



[Pastor Keith GeRue](#)

Sermon for Good Friday

April 7, 2023

When Push Comes to Shove, God is Love

Isaiah 52:13-53:12; Psalm 22; John 18-19

In the Name of the Father, and of the † Son, and of the Holy Spirit. Amen.

We are inconvenienced from time to time. Cars break down, power outages, sickness, too much work, and the list goes on and on. If you're like me you're not happy about that. Grumble a bit.

But really, this is nothing. And it is *really* nothing compared to what Jesus went through for us this day. This Good Friday. What He went through because we pushed God out of our lives. For that's really what sin is. Sorry God, I want this, I want to do this, I want to be this, so you're out. Out of this part of my life, at least. Or that part. Adam and Eve were the first, but they weren't the last. This pushing out has been repeated by every single person since. No exceptions.

And the result of pushing God out of their life, for Adam and Eve, was being pushed out of the Garden. To a world of hardship, toil, and trouble. Do you want life without God? OK, here it is. And it was not good. We've created a world of hardship, toil, and trouble, too. And others have inflicted theirs on us. And God saw all that we have created, and behold, it was *very not* good. And the result of this, the consequence for this, is being pushed out of eternal life. Do you want life without God? OK, here it is. *It is called dying.*

And every man and woman, boy and girl, has been dying ever since.

But today is called Good Friday, not Bad Friday. Today is the day we see like no other that while we have pushed God out of our lives - or at least part of my life, when I sin - **God is not so easily pushed.** He comes back. He doesn't stay away. He wants us back. He wants us to live.

So, He dies. He is born into our world for this purpose. He is a teacher, He is an example for us, **but He was born to die for us.** To become the pushed out one, taking our place, taking our sin. So, He is *forsaken*. He is *stricken, smitten by God, and afflicted*. He *bears our griefs and carries our sorrows*. He is the *lamb led to slaughter*. And when He raised His arms on the cross, it was not to push us away, but to gather us to Himself. To gather us up and take us back to God in the forgiveness of our sins. To forgive us for those very sins that pushed Him out and put Him there.

So, we've been inconvenienced from time to time. Perhaps that is good. Our life in this world of sin shouldn't be too comfortable. *It should* be a struggle against sin, a battle against evil. We live pushed



[Pastor Keith GeRue](#)

Sermon for Good Friday

April 7, 2023

out lives in this world. The world pushing out the truth, pushing out love, pushing out Jesus, and those who belong to Him.

But just as God is not so easily pushed, neither should we be. So when pushed with sin, we respond with forgiveness. When pushed with hate, we respond with love. When pushed with falsehood, we speak the truth in love. When pushed aside and trampled, we respond with care and prayer. We may be stricken, smitten, and afflicted by the world, but we won't be by God. Because Jesus was for us. That's why our prayer is not *My God, My God, why have you forsaken me?* In fact, our prayer should be, *My God, My God, why haven't you forsaken me?* For that's what we deserve. But the answer is the same. Jesus. He was forsaken for us, so we will never be.

And He was on a Good Friday. A Friday of goodness. And this wasn't an inconvenience for God. He wasn't busy doing other things in other places, and then throw His hands up in disgust, having to stop what He was doing, and come and save us. No. This is who God is. When you see Jesus on the cross, you see God as He wants to be seen, as He wants to be known, as He IS. The cross was not an interruption, an inconvenience, or a Plan B - the cross is God loving us, and loving us to the end (John 13:1). So, He loved us in a world and life without end.

We've heard that account again tonight. The candles went out. The room grows dark. But as the darkness grows, so does the light. The light of God's love, shining from the cross. The light that shines even in the darkness of death.

But one thing in that account that you've heard tonight . . . a small, insignificant detail, that maybe isn't so small or insignificant at all. It is the inscription that Pilate put on the cross, over Jesus. The charges against Him. It read, ***Jesus of Nazareth, the King of the Jews***. The Jews didn't want that. They pushed back on Pilate, wanted Pilate to change it, to read, This man *said*, this man *claimed*, He is our king. But ***Pilate answered, "What I have written I have written."*** It was the truth Pilate had asked about earlier, when he asked, ***What is truth?*** He got it right.

What is also right is the inscription God wrote and put - not *above you* - but on you. When you were baptized and marked with the sign of the cross and His Name was put upon you. *Christian*. The world doesn't want that. Pushes back on that. Says: *you're no Christian!* You may *say* you are, *claim* to be, but look at your life, your sin. You're no better, no different than the rest. And perhaps they are right. There certainly is never a shortage of reasons for us to repent. But when the world, and Satan, and even our own sinful nature push back and say *you're no Christian!* It is God who pushes back and says: *Yes, yes you are!* What I have written I have written. You are mine. Not because of what you do, but because of what I have done. Not because you're good, but because of Good Friday. Because my good Son died to make you good again. And when push comes to shove, that love, that forgiveness, that life, that Word, that promise, wins every time.



[Pastor Keith GeRue](#)

Sermon for Good Friday

April 7, 2023

So, it really is a Good Friday. Inconvenient, perhaps. But our life in this world of sin shouldn't be too comfortable. Our rest is coming. Now it is for us to love and forgive, even as we are embraced in the love, forgiveness, and life of our Savior. Our Savior who pushed out and swallowed up sin and death for us. Who died that we might live.

In the Name of the Father, and of the † Son, and of the Holy Spirit. Amen