

Good Friday
Jesus' Personal Passion Prophecies: "...Prepare Him for Burial"
Mark 14:6-9
April 5, 2026
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Grace to you and peace from God our Father and our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ.
Dear brothers and sisters in Christ, our text for Good Friday is from Jesus' personal prophecy recorded in Mark 14:6-9

"6 But Jesus said, "Let her alone. Why do you trouble her? She has done a good work for Me. 7 For you have the poor with you always, and whenever you wish you may do them good; but Me you do not have always. 8 She has done what she could. She has come beforehand to anoint My body for burial. 9 Assuredly, I say to you, wherever this gospel is preached in the whole world, what this woman has done will also be told as a memorial to her."

So far our text:

Does it take courage to prepare for a burial? How often do we think about the details of our own burial...which funeral home will be in charge of the arrangements? Where will the burial be? Who will perform the funeral service and where? In what clothing will I be buried? What hymns and texts will be read at my funeral? How will gifts and memorials be distributed? Is my will prepared? Does it include a precious anointment memorial to my Lord and Savior Jesus Christ so that His Gospel may continue to be preached in the whole world?

Like the disciples who denied Jesus, fled at His arrest, and then cowered behind locked doors for fear of the Jews, we too often lack courage at different times in our life, especially when it comes to thinking and preparing for our own death. Jesus knew exactly how He was going to die and with great courage He resolutely did his Father's will until it was finished at His death. In great detail He told disciples that His death was imminent. In chapter 10 of Mark Jesus prophesied to them a third time:

"33 "Behold, we are going up to Jerusalem, and the Son of Man will be betrayed to the chief priests and to the scribes; and they will condemn Him to death and deliver

Him to the Gentiles; 34 and they will mock Him, and scourge Him, and spit on Him, and kill Him.”

And with utmost confidence, Jesus added these most beautiful words which we will celebrate on Sunday. **“And the third day He will rise again.”**

It takes courage to make one’s personal burial arrangements. One has to admit that there is no escaping death. One must admit that there is a consequence for my sin as God told Adam and Eve – death. Maybe we put off making the funeral preparations because we lack the courage to face what lies before us.

In our readings tonight we see courage from some of Jesus’ followers who were willing to help give Jesus an honorable burial as was the Jewish custom. Joseph of Arimathea, a member of the council, which had determined that it was expedient for one to die for the nation, was not in agreement with that decision we read earlier. **“He had not consented to their decision and deed. He was from Arimathea, a city of the Jews, who himself was also waiting for the kingdom of God, (38b) and being a disciple of Jesus, but secretly, for fear of the Jews, coming and taking courage, went in to Pilate and asked for the body of Jesus.”**

He took courage out of love for His Lord and made the effort to personally go to Pilate and took the body of Jesus to his new tomb that he had hewn out of rock. Delayed courage, but courage indeed.

Nicodemus. A pharisee who had secretly come to Jesus at night and was told that one needs to be born again to enter the kingdom of God. And that was only possible, he was told by Jesus, by His Lord being raised up like Moses raised the serpent on a pole. There he came, no longer fearful, but carrying his gift of love, 100 lbs of spices to help prepare Jesus’ body for burial.

Yes, Nicodemus understood from Jesus that He had to be given into death for the world as Jesus told him.

“16 For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have everlasting life.”

But even before Nicodemus brought these spices, there was a woman who showed courage, 6 days before the Sabaoth, by anointing Jesus' head and feet with a costly spikenard oil perfume. Matthew and Mark don't tell the name of this woman although Jesus says her act of love will be remembered as a memorial.

John tells us the name, Mary, the sister of Martha and Lazarus. **“six days before the Passover, Jesus came to Bethany, where Lazarus was who had been dead, whom He had raised from the dead. 2 There they made Him a supper; and Martha served, but Lazarus was one of those who sat at the table with Him. 3 Then Mary took a pound of very costly oil of spikenard, anointed the feet of Jesus, and wiped His feet with her hair. And the house was filled with the fragrance of the oil.”**

Why was this a courageous act? She was rebuked by the disciples and especially Judas for wasting this precious commodity that could have been sold and given the money used for the affordability crisis of the poor of their time. **“Let her alone. Why do you trouble her? She has done a good work for Me.”** Jesus defended her. And by His coming death, Jesus defended the world from all accusations of sin from the devil.

Jesus had raised her brother Lazarus from the dead a week earlier. Surely she was showing great gratitude for this kindness the Lord had given her. But mostly she showed spiritual courage in anointing Jesus' body for burial by trusting His words that He had told her sister Martha: **“I am the resurrection and the life. He who believes in Me, though he may die, he shall live. 26 And whoever lives and believes in Me shall never die.”**

Yes Jesus must die to conquer death, once and for all...so that those who believe in Him shall live and never die eternally. Jesus, the Son of God, must die to then show that He is the Resurrection and the Life!

There will always be poor among us and there are always opportunities to help those in need as God wants us to do. But now was the moment, with only six more days before Jesus would breathe His last, to anoint Him for His most precious and costly work of saving all mankind from their sins. Myrrh was given to Jesus by courageous wise men at His birth, symbol of His death and now Mary willingly anoints Jesus with this fragrant oil on His head and feet and dries it with her hair. Oil was used to consecrate prophets, priests and kings in the Old Testament. The Prophet, Priest and King is lovingly anointed for His final work by Mary.

The Lamb of God sacrificed Himself on the altar of the cross. And when that happened, and it indeed happened. The veil in the temple was torn. The earth quaked and tombs of believers were opened who had come back to life. Jesus accomplished His goal of defeating death with His death. There is no longer any condemnation for those who die in the Lord. It was costly – your salvation and mine. It cost Jesus precious blood, but this sacrifice ascended as a sweet aroma, a sweet perfume to the Father that filled the heavenly home of God.

“Ephesians 5:2

“And walk in love, as Christ also has loved us and given Himself for us, an offering and a sacrifice to God for a sweet-smelling aroma.”

Jesus personally prophesied of His sacrifice in the Messianic Psalm 40: **“Sacrifice and offering You did not desire; My ears You have opened. Burnt offering and sin offering You did not require. 7 Then I said, “Behold, I come; In the scroll of the book it is written of me. 8 I delight to do Your will, O my God, And Your law is within my heart.”**

Jesus became poor and needy because of our sin that was laid on Him as Psalm 40 concludes.

“But I am poor and needy; Yet the Lord thinks upon me. You are my help and my deliverer; Do not delay, O my God.”

And Jesus was delivered after He suffered all the torments of hell for us once and for all. He commended His spirit to His Father and breathed His last. God died. For Jesus, true Man is also God, but His divine and human soul continued to live in heaven until it was reunited with His glorious body on Easter.

Yes, today is a Good Friday because there is a Good Sunday in three days. Jesus lives. Our debt is paid. By His resurrection we too will rise and therefore never need fear death. Take courage like Joseph of Arimathea, Nicodemus and Mary. Take courage that your salvation has been won by Jesus and offer Him your gifts of love and service in humble thanksgiving! Amen!

And the peace of God, which surpasses all understanding, will guard your hearts and minds through Christ Jesus.” Amen. (Philippians 4:7)