

Good Friday

Three Hours at the Cross I

Noon

A notable feature of the last year of lockdown and living restricted lives has been the strangeness of time: we lost our temporal landmarks. If you have not said it yourself, you will I am sure have heard someone else say “I can’t tell which day of the week it is!”

Mark’s Gospel is alone in telling us what happened every day of Holy Week. No other Gospel does this, but Mark’s narrative is carefully constructed around the days of that week. We will use the time of each of the half hours of the service to consider each of those days Jesus, his followers and others experienced, comparing the days of the week we traditionally have experienced, the more recent, more anonymous days of the virus, and, as we approach more relaxed times ahead, the days of the weeks we are expecting. We will reflect on this in parallel to the six hours of the crucifixion, the timings of which Mark is also careful to record.

Mark tells us nothing about the Saturday and some believers will not speak at all between the end of this service and the opening of worship on Sunday. Please use the time, especially the silences to reflect on moments when you recognised any of your own reality and self in the readings, poems, music or addresses, to speak quietly to the Christ of the Cross and to listen for his message to you today.

Sunday Bloody Sunday

“I can’t believe the news today. . . ”

Almighty God, who hastest nothing that thou hast made and forgives the sins of all them that are penitent: Create and make in us new and contrite hearts, that we, worthily lamenting our sins and acknowledging our wretchedness, may obtain of thee the God of all mercy perfect remission and forgiveness, through Jesus Christ our Lord, Amen.

Psalm 36 *Dixit injustus*

My heart sheweth me the wickedness of the ungodly : that there is no fear of God before his eyes.

For he flattereth himself in his own sight : until his abominable sin be found out.

The words of his mouth are unrighteous, and full of deceit : he hath left off to behave himself wisely, and to do good.

He imagineth mischief upon his bed, and hath set himself in no good way : neither would he abhor any thing that is evil.

Thy mercy, O Lord, reacheth unto the heavens : and thy faithfulness unto the clouds.

Thy righteousness standeth like the strong mountains : thy judgements are like the great deep.

Thou, Lord, shalt save both man and beast; how excellent is thy mercy, O God : and the children of men shall put their trust under the shadow of thy wings.

They shall be satisfied with the plenteousness of thy house : and thou shalt give them drink of thy pleasures, as out of the river.

For with thee is the well of life : and in thy light shall we see light.

O continue forth thy loving-kindness unto them that know thee : and thy righteousness unto them that are true of heart.

O let not the foot of pride come against me : and let not the hand of the ungodly cast me down.

There are they fallen, all that work wickedness : they are cast down, and shall not be able to stand.

Reading: Mark 11. 1 – 11.

Jesus of the Scars

*Edward Shillito
World War 1 Veteran
Free church Minister
(1876-1948)*

If we have never sought you,
we seek you now;
Your eyes burn through the dark, our only stars;
We must have sight of thorn-marks on your brow,
We must have you, O Jesus of the scars.

The heavens frighten us;
they are too calm;
In all the universe we have no place.
Our wounds are hurting us; where is the balm?
Lord Jesus, by your scars
we know your grace.

If, when the doors are shut,
you then draw near,
Only reveal those bloodied feet and hands .
We know today what wounds are, have no fear;
Show us your scars,
we know you understand

The other gods were strong;
but you were weak;
They rode, but Jesus stumbled to a throne;
But to our wounds only God's wounds can speak,
And not a god has wounds,
but You alone

Address

Music

Silence

[at 12:30] The Lord's Prayer.