

THURSDAY, APRIL 2ND, 2026

# THURSDAY BLOG

## *Friday's Good 'Cause Sunday's Coming*

**BY BRYAN MARTINEZ**

It's Thursday. The religious leaders were plotting to kill Jesus. Judas Iscariot, one of his own disciples, chose to betray him for 30 pieces of silver. Jesus has the Passover meal with His disciples. He goes to pray to God the Father in the Garden of Gethsemane. He is then arrested by the temple guards and turned over to Pontius Pilate for questioning. And then we get to Friday. An angry mob is set to choose between 2 men to be killed: Jesus Christ, the child of a poor Nazareth couple, a rabbi who heals and restores... and Barabbas, a dangerous revolutionary, who tears down and destroys.

The mob chooses to free Barabbas, and eventually shouts "Crucify him!" as Jesus' punishment. Jesus is then flogged, beaten, spat on, and mocked. He gets "crowned" with a crown made out of thorns. He then carries his cross 650 yards to a hill called Golgotha. He is then nailed to the cross. He's hoisted up into place. And for 6 hours, he is hanging on the cross, slowly dying until he says His final words: It. Is Finished. We know the story.

But here's the reality of Good Friday: WE are Barabbas. An innocent man, Jesus Christ, died a criminal's death for someone who was obviously and unapologetically guilty. And WE are obviously and unapologetically guilty. The Bible tells us that the entire human race is like Barabbas: "We all went astray like sheep; we all have turned to our own way; and the Lord has punished him for the iniquity of us all (Isaiah 53:6). "There is no one righteous, not even one" (Romans 3:10).

But here's the Good News: Like Barabbas, we have been set free... even though we rightly deserve death. Jesus was crucified for the crimes Barabbas committed. The one who resisted earthly revolution and urged respecting Caesar and paying taxes was crucified for treason while the one who plotted sedition was set free. The cross was meant for Barabbas. The cross was meant, really, for you and I. And that is the promise of Good Friday: The Son of God, the innocent one, pure and holy, God and man, went to that cross not ultimately because Pilate got it wrong or because the crowds lost their minds... but because this was God's divine rescue plan all along. In many ways, that cross was made for Barabbas and it was made for sinners, like you and I, but it was made for Jesus all along.

In those lonely moments on the cross, as a bloody and bruised Jesus gasped for air, the entire burden of sin of God's people was upon him. The earth grew dark. The Father turned his face away. At that moment, the ugliness of sin — Barabbas' sins, our sins, the evil from the beginning to the end of time — was on Jesus' shoulders. He bore our sin. He took our shame. It is the greatest act of love in the world. The Bible tells us that, "He made the one who did not know sin to be sin for us, so that in him we might become the righteousness of God" (2 Corinthians 5:21).

Jesus paid the penalty for sin that we should have paid, but could not bear. And in exchange offers us freedom. Freedom from sin, and reconciliation with the Creator. "For as in Adam all die, so also in Christ shall all be made alive," (1 Corinthians 15:22). This idea that Christ is our substitute, that he took on the full wrath of God in our place, is central to understanding the true meaning of Easter.

Barabbas walked free. No charges against him. And so do you if you know Jesus as Savior and Lord. "There is therefore now no condemnation," we read in Romans, "to those who are in Christ" (Romans 8:1). You bear no guilt. You carry no shame. You are reconciled back to the Creator who created you. The innocent one nailed to the cross was nailed there for you. He bore your sins and took your punishment so you could have eternal life. That is why we know it as GOOD Friday.

I pray that you will join us this weekend. There's 3 opportunities for you to join us. Come join us on Good Friday, April 3 at 7:00 PM as we remember and reflect on the sacrifice of Jesus Christ. Join us Saturday at 6:00 PM or Sunday at 10:30 AM as we celebrate the hope of the resurrection. We are expecting the building to be FULL as we worship the Name above every name.

Friday is GOOD... because Sunday is coming.

