

# GOOD FRIDAY

— Worship Resource —



## INSTRUCTIONS

The following is a Good Friday Worship Service written by Rev. Dr. Ken Foo based on the last seven words of Christ from the cross.

Please feel free to adapt the content to fit your congregational context. All scripture quoted is from the NIV – feel free to adjust this to the version your congregation is most comfortable with (e.g. ESV, NLT, NKJV, etc.). This material can involve other members of your church to participate and read the scriptures, commentary, and reflection questions, or one person can cover all these sections.

## SOME SUGGESTIONS

- Darken the sanctuary as much as possible with minimal lighting and allow the mood to feel somber.
- Optional: Have 7 pre-lit candles across the communion table and extinguish a candle after each reading.
- If using multiple readers, have all participants spread out across the front of the sanctuary. If you are limited by microphones, have each reader come forward to the microphone at their designated reading time.
- A printed bulletin with all the references and questions can be helpful and allow for congregants to take something home with them.
- If using a projector, reveal the words at the conclusion of each scripture reading. (Feel free to use our template).

## MUSICAL PRELUDE

## WORD OF WELCOME/INSTRUCTION

Welcome to [name of church] for our Good Friday service.

Today/This evening our service may look and feel slightly different. We will be taking some time to hear the Seven Last Words of Jesus from the cross. During each segment we will hear the scriptures along with some reflective commentary, and invite you to a time of silent reflection where you can think, write down your thoughts, pray, or sit in silence.

Let us begin with a Call to Worship.

## CALL TO WORSHIP

Our Call to Worship is taken from Isaiah 53:1-3 (NIV):

Who has believed our message  
and to whom has the arm of the Lord been revealed?  
He grew up before him like a tender shoot,  
and like a root out of dry ground.  
He had no beauty or majesty to attract us to him,  
nothing in his appearance that we should desire him.  
He was despised and rejected by mankind,  
a man of suffering, and familiar with pain.  
Like one from whom people hide their faces  
he was despised, and we held him in low esteem.

## SONG OF WORSHIP

### **Song Suggestions:**

**Hymn:** *“When I Survey the Wondrous Cross”* – Isaac Watts

**Song:** *“How Deep the Father’s Love for Us”* – Stuart Townend

## PRAYER OF INVOCATION

Merciful God, as we remember how Jesus bore our sins on the cross, we ask that you help us hear His words as we gather. As we remember Christ’s final hours may it stir in us a greater and deeper appreciation of the finished work of Christ. May we grasp the mystery of Your love and may it stir in us a desire to share this good news with others. Amen.

## THE SEVEN LAST WORDS OF JESUS



### THE FIRST WORD

“Father, forgive them, for they do not know what they are doing.”

When they came to the place called the Skull, they crucified him there, along with the criminals—one on his right, the other on his left. Jesus said, “Father, forgive them, for they do not know what they are doing.” And they divided up his clothes by casting lots.

– Luke 23:33-34 (NIV)

### COMMENTARY

Forgiveness is something we want when we are in the wrong, but we struggle to give it when someone has wronged us. Rather than forgive, we turn to anger, revenge, hurtful words, spiteful thoughts, or vindictive actions, even for the smallest slight against us. Jesus’ radical instructions are to love our enemies, pray for those who persecute us, and forgive, no matter how often we have been wronged. Jesus modelled this forgiveness after being beaten, whipped, mocked, spat on, and nailed to the cross. Jesus asks His Father to forgive them, because they do not know what they are doing.

### REFLECTION

1. Take a moment to reflect on the forgiveness that Jesus extended even in the midst of His suffering.
2. Consider times when you have been forgiven and those moments when forgiveness is needed in your life.
3. Is there someone you need to forgive today?

### PRAYER

Loving Father, grant us the grace to forgive as Jesus forgave. Help us release the burden of resentment and extend mercy to those who have wronged us.

### EXTINGUISHING THE CANDLE

Lord Jesus – You gave Your life for us. You suffered and died that we might live.

## THE SEVEN LAST WORDS OF JESUS



### THE SECOND WORD

“Today you will be in paradise with me.”

One of the criminals who hung there hurled insults at him: “Aren’t you the Messiah? Save yourself and us!” But the other criminal rebuked him. “Don’t you fear God,” he said, “since you are under the same sentence? We are punished justly, for we are getting what our deeds deserve. But this man has done nothing wrong.” Then he said, “Jesus, remember me when you come into your kingdom.” Jesus answered him, “Truly I tell you, today you will be with me in paradise.” – Luke 23:39-43 (NIV)

### COMMENTARY

Criminals were being crucified on either side of Jesus. They deserved to be there. They were getting exactly what they deserved, unlike Jesus. That criminal did not pray the sinner’s prayer, did not go to church, did not attend a Bible study, did not get baptized, did not memorize Bible verses. God worked in him to call out to Jesus for salvation. The same amazing grace given to this criminal from Jesus is the same amazing grace afforded to you, to me and to others. As Christ hung on that cross, He granted salvation to anyone who came to Him for it.

### REFLECTION

1. Take a moment to reflect on the amazing grace that Jesus extends.
2. Have you received this grace? Talk to Jesus, talk to a pastor or Christian friend/family member to know more.
3. Is there someone you know that needs to hear this message? Pray for them.

### PRAYER

Gracious Lord, grant us the assurance of Your presence in our lives and the hope of eternal communion with You.

### EXTINGUISHING THE CANDLE

Lord Jesus – You gave Your life for us. You suffered and died that we might live.

## THE SEVEN LAST WORDS OF JESUS



### THE THIRD WORD

“Woman, here is your son. Here is your mother.”

Near the cross of Jesus stood his mother, his mother’s sister, Mary the wife of Clopas, and Mary Magdalene. When Jesus saw his mother there, and the disciple whom he loved standing nearby, he said to her, “Woman, here is your son,” and to the disciple, “Here is your mother.” From that time on, this disciple took her into his home.

– John 19:25-27 (NIV)

### COMMENTARY

At this point some of the women from Jesus’ ministry stayed while Jesus hung on the cross. John was the only disciple that stayed until the end. Imagine Mary, the mother of Jesus, watching her son die like a criminal instead of a conquering king. Imagine the pain, the anguish, the grief, the tears and screams. In this moment, Jesus still knew that someone would need to look after his earthly mother. He doesn’t ask John, “Take care of my mother.” Jesus instead redefined the relationship and from there the rest would follow.

### REFLECTION

1. Jesus invites us into a relationship with Him. How has Jesus defined this relationship with you?
2. How are your relationships with others? Where can there be improvement?
3. How open is your church community to new relationships with newcomers, new adherents, new members? Where can there be improvement?

### PRAYER

Lord Jesus, teach us to care for one another as You cared for Your mother and disciples. Help us build communities of love and support.

### EXTINGUISHING THE CANDLE

Lord Jesus – You gave Your life for us. You suffered and died that we might live.

## THE SEVEN LAST WORDS OF JESUS



### THE FOURTH WORD

“My God, my God, why have you forsaken me?”

At noon, darkness came over the whole land until three in the afternoon. And at three in the afternoon Jesus cried out in a loud voice, “Eloi, Eloi, lema sabachthani?” (which means “My God, my God, why have you forsaken me?”).

– Mark 15:33-34 (NIV)

### COMMENTARY

Jesus has been abandoned by his disciples and in this moment He cries out from Psalm 22. Jesus bears the punishment for all the sins ever committed by His people – past, present and future – and here He experiences the Father’s wrath and abandonment. It is both a human and divine outcrying of Christ. His earthly relationships have abandoned Him and His divine eternal nature is experiencing separation from the Holy Trinity.

### REFLECTION

1. Contemplate the depth of Jesus’ isolation and abandonment.
2. How would you gauge the distance you are experiencing with God? Is He near or far?  
Are you near or far?

### PRAYER

Lord, in moments of despair, remind us of Your enduring presence and grant us the strength to trust in Your plan even when it is beyond our understanding.

### EXTINGUISHING THE CANDLE

Lord Jesus – You gave Your life for us. You suffered and died that we might live.

### ANTHEM OF PRAISE

#### Song Suggestions:

**Hymn:** “*Jesus Paid it All*” – Elvina Hall

**Song:** “*Lead Me to the Cross*” – Brooke Fraser

## THE SEVEN LAST WORDS OF JESUS



### THE FIFTH WORD

“I am thirsty.”

Later, knowing that everything had now been finished, and so that Scripture would be fulfilled, Jesus said, “I am thirsty.” – John 19:28 (NIV)

### COMMENTARY

As Jesus hangs on the cross, the instrument of torture and death, His body weakening, He calls out for the most basic element we need for survival: water. His mouth is parched, tongue swollen, throat raspy. Water would keep Him alive just a few moments longer. The irony of this moment is that Jesus provided Himself as Living Water, that whoever receives Him will never thirst again. In these final moments, He calls out in thirst.

### REFLECTION

1. Reflect on the spiritual longing and search for meaning in your own life.
2. What are the ways we try to quench thirst and meaning apart from Jesus?

### PRAYER

Jesus, Living Water, quench our thirst for purpose and meaning.  
Help us find fulfillment in You alone.

### EXTINGUISHING THE CANDLE

Lord Jesus – You gave Your life for us. You suffered and died that we might live.

## THE SEVEN LAST WORDS OF JESUS



### THE SIXTH WORD

“It is finished.”

A jar of wine vinegar was there, so they soaked a sponge in it, put the sponge on a stalk of the hyssop plant, and lifted it to Jesus’ lips. When he had received the drink, Jesus said, “It is finished.” With that, he bowed his head and gave up his spirit.

– John 19:29-30 (NIV)

### COMMENTARY

The work is complete. The ordeal is over. It is finished! There is a sense of triumph, there is a sense of joy, and there is a sense of release. Mission accomplished! The purpose for which Christ came is fulfilled. Christ has redeemed people from their sins through His death. Perhaps the question is - is it finished? What about the resurrection? Christ knew the punishment for sin was satisfied and the payment was complete at the cross. The resurrection would demonstrate that Jesus is Lord over sin, death, and the grave. The resurrection is proof for us that Jesus is who He said He is. It is finished. Nothing more to add. It is complete.

### REFLECTION

1. Meditate on the completion of Jesus’ earthly mission and the accomplishment of salvation.
2. Consider the significance of redemption in your life.
3. Express gratitude to Christ for His finished work.

### PRAYER

Merciful Saviour, thank you for completing the work of salvation.  
Help us live in the freedom and grace that Your sacrifice has provided.

### EXTINGUISHING THE CANDLE

Lord Jesus – You gave Your life for us. You suffered and died that we might live.



## THE SEVEN LAST WORDS OF JESUS



### THE SEVENTH WORD

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

Jesus called out with a loud voice, “Father, into your hands I commit my spirit.”  
When he had said this, he breathed his last. – Luke 23:46 (NIV)

### COMMENTARY

In these last words of Jesus, He references Psalm 31:1-5. In this Psalm, David asserts his innocence and righteousness in the face of his enemies. How telling that Jesus would assert His innocence and righteousness in the presence of those who cried out, “Crucify him.” Jesus lived a blameless and sinless life on earth and now He would be going to the Father – His life would be vindicated by the resurrection. Jesus will have the final victory and we continue to await His coming again.

### REFLECTION

1. Reflect on the surrender of Jesus’ spirit into the hands of the Father.
2. Consider moments in your life where you need to surrender and trust in God’s providence.
3. Express your gratitude to God for Christ’s atoning work.

### PRAYER

Heavenly Father, we commend our lives into Your hands.  
Grant us the grace to surrender our will to Yours and trust in Your divine plan.

### EXTINGUISHING THE CANDLE

Lord Jesus – You gave Your life for us. You suffered and died that we might live.

**RESPONSIVE READING**

Isaiah 53:4-6,9

- (Leader)** Surely he took up our pain  
and bore our suffering,  
**(Congregation)** yet we considered him punished by God,  
stricken by him, and afflicted.
- (Leader)** But he was pierced for our transgressions,  
he was crushed for our iniquities;  
**(Congregation)** the punishment that brought us peace was on him,  
and by his wounds we are healed.
- (Leader)** We all, like sheep, have gone astray,  
each of us has turned to our own way;  
**(Congregation)** and the Lord has laid on him  
the iniquity of us all.
- (ALL)** He was assigned a grave with the wicked,  
and with the rich in his death,  
though he had done no violence,  
nor was any deceit in his mouth.

**SONG OF RESPONSE****Song Suggestions:**

**Hymn:** *"The Old Rugged Cross"* – George Bernard

**Song:** *"Man of Sorrows"* – Jadwin Gillies

**BENEDICTION**

Loving God, may the words of Your Son resonate in our hearts. May the depth of His sacrifice inspire us to live lives of love, forgiveness, and surrender to Your will. May the grace of this Good Friday lead us to the joy of Easter Sunday. In the name of Jesus Christ, our Lord. Amen.

**(OPTIONAL)**

Play video to end service and leave quietly.