

Here in our world
 We are going to read ~~the~~ a story, the most important story ever told. *The story of this suffering and death of Jesus*
 A young man has died, older men and women begin their walk through the valley of the shadow of death. Men and women suffer the pain and loss of a divorce, their children adjust to the hardest change they have ever known. A man or a woman loses a job. A friend, a spouse is unfaithful. Aids or cancer like a leech drains the life from one with much to live for. For all of you, in all of your pain, all of your fears, all of your needs I have nothing to give but this story.

It is the story of Judas, whose dreams led him to betray a friend. Of Peter, who ~~does the very thing he said he would never do.~~ *fails in the very way he would he never would.* The story of Caiaphas and Pilate, each trying to preserve a world that is passing away. Of mocking soldiers and of women who watch as one they love suffers and cries out and dies.

Each of these is a mirror for us, seeing them we see ourselves, the more we know the story, the more we see our places in it.

But above all of these the story is a window through ^{which} we ~~we~~ glimpse see our God. For as ^{and intends to be} true of your life and mine, the center of the story is Jesus Christ, the only Son of God. We see him abediently accepting what we most fear, suffering, rejection, ridicule, death. Step by step he walks the path his father has set before him, believing in God clinging to God even when nothing his eyes can see nor his ears hear tells him that God is near. My God he ~~ex~~ cries out knowing to whom he belongs even when he feels utterly forsaken.

For all all of your pain, ~~all~~ in all of your grief, through all of your dying God has given me nothing for you save this story. No ontether remedy, no shortcuts, no simple solutions, simply the suffering and dying of Jesus Christ for you.

This week we will hear the part of this story that is ours in this world, Next week, Easter, ^{we will know the future} the story God has prepared for all who belong to Jesus.

Listen then, to your story, and my story: ~~and~~ the story of our God's *love for us.*