

The Last Week of Jesus Christ

PERSONAL THOUGHTS:

It's Friday

As you slept last night...

Jesus was betrayed in the Garden by one of his disciples, Judas (Luke 22:47-48). Jesus was then taken to the former high priest, Annas (John 18:13). Jesus, the King of the Jews, was bound and delivered to Caiaphas, the reigning high priest who just happens to be the son-in-law of Annas (wink, wink). Then Jesus was taken before the Sanhedrin, a group of top ranking religious leaders who were modeled after a council of elders that Moses convened to administer justice to keep Israel pure before their God (see Numbers 11:16). Jesus, the Son of God was bound by man, the creation of God. The entire series of events leads us into what is commonly called "Good Friday."

"Good" Friday?

Jesus must have looked powerless through the events of the night. He looked like a man broken or caught depending on which side you were on. However, throughout the ordeal, Jesus is reminding us that the role that He is portraying is submission to the Father's plan; it is not to be seen as a weakness on the part of Jesus to act against his captors. This is made clear when Peter is told by Jesus during His arrest in the garden, that he had at his disposal "twelve legions of angels" (see Matt. 26:52-54) who could immediately take control of the situation. It is interesting to note that a legion was comprised of 6,000 soldiers. Twelve angelic legions would be 72,000 angels! In 2 Kings 19:35 we read of one angel killing 185,000 men in Sennacherib's army in one night! Powerless? I don't think so. Jesus was playing a part and this is the way it had to be done; it was the will of the Father. Jesus indicates there is something greater being accomplished here - the Scriptures had to be fulfilled. Jesus was being driven by submission to the Father's plan to bring hope to mankind, not self-protection or personal comfort.

"Good" Friday?

In the morning, after the trial and initial beating by the "religious leaders," Jesus is taken to a civil trial in front of Pilate. Pilate is the Roman governor who was in Jerusalem due to the swell in population at the Passover feast. Pilate is charged with keeping the peace in this province. He treats Jesus like a hot-potato and passes Jesus to Herod Antipas - an Edumean, a descendent of Esau, the brother of Jacob (i.e., Israel). He then hands Jesus back to Pilate, who surrenders to the will of the people. Pilate washes his hands of Jesus' fate.

"Good" Friday?

Jesus is paraded through the streets, after being beaten... again. Jesus is directed to a hill outside of Jerusalem - the "hill" or "place of the skull." Jesus is nailed to a Roman cross which is then dropped into a hole in the ground. Jesus will hang on this cross and ask the Father to forgive those who have put him there. He doesn't call down insults or try to convince people of who He really is. Jesus simply does what He has always done - He reaches out to a criminal who hangs on a cross next to Him. You see, Jesus is determined to do the right thing, not the easy thing, not the most popular thing, the right thing. In this moment, to trust the Father is right. To reach out to a person in need is right. To forgive people who have nothing but hatred and malice in their hearts toward Him is right.

Good Friday!

Absolutely! Without Jesus acting in this way I would have no hope. Why? It is because I am the person who has malice in my heart. I am the person who hated Christ. I am the person who needs to be reached. In the actions of Jesus, I find hope to deal with my issues. I find a God who does not give me what I deserve, but meets me at my point of need. It is in my moment-by-moment need that I find the grace of God expressed to me through Jesus Christ.

GOOD FRIDAY!

"Jesus must have looked powerless through the events of the night."

