

Friday, April 2 – **Good Friday**

Readings: Isaiah 52:13—53:12
Psalm 22
Hebrews 10:16-25
John 18:1—19:42

Prayer: *Merciful God, your Son was lifted up on the cross to draw all people to himself. Grant that we who have been born out of his wounded side may at all times find mercy in him, Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. Amen*⁷⁸

Focal Verse: “Surely he has borne our infirmities and carried our diseases; yet we accounted him stricken, struck down by God, and afflicted. ⁵But he was wounded for our transgressions, crushed for our iniquities; upon him was the punishment that made us whole, and by his bruises we are healed.” Isaiah 53:4

Reflection:

It “the world’s” big picture, money is power. In Pilate’s day, with the Roman military backing him up, military might made one powerful. Either by way of naked force or money, power is persuasive. Still, with power also comes responsibility. Rome boasted that everyone living within the boundaries of its authority was due justice. In our lesson today the falsity of that claim is too evident even to point out.

Christian stewardship reflects the truth that how we do something may be as important as what we do. The Christian faith is not utilitarian, in other words. We do not merely look at the bottom line; we look at how we arrived at the bottom line. This means for a steward that “the means to an end result” are as important as the end itself. Perhaps God could have thundered humankind into salvation, but God used Jesus’ self-sacrifice for divine purposes. Accordingly, the Christian faith makes little sense to our managed, linear, logical, rational ways of doing business with the world. Maybe this is why the world rejects Jesus. God’s means to the end just don’t make human sense.

In our world of efficiency and utility, the gospel reminds stewards that how we offer ourselves and our talents to God and others is often as crucial as our offering the gifts and talents in the first place. The way we give food and drink to strangers at our door ways a lot about how we exercise power and authority with those who have little.⁷⁹

Stewardship Principle

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Live genuinely

means putting your faith into action. This is the tangible demonstration of what is sincerely on our hearts and where our treasure is, not simply a verbal expression. The Macadonians set an example that Paul called to the attention of the Corinthians.

“I am testing the genuineness of your love against the earnestness of others.”
2 Corinthians 8:8

What do you hear?

How does it make you feel?

Toward what are you being drawn?

What do you sense you should do?

⁷⁸ Evangelical Lutheran Worship

⁷⁹ Mosser, David, *The Stewardship Companion*, Westminster John Knox Press, © 2007, p. 33.