



Good Friday

Towards the end of his life, Jesus began to be more and more insistent about his identity, as one who dared to put his trust in the Father's love completely; and more insistent about the Reign of God.

His ponderings on the "Kingdom of God" became more and more different and distinct from the teachings and demands of the Scribes and Pharisees, the Religious and cultural leaders of his world. In God's Kingdom there were no unclean, no outcasts. It is the Samaritan, the despised one, who epitomises God's will that we care for one another. (Lk10,25-37); it is the leper, the untouchable, who comes back to say, 'thank you' (Lk, 17-18); it is the prostitute who is first in making her way into the Kingdom! (Mt 21,31)

The opposition from the chief priests, the scribes and the Pharisees became more and more threatening and Jesus knew that he was in trouble (Mt, 23 and 26, 1-5). If he were to continue to proclaim his version of The Kingdom of God - a Kingdom in which the reign of his Abba-Father is one of unconditional love - then he would be accused of blasphemy. He knew that would mean execution.

So, Jesus was faced with a choice: he either went back on his word, and very identity, that God was a God to be trusted with your very life, ceased his teaching and kept out of the public eye; or, he stayed true to his Abba Father and put his life in the Father's hands!

He chose to say: "Father, I put my life into your hands". And so, he went forward to the cross.

Not because God is a vengeful, angry God who demanded human sacrifice to be appeased. But because God is a loving God, and nothing, not even death, can separate us from Our Abba-Father! "The Father who gave them ('the little ones')

to me is greater than anyone and no one can steal from the Father. The Father and I are one." (Jn10, 25-30)

The cross is a consequence of unfailing love - between Jesus, the Father, and the whole of humanity! For Jesus to back away from death was to wipe out his Abba experience - that is wipe out his very Self. The profundity of it! "I and the Father are One." For Jesus there is no 'me' apart from the Father. Jesus' surrender to his Abba-Father is his identity.

Maybe we can say that Jesus was the first human to dare to trust, and surrender to, God's love completely!

Jesus' whole being lived this reality: It is in love that God's Kingdom comes; it is in love that God's will is done; it is in love that salvation is found; it is love that is stronger than death; it is through love that resurrection happens!

There were many people crucified for blasphemy or stoned to death for transgressions to the Law. But those deaths were not salvific for us all. It is this unique surrender, this loving with abandon of Jesus, that is our salvation!

"When I could not see my way, God kept my heart full of trust to make all come right."

Mary MacKillop.

With the Christ who abandoned Himself to his Abba-Father, may we discover the treasures of darkness, find the riches hidden in secret places, and hear the whisperings of God in our own hearts, that we may be the glow of Jesus' light and warmth to our brothers and sisters in the heart of humanity.

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