

If you've ever heard someone say thank God its Friday, or said it yourself in a dog-tired tone, then you probably already know what this is about. It's that feeling of exhaustion and overload, a burden too long carried. It's a condition that is so common they even made a movie about it. TGIF is a signal, a warning that your life is out of balance.

All of us have bad days from time to time. They seem to come out of nowhere and can affect the whole of life (personal, family, business, etc.). A bad day is not necessarily 24 hours, but a season of stress of difficulty. You may be thinking, 'one bad day wouldn't be so bad', but they keep coming.

If you want to talk about having a bad day- a day of incredible, exhausting, literally death-dealing suffering-Good Friday certainly would qualify. It's a day Jesus was rejected by people he was depending on. All the things that constitute human bad days-days like we all go through from time to time-are focused in this one. None of us have ever had a day like he experienced.

So with all the bad things that happened, with all the pain and suffering Jesus went through, why do we call it Good Friday? Some may ask what good could

come out of all that suffering. Let me tell you plenty let me just name a few.

CHRIST DIED FOR SINS ONCE FORALL. CHRIST'S DEATH WAS TO BRING US TO GOD. CHRIST'S DEATH WAS IN THE FLESH

The great truth of the incarnation is that God became flesh and was born as a baby. I love the language of John 1:14 where it says that he became flesh and dwelt among us. The literal Greek uses a word that was used in the Old Testament to describe the Tabernacle. God "tented" with us.

What we see here is the reason for it all. He became flesh in order to die. His hands and His feet were formed for the nails. His side was scheduled for the spear. His brow was destined for the crown of thorns. God could not suffer and die, so He took on flesh that could.

We are the only people in all of human history who worship a god who has wounds. Those wounds are the only man-made thing that will ever make it into heaven. They are a testimony of His love for us. Jesus laid down his life; no one took it away from him. There was not one Jewish person who killed Jesus. There was not one Roman soldier who took his life and as hard as Satan tried to end Jesus'

life, he fought to stay alive so he could die on the cross because he knew that was the only way to save us from eternal death.

CHRIST'S DEATH WAS NOT PERMANENT: St Peter tells us "For Christ also died for sins once for all, the just for the unjust, in order that He might bring us to God, having been put to death in the flesh, but made alive in the spirit" (1 Peter 3:18).

We asked the question at the onset, "What's so good about Good Friday?" The answer is that Sunday is coming. Though we remember His death, there would be no cause of rejoicing apart from the resurrection. He died and rose again and because we have been joined to Him in faith, we have died and arisen to a new life.

Christ is both our substitute and our representative. A substitute is one who acts in place of another in such a way as to render the other's action unnecessary.

A representative is one who acts on behalf of another in such a way as to involve the other in his action.

Christ is BOTH. Christ was our Substitute and Christ is our Representative

He is our substitute with regard to sin He is our representative with regard to righteousness He is our substitute in death and our representative in His resurrection

As He was made alive by the Spirit, so also both our future resurrection as well as our resurrection life today is by that same Spirit. Our Sunday is coming, and there is a sense in which it is already here.

As Christ has been our substitute in death and our representative in resurrection, so we are now called to consider ourselves crucified, dead, buried and now risen into a new life of service for Him.

What does that mean for us today living in the 21st century? It means that we are the present manifestation to the world of the risen Christ. The disciples were able to see the risen Jesus. Thomas got to see the nail prints in His hands. The world has... US.

"Except I shall see in his hands the print of the nails..." What Thomas said of Christ, the world is saying about the church. The world is saying that to every one of you: Unless I see in your hands the print of the nails, I will not believe. So when they ask, you tell them the truth of Christ and then you show them the love of Christ. That's what makes this Friday a Good Friday. That's what makes this story not a story of death but one of life.