



# ONE VOICE



Churches: ♦Bethany ♦Immanuel ♦Lunder ♦Silver Lake ♦Winnebago

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## From the Pastor's Desk

*"Aha! You who would destroy the Temple and build it three days, save yourself, and come down from the cross!" In the same way the chief priests, along with the Scribes were also mocking him among themselves and saying, "He saved others; he cannot save himself. Let the Messiah, the King of Israel, come down from the cross now, so that we may see and believe." Mark 15:29b-32a*



Three times Jesus had taught his disciples on the way to Jerusalem, that he would be handed over to the Elders, be rejected, mocked, killed and raised from the dead on the third day. Now Jesus is living out his teaching. On the eve before Passover, Jesus began the Observance by washing the feet of the disciples, setting for them an example to follow. Jesus gives us the gift of His Supper, telling his disciples to take and eat it is his body broken for you and take and drink it is my blood shed for you. After this intimate time, things went down hill and the teaching of his suffering and death began to be fulfilled.

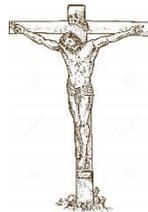


First, Jesus told them that one of them would betray him. Shortly, after these words, Judas Iscariot left the table to go find the Chief Priests. Jesus tells Simon Peter that he will deny even knowing him three times before the rooster crows twice. Jesus looks at his friends and tells them they will abandon him. Of course, they all deny it, especially Peter. Then Jesus leads the disciples out to the Garden of Gethsemane. Jesus struggles with the suffering he is about to face. Jesus prays so fiercely that he sweat drops of blood. Three times Jesus prayed, "Father if it is possible remove this cup from me, but not my will, but thy will be done."



After his time in prayer, Jesus is ready to face what is to come. Judas Iscariot and the guards from the Temple enter the garden, just as Jesus finishes his time in prayer. Judas betrays him with a kiss. The disciples all run off into the darkness. Peter follows from a distance, only to deny even knowing Jesus three times and the rooster crows the second time and Jesus knows, his best friend had denied him three times. The Chief Priest figures he has Jesus right where he wants him. But the false witnesses stories don't add up. So Caiaphas asked Jesus, "Are you the Messiah, the Son of God?" Jesus answers truthfully, "I am." Jesus is rejected by the Elders, mocked. Jesus is beaten. The crowds call for his crucifixion and Pontius Pilate has Jesus scourged with the whip and crucified.

Hanging on the cross, his body beaten, nails piercing his wrists and feet, a crown of thorns pushed onto his head, the Chief Priests and the Scribes glory in their victory and mock Jesus. *"He saved others, he cannot save himself. Let the Messiah, the King of Israel, come down from the cross now, so that we may see and believe."*



What would have happened if Jesus decided, he had had enough? What if Jesus nodded to the twelve legions of angels with swords drawn came and surrounded Jesus? What if

Jesus transfigured into his glory, like had on the mountaintop with Peter, James and John witnessing Jesus talking with Moses and Elijah? What if he came down from the cross in his glory and confronted Caiaphas as the Son of God? What if he walked back to the Temple in his power and glory and confronted Pontius Pilate with his twelve legions of angels taking to task those who whipped and mocked the Son of God? Then what? Jesus' enemies of the Chief Priest, Pontius Pilate, the Roman Guards, the jeering crowds would have been defeated. But then what? What would happen to us?

This is the question Jesus was thinking about as he listened to the taunts of the Priests and the crowd. Jesus was thinking about you. Jesus and the Father had conversations about you and me. Jesus and the Father came up with a plan to bring you into their love. Instead of defeating the Roman guards Jesus stayed on the cross. Instead of challenging the taunts of the Chief Priests and scribes, Jesus stays on the cross. Jesus stays on the cross for you.

Jesus came to defeat the powers of sin and death and Satan, the powers that try to separate you from his Father and himself. Jesus had his heart and mind on you as he hung on that cross. Jesus knew that you would become lost in the brokenness of sin, the sin of the world and your sin. Jesus could not bear leaving you in the grasp of sin and its power to break and destroy you. Jesus knew that one day, your heart would be broken as you lost a loved one to death. Jesus knew that your heart could be terrified of death. Jesus looked at Satan and declared, that Satan was done holding sway over you. Jesus stayed on the cross. Jesus took our sins, our punishment of death onto himself. Jesus died. For three days Satan thought he had won.

On the third day, early in the morning, Mary Magdalen, Mary the mother of Joses and Salome went to the tomb in grief and sorrow to anoint Jesus' body in burial spices. But the stone was rolled away from the tomb. The tomb was empty. Jesus had taken his life back. Jesus had taken your redemption into his hands. Jesus rose victoriously defeating sin, death, and Satan. Jesus appeared to his disciples and he reconciled with his friends. Jesus reconciles you to the Father. Jesus removes the shackles of sin and death from upon you and sets you free. Jesus has the authority as the Risen Crucified Son of God, to forgive your sins and give you the gift of eternal life. Jesus pursues you and brings you into a relationship with him and the Father, a relationship of love that will never let you go. When Jesus was on the cross, he was thinking of you, thinking of setting you free, from sin, death and Satan. Jesus defeated them and Jesus sets you free.



*Pastor Randy*



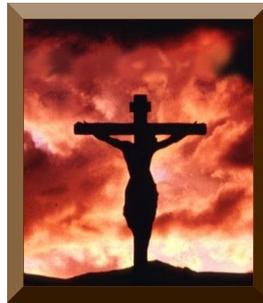
# WANDERINGS AND WONDERINGS



Hope. What would we do ... what would our lives be like ... if we had no hope? We have all had a time ... we have all been there ... we have all wondered "is it hopeless." That may be how we feel, but we know God! A



God who has claimed us ... and saved us! When we read Jesus' cry from the cross "My God, my God, why have you forsaken me?" – we are taken aback ... stopped dead in our tracks ... how could Jesus say that? Jesus is quoting Psalm 22. I believed he is reciting the whole Psalm, not just the first verse. Let me remind you, the psalms are emotional outbursts. It is what the writer feels, not necessarily what he knows or what he ultimately believes. Read Psalm 22 (we will read it during holy week), and don't get lost in the first verse. The writer is greatly despaired ... when Jesus recites this psalm, he feels abandoned ... but the writer, Jesus, and we ... know God. We know God ... we know what God has done ... and we know what God promises to do. We know God.



In the past, I have shared some stories of Tony Campolo. The only thing better than a story from Tony Campolo, is listening to a story told by Tony Campolo. I'm going to share another, I believe one of his favorites ... one that uses the experience(s) of Holy Week to speak to us in our needs today.



Tony Campolo belonged to an African American church in West Philadelphia. And they often gave him the opportunities to

preach. *"One Good Friday there were seven of us preaching back to back. When it was my turn to preach, I rolled into high gear, and I want to tell you, I was good ... I was real good. The more I preached, the more the people in that congregation "turned on," and the more they "turned on," the better I got. I got better and better and better. I got so good that I wanted to take notes on myself. At the end of my message, the congregation broke loose. I was absolutely thrilled to hear the hallelujahs and the cries of joy that broke loose throughout the place. I sat down next my pastor and he looked at me with a smile. He reached down with his hand and squeezed my knee. "You did all right!" he said.*

*I turned to him and asked, "pastor, are you going to be able to top that?" The old man smiled at me and he said, "Son, you just sit back, "cause this old man is going to do you in!"*

*I didn't figure that anybody could have done me in that day. I had been so good ... But the old guy got up, and I have to admit, he did me in. The amazing thing was that he did it with the use of one line. For an hour and a half he preached one line over and over again. For an hour and a half he stood that crowd on its ear with just one line. That statement may not blow you away, but you should have heard him do it. He started his sermon real softly by saying, "It was Friday, it was Friday, and my Jesus was dead on the tree. But that was Friday, and Sunday's comin'!"*





## WANDERINGS AND WONDERINGS CONTINUED



One of the deacons yelled, “Preach, brother! Preach!” it was all the encouragement that he needed. He came on louder as he said, “it was Friday, and Mary was cryin’ her eyes out. The disciples were runnin’ in every direction, like sheep without a shelpherd, but that was Friday, and Sunday’s comin’!” People in the congregation were beginning to pick up the message. Women were waving their hands in the air and calling softly, “Well, well.” Some of the men were yelling, “keep going! Keep going!”

The preacher kept going. He picked up the volume still more and shouted, “it was Friday. The cynics were lookin’ at the world and sayin’, ‘as things have been so they shall be. You can’t change anything in this world, youi can’t change anything.’ But those cynics didn’t know that it was only Friday. Sunday’s Comin’!” it was Friday! And on Friday, those forces that oppress the poor and make the poor to suffer were in control. But that was Friday! Sunday’s comin’!

“It was Friday, and on Friday Pilate thought he had washed his hands of a lot of trouble. The Pharisees were struttin’ around, laughin’ and pokin’ each other in the ribs. They thought they were back in charge of things, but they didn’t know that it was only Friday! Sunday’s comin’!”

He kept on working that one phrase for a half-hour, then an hour, then an hour and a quarter, then an hour and a half. Over and over he came at us, “it’s Friday, but Sunday’s Comin’!”

By the time he had come to the end of the message, I was exhausted. He had me and everybody else so worked up that I don’t think

any of us could have stood it much longer. At the end of his message he just yelled at the top of his lungs, “IT’S FRIDAY!” and all five hundred of us in that church yelled back with one accord, “SUNDAY’S COMIN’!”

That’s the Good News. That is the word that he world is waiting to hear. That’s what we have got to go out there and tell the world’s people. When they are psychologically depressed, we have to tell them that Sunday’s coming. When they feel that they can never know love again, we have got to tell them that Sunday’s coming. When they have lost their belief in the miraculous so that they no longer expect great things from God, we must tell them that Sunday’s coming.

We must go to a world that is suffering economic injustice and political oppression and tell them that Sunday’s coming. The world may be filled with five million hungry.

Half of the planet may be under the tyranny of Communist domination. Dictators may rule in Latin America; people my find their

rights abridged and their hopes under attack. But I am not ashamed of the Gospel of Christ, because to all those who are on the brink of despair, I can yell at the top of my lungs, “IT’S FRIDAY, BUT SUNDAY’S COMIN’!”

We live our lives ... we live in a world ... we experience are share of Fridays. But let us never forget, “SUNDAY IS A COMIN’!”

Wanderings and Wonderings,  
Pastor Bill Peters





