruise to the head speaks of a fatal blow to be delivered to the serpent – the source of the evil who caused the spoiling of God's creation. The bruise to the heel speaks to a non fatal wound the serpent would deal to the seed of the woman.

With these words, please see the Master Artist drawing the first lines of His already completed vision on the portrait of redemption. Many more strokes, many more colors, textures, details... will be added, all serving to express the reality and centrality of Jesus as God's plan and provision for restoring what was lost.

A theme begins to surface: God would bring “Life out of death”¹

We see this in the record of God’s dealing with Noah.

Genesis 6:5-8—Lori

⁵Then the LORD saw that the wickedness of man was great on the earth, and that every intent of the thoughts of his heart was only evil continually.

⁶The LORD was sorry that He had made man on the earth, and He was grieved in His heart.

⁷The LORD said, "I will blot out man whom I have created from the face of the land, from man to animals to creeping things and to birds of the sky; for I am sorry that I have made them."

⁸But Noah found favor in the eyes of the LORD.

Genesis 6:13-14

¹³Then God said to Noah, "The end of all flesh has come before Me; for the earth is filled with violence because of them; and behold, I am about to destroy them with the earth.

¹⁴"Make for yourself an ark...

Genesis 6:18

¹⁸"But I will establish My covenant with you; and you shall enter the ark--you and your sons and your wife, and your sons' wives with you.

Genesis 6:22

²²Thus Noah did; according to all that God had commanded him, so he did.

Genesis 7:11-12, 21-24

¹¹In the six hundredth year of Noah's life, in the second month, on the seventeenth day of the month, on the same day all the fountains of the great deep burst open, and the floodgates of the sky were opened.

¹²The rain fell upon the earth for forty days and forty nights. ...

²¹All flesh that moved on the earth perished, birds and cattle and beasts and every swarming thing that swarms upon the earth, and all mankind; ... only Noah was left, together with those that were with him in the ark.

²⁴The water prevailed upon the earth one hundred and fifty days.

Genesis 8:14-18

¹⁴In the second month, on the twenty-seventh day of the month, the earth was dry.

¹⁵Then God spoke to Noah, saying,

¹⁶"Go out of the ark, ... and be fruitful and multiply on the earth."

¹⁸So Noah went out, and his sons and his wife and his sons' wives with him.

Again, God brings “Life out of death.”

We have here a new start through one righteous man subjecting Himself to God’s unlikely plan in faithful obedience. Please see the development of God’s portrait of redemption. God judged

¹ Pastor Kit Culver’s phrase

the evil of mankind but in the midst of that judgment He provided a new creation through one righteous man in an unlikely deliverance. Through the life of Noah, the Artist has added more structure and detail to His portrait of restoring the lost. But the painting is far from done...

God raised up another man Abram later to be renamed by God, Abraham.

Genesis 12:1-3 -- Becky

¹Now the LORD said to Abram,
"Go forth from your country,
And from your relatives
And from your father's house,
To the land which I will show you;
²And I will make you a great nation,
And I will bless you,
And make your name great;
And so you shall be a blessing;
³And I will bless those who bless you,
And the one who curses you I will curse
And in you all the families of the earth will be blessed."

How would all families of the earth be blessed through him? Abraham did not even have any children through whom he could extend his reach. In a series of conversations God made it clear to Abraham that he would indeed have a child and that through his barren wife Sarah and in the descendents of this child all families would be blessed.

Genesis 17:19 -- ¹⁹... [tell becky of elipse] Sarah your wife will bear you a son, and you shall call his name Isaac; and I will establish My covenant with him for an everlasting covenant for his descendants after him.

Genesis 22:1-2 -- ¹Now it came about after these things, that God tested Abraham, and said to him, "Abraham!" And he said, "Here I am." ²He said, "Take now your son, your only son, whom you love, Isaac, and go to the land of Moriah, and offer him there as a burnt offering on one of the mountains of which I will tell you."

Genesis 22:7-8 -- ⁷Isaac spoke to Abraham his father and said, "My father!" And he said, "Here I am, my son." And he said, "Behold, the fire and the wood, but where is the lamb for the burnt offering?" ⁸Abraham said, "God will provide for Himself the lamb for the burnt offering, my son." So the two of them walked on together.

Genesis 22:9-18 -- ⁹Then they came to the place of which God had told him; and Abraham built the altar there and arranged the wood, and bound his son Isaac and laid him on the altar, on top of the wood. ¹⁰Abraham stretched out his hand and took the knife to slay his son. ¹¹But the angel of the LORD called to him from heaven and said, "Abraham, Abraham!" And he said, "Here I am." ¹²He said, "Do not stretch out your hand against the lad, and do nothing to him; for now I know that you fear God, since you have not withheld your son, your only son, from Me." ¹³Then Abraham raised his eyes and looked, and behold, behind him a ram caught in the thicket by his horns; and Abraham went and took the ram and offered him up for a burnt

offering in the place of his son. ¹⁴Abraham called the name of that place The LORD Will Provide, as it is said to this day, "In the mount of the LORD it will be provided." ¹⁵Then the angel of the LORD called to Abraham a second time from heaven, ¹⁶and said, "By Myself I have sworn, declares the LORD, because you have done this thing and have not withheld your son, your only son, ¹⁷indeed I will greatly bless you, and I will greatly multiply your seed as the stars of the heavens and as the sand which is on the seashore; and your seed shall possess the gate of their enemies. ¹⁸"In your seed all the nations of the earth shall be blessed, because you have obeyed My voice."

Once again, God is bringing "Life out of death!"

Yet another stroke on the canvas of God's portrait of redemption. In Abraham and Isaac's lives and particularly these events God is showing us that He would restore the intimate communion that had been lost between Himself and mankind and **it would require the death of the very son through whom all would be blessed. But that son would not be the son of any man but a son that God Himself would provide in a miraculous way.**

God kept adding one stroke after another to His portrait of redemption.

Later God would establish the Law -- the covenant He made with man and mediated by Moses. The success of that covenant was dependent on the obedience of God's people to do all of His commands.

Obedience produced blessing, and disobedience, judgment...

But, human inability to keep this covenant was proven over and over by the failings of God's people. Time and time again Israel would fail to keep their covenant obligations and would undergo God's righteous judgment for their disobedience.

Then, God spoke through Jeremiah the Prophet about a New Covenant God would make with His people...

Jere 31:31 (NASB) -- Les

"...I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel and with the house of Judah, not like the covenant which I made with their fathers in the day I took them by the hand to bring them out of the land of Egypt, My covenant which they broke, ..." declares the Lord. ... "I will put My law within them, and on their heart I will write it; and I will be their God, and they shall be My people. ... they shall all know Me, ... I will forgive their iniquity, and their sin I will remember no more."

There was hope! Somehow God was going to... make a new covenant not dependant on our obedience. He would bring about forgiveness, and right relationship without laying aside righteous judgment.

But, it would require a savior to take upon Himself the judgment that the sin of God's people required.

Listen to this description of the savior God would provide as spoken to the Prophet Isaiah:

From Isaiah 53 (NASB) ...

He was despised and forsaken of men, A man of sorrows, and acquainted with grief; ...

Surely our grief's He Himself bore, And our sorrows He carried; ... But He was pierced through for our transgressions,

He was crushed for our iniquities; The chastening for our well-being fell upon Him, And by His scourging we are healed.

All of us like sheep have gone astray, Each of us has turned to his own way;

But the Lord has caused the iniquity of us all To fall on Him... the Lord was pleased To crush Him, putting Him to grief;

He would render Himself as a guilt offering, ... bearing their iniquities. ...He poured out Himself to death: He Himself bore the sin of many...

Yes, God had a plan! He Himself would provide!

God became a man

God became man in Jesus so that mankind in relationship to Jesus could be redeemed. He did not come as a concurring king, but in the unlikely role of a suffering savior. He experienced loss, hardship, rejection, temptation, even betrayal. He is intimately acquainted with all our needs.

Jesus had a human nature like ours. John refers to Jesus as “the Word and says”:

John 1:14 (NIV) -- Chuck

The Word became flesh and made his dwelling among us.

Jesus Humbled himself.

Philippians 2:5-8 5 (NKJV) Let this mind be in you which was also in Christ Jesus, 6 who, being in the form of God, did not consider it robbery to be equal with God, 7 but made Himself of no reputation, taking the form of a bondservant, and coming in the likeness of men. 8 And being found in appearance as a man, He humbled Himself and became obedient to the point of death, even the death of the cross

He was tempted:

Matt 4:1 (NIV) Then Jesus was led by the Spirit into the desert to be tempted by the devil.

He had human emotions: compassion (Mt 9:36), anger (Mk 3:5)... John 11:35 (NIV).

He was made of flesh and blood as we are:

John 19:34 (NIV) ...One of the soldiers pierced Jesus' side with a spear, bringing a sudden flow of blood and water.

He suffered:

Hebr 2:17-18 (NIV) For this reason he had to be made like his brothers in every way, in order that he might become a merciful and faithful high priest in service to God, and that he might make atonement for the sins of the people. Because he himself suffered when he was tempted, he is able to help those who are being tempted.

The mercy and love of God not only sent Jesus to identify with us but compelled Him to redeem us.

God redeemed us at great cost (Freedom is Not Free)

- Although Jesus expected to suffer and die He approached it with human distress and anguish of soul
Mark 14:32 (NIV) -- Dave
They went to a place called Gethsemane, and Jesus said to his disciples, "Sit here while I pray." He ... began to be deeply distressed and troubled. "My soul is overwhelmed with sorrow to the point of death," ... he fell to the ground and prayed that if possible the hour might pass from him. "Abba, Father," he said, "everything is possible for you. Take this cup from me. Yet not what I will, but what you will."
- He was arrested by force in morning darkness
Mark 14:43-46 (NIV) Just as he was speaking, Judas... appeared. With him was a crowd armed with swords and clubs, sent from the chief priests, the teachers of the law, and the elders. Now the betrayer had arranged a signal with them: "The one I kiss is the man; arrest him and lead him away under guard." Going at once to Jesus, Judas said, "Rabbi!" and kissed him. The men seized Jesus and arrested him.
- He was tried in a pre-dawn trial by "religious" men who had already convicted Him
Mark 14:55-56 (NIV) The chief priests and the whole Sanhedrin were looking for evidence against Jesus so that they could put him to death, but they did not find any. Many testified falsely against him, ...
- His "crime?" He claimed to be the Christ!
Mark 14:61-65 (NIV) ... "Are you the Christ, the Son of the Blessed One?" "I am," said Jesus. "And you will see the Son of Man sitting at the right hand of the Mighty One and coming on the clouds of heaven." The high priest tore his clothes. "Why do we need any more witnesses?" he asked. "You have heard the blasphemy. ... " They all condemned him as worthy of death. Then some began to spit at him; they blindfolded him, struck him with their fists, and said, "Prophecy!" And the guards took him and beat him.
- He was delivered into the cruel hands of harsher still Roman soldiers who found no guilt in Him, yet had him beaten anyway

John 19:1 (NASB) Then Pilate therefore took Jesus, and scourged Him.

John 19:2 (NASB) And the soldiers wove a crown of thorns and put it on His head, and arrayed Him in a purple robe; 3 and they began to come up to Him, and say, "Hail, King of the Jews!" and to give Him blows in the face.

He was forced to carry the instrument of His death to the place thereof and be nailed up to die...

John 19:17-19 (NIV) Carrying his own cross, he went out to the place of the Skull (which in Aramaic is called Golgotha). Here they crucified him, ...

Finally, the end came...

Mark 15:34 (NIV) And at the ninth hour Jesus cried out in a loud voice, ... "My God, my God, why have you forsaken me?"

John 19:28-30 (NIV) Later, knowing that all was now completed, ... Jesus said, "It is finished." With that, he bowed his head and gave up his spirit.

Why did He suffer so?

Hebr 9:22 (NASB) ... without shedding of blood there is no forgiveness.

1Pet 3:18 (NASB) For Christ also died for sins once for all, [the] just for [the] unjust, in order that He might bring us to God...

All this God has done for us.

How will you respond?

From the cross Jesus said: "It is Finished".

God has provided the sacrifice He required in order to satisfy the righteous requirements of the Law and to bring blessings to all the families of the earth.

What's left? Our response to the complete work is what remains unfinished.

This day is all about Jesus and our remembrance of Him and what it took to make possible our intimate communion with God.

Please use the remainder of your time today to respond to Him in thanksgiving, repentance and confession as needed, linger in communion with Him and leave refreshing your commitment to follow pick up your own cross and follow Him.

We have set the cross for you to journey to, and we have prepared the Lord's Supper for us to receive.

The cross:

We have provided paper & pens and we invite you to write a prayer of thanksgiving, repentance or acceptance of salvation and to then leave it at the foot of the cross. There, symbolic of your commitment to follow the Lord Jesus even into suffering you may pick up a cross and carry it with you today.

The Lord's Supper:

We have provided communion, the Lord's Supper, for you to remember and identify with and be nourished by our Lord.

Jesus took the simple elements of bread and wine and transformed them into profound symbols -- reminders for us of His body and blood, broken and shed, in order to bring us to God.

This afternoon we are reminded of what He has done. Let's focus in particular on the fact that He has done it **for us-- for you!** Your salvation cost Jesus His life and God, His one and only Son.

All who have believed in Jesus and received Him as their savior are welcome to come to the table He has prepared for you.

As you eat the bread know he suffered **for you.** As you taste the cup let it impress you that His blood was shed **for you** and to seal the New Covenant.

Just as the earthly elements of bread and wine sustain temporal life, Jesus broken body and shed blood sustain our eternal life.

Believe in Him. Receive Him. Thank Him! Appreciate Him. Identify with Him. Acknowledge that you live **by** Him. Covenant to live **for** Him and **IN** Him.

We invite you to spend the rest of this time in personal reflection, bringing your prayers to the cross, receiving communion, picking up your cross, and leaving in quiet appreciation of the forgiveness and new life Jesus secured at this great cost.

The Lord God has already richly blessed you by providing the sacrifice required. May you enter into and fully apprehend the blessing of communion with God in Christ Jesus.

Redeem this time now in personal and quiet remembrance. After you have met with your Lord in this room carry your cross with you all weekend and let it be a reminder of God's love and how it came to you through God's miraculous costly provision of Jesus.

- He is the lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world,
- He is the suffering servant of Isaiah,
- the mediator of the new covenant Jeremiah spoke of,
- the seed in the line of Abraham who has brought God's blessing to all family,
- the only one who can deliver us through the waters of God's judgment as pictured by Noah,
- the seed of the woman who dealt a death blow to Satan on that cross.

Come to the cross!

Come to the table!

Go with God who **IS** with you!