



THANK YOU JESUS FOR WHAT YOU DID

Good Friday 2020

*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.*

Isaiah 53:3

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Good Friday is a time when we remember how Christ suffered and died for us. I hope this piece will help you appreciate what a great sacrifice God made by having his Son go through the crucifixion—all because of our sins—sins we know about as well as those we're not aware of.

I believe that some of us dealing with disabilities or mental health issues are sometimes treated badly and might have felt like the description in the above Scripture. We, too, might have felt the pain of rejection. It won't be hard for us to identify somewhat with the man Isaiah talks about here, this man Jesus. Can you imagine the great suffering he underwent? Can you? Even a little?

Although the word excruciating is usually reserved for extreme physical pain, if you've ever been hurt through rejection, you will know that can also be excruciating. As one friend described it, the pain was like having a knife thrust into her heart and twisted. Not once, but over and over. At the end of Jesus' life he went through such rejection and suffering. Our Savior, he who loved and taught us how to love.

Barnes Notes uses some of the following descriptions: He "ceased to belong," he was considered "less than a man," there was a "ceasing from being regarded as belonging to mankind," there was a "ceasing to treat him as if he had human feelings and was in any way entitled to human fellowship and sympathy."

Jesus died on the cross, carrying the sins we ourselves should have borne. In his great love, he bore them instead, making forgiveness possible. Imagine the piercing sting inside and out as he was flogged before his crucifixion. Imagine how, with each agonizing blow, he must have felt the anguish of wrongs we had committed. Jesus, Son of God, the man who came to Earth to show us what true love is like. The man who healed. He suffered for the suffering we caused others. As the pain wracked his broken body he became sin itself on our behalf.

What Christ did for us on the cross has made forgiveness for our sins possible. But it is not automatic.

When we accept that we have done wrong, we must show remorse, repent (have a change in heart), and ask God to forgive us. Likewise, we must ask forgiveness from those we have wronged. That is the only way we can live with a clear conscience and remain in fellowship with God.

As he was being crucified, Jesus prayed, "*Father, forgive them, for they do not know what they are doing.*" (Luke 23:34)

Many don't understand what Jesus meant here. Is forgiveness automatic, whenever we have done something wrong? I don't believe it's as easy as that. We need to recognize our sin and come to Jesus to ask for his forgiveness.

Today I agree with Cindy Osborne, writing for *Christianity Today*: "The Cross made forgiveness available to the world. However, forgiveness extended may not mean forgiveness received. There must be a willingness to accept it if it is to be ours."

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