

Mark 14-15

Sunday of the Passion

March 24, 1991

For you.

Now that we have heard the account of Jesus' passion, his suffering and death, only those two words remain to be spoken: for you.

Without those words it is just a story, the unjust death of a man that could be told alongside of millions of other unjust deaths. Jesus' sisters and brothers by nationality, herded like cattle into the gas chambers of Hitler, Iraqis victimized by the dreams of a dictator, buried under the rubble, men and women and children, robbed of life when a drunk driver runs a red light, Jesus death is the same as all of theirs, but for the words, for you.

We listened as Jesus suffering was described, how he was greatly distressed and troubled in the garden of Gethsemane. In our minds we witnessed the crown of thorns, heard his God forsaken cry. Yet that very day two others suffered the very same torturous death as he. And in our day human cruelty has devised tortures more horrible still. Jesus suffering was like so many others but for the words, for you.

We heard the prophecy, "You will all fall away," spoken to his disciples. We watched that prophecy come true. Judas betraying, Peter denying, his sheep scattering, Jesus was alone. Then the spitting and the mocking, even the darkness of the sky. Yet his aloneness was no different from millions of others but for the words, for you.

For you. For each and every one of you.

You.

That you might be washed clean every day by the water that flowed from his side Jesus died. All your sin, all your shame, every failing overcome through his dying for you.

That you might be born into the family of God, Jesus gave his life. Sister, brother of Jesus, child of the almighty, every baptized one made family forever together because Jesus died for you.

That you might believe that death will not be the end Jesus died for you. For your eternal salvation, so that you would be with him for all eternity, Jesus endured the pain, the abandonment, the cross. For you.

When you believe and trust in him and love him with all your heart and soul and mind and strength, then all that Jesus suffered was worth it.

For he gave his life for you.

