

Good Friday Meditations and Prayers

*Today the carpenter's hands are nailed to a cross, the King of kings is crowned with thorns.
Today he sets us free, himself imprisoned on a tree.*

Scripture

Psalm 22

John 18-19

Opening Prayer

Holy and loving God, as we prepare to set aside our busyness and to focus intently on Jesus' suffering and death, we ask for eyes to see all of the amazing things that Jesus' death means for understanding you, your love, and our salvation. In Jesus' name we pray. Amen.

Great God, our Father: As we remember Christ's suffering in Gethsemane, our hearts are filled with shame that we foolishly waste our time in idleness and that we make little to no progress in the Christian life from day to day. We lament that war and lust flourish and grow more rampant every day. Forgive us for our cruel indifference to the cross. Teach us the good news of your forgiveness. Allow humanity, degenerate as it is, to live anew, and hasten the day when the whole world shall be born again. Amen

Loving God, we know that you love us, so we confess that we have let you down. Every day we betray you, deny you, misunderstand you, crucify you. We betray you when we are selfish or unkind. We deny you when we do not speak out for justice and truth. We misunderstand you when we justify our actions by misquoting your teaching. We are truly sorry, and we wait for your word of love. Through Christ, our Lord. Amen.

The Traditional Last Seven Words of Jesus

"Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do."

Loving Father, to whom your crucified Son prayed for the forgiveness of those who did not know what they were doing, grant that we too may be included in that prayer. Whether we sin out of ignorance or intention, be merciful to us and grant us your acceptance and peace in the name of Jesus Christ, our suffering Savior. Amen.

"Truly I say to you, today you will be with me in Paradise."

O Lord Jesus Christ, who promised to the repentant the joy of paradise, enable us by the Holy Spirit to repent and to receive your grace in this world and in the world to come. Amen.

"Woman, behold your son. . . . Behold your mother."

O blessed Savior, in your hour of greatest suffering you expressed compassion for your mother and made arrangements for her care; grant that we who seek to follow your example may show our concern for the needs of others, reaching out to provide for those who suffer in our human family. Hear this our prayer for your mercy's sake. Amen.

"*Eloi, Eloi, lama sabachthani?*" ("My God, my God, why have you forsaken me?")

**O Lord, I call for help by day, and in the night I still must cry. Regard me, listen to my prayer.
My soul is troubled; I am weak, cut off as one whom you forsake, forgotten near the pit of death.
Your wrath weighs heavy on me here. Your angry waves upon me break. Friends watch in horror from afar.
I am shut in without escape. My eyes are dim because I weep. My hands are lifted up to you.
Do you work wonders for the dead? Can graves tell out your mighty deeds? There, who can know that you can save?
Lord, do not hide your face from me. You have afflicted me from youth. Your anger is destroying me.
Your flood of anger closes in. The darkness is my closest friend— shunned and forsaken, all alone. Amen.**

“I thirst.”

O blessed Savior, whose lips were dry and whose throat was parched, grant us the water of life, that we who thirst after righteousness may find it quenched by your love and mercy, leading us to bring this same relief to others. Amen.

“It is finished.”

O Lord Jesus Christ, you finished the work that you were sent to do; enable us by your Holy Spirit to be faithful to our call. Grant us strength to bear our crosses and endure our sufferings, even unto death. Enable us to live and love so faithfully that we also become good news to the world, joining your witness, O Christ, in whose name we pray. Amen.

“Father, into your hands I commit my spirit.”

Father, into whose hands your Son, Jesus Christ, commended his spirit, grant that we too, following his example, may in all of life and at the moment of our death entrust our lives into your faithful hands of love. In the name of Jesus, who gave his life for us all. Amen.

based on Psalm 88; Mark 15:34; Luke 23:34, 43, 46; John 19:26-30

Closing Prayer

May you find in the cross a sure ground for faith, a firm support for hope, and the assurance of sins forgiven. And may the blessing of God go with you, now and forevermore. Amen.

May the Christ who walks on wounded feet walk with you on the road. May the Christ who serves with wounded hands stretch out your hands to serve. May the Christ who loves with a wounded heart open your hearts to love. May you see the face of Christ in everyone you meet, and may everyone you meet see the face of Christ in you. Amen