

Good Friday 2026

He Who Did Not Spare His Own Son

April 3rd, 2026

Romans 8:32, Genesis 22

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Introduction:

Good morning, Redeemer. My prayer this morning is that we would come to recognize the cross as a SURE, UNDENIABLE SIGN of the Father's love for us. If God would give His Son for you, then you can be sure that His grace, and His love, and His forgiveness is yours.

In my preparation, I have been gripped by the story in Genesis 22. Let me remind you of it by way of introduction.

There, God speaks to a man named Abraham. This is not the first time that Abraham has heard God's voice. Previously God had told him that he was going to have a son, and that his seed would become a great nation through whom all the world would be blessed. He and his wife, Sarah, were old and barren. Their hope of ever having a child had long ago faded, so this promise seemed like an impossibility.

Yet, lo and behold, God opened Sarah's womb and she gave birth to a son! They named him Isaac.

Every child is loved by their parents, but here is a boy who was born to parents who had waited *decades!* There was nothing more precious or valuable to Abraham than his son Isaac.

This makes God's request in Genesis 22 all the more unimaginable. In verse 2, God speaks again to Abraham and says:

"Take your son, your only son Isaac, whom you love, and go to the land of Moriah, and offer him there as a burnt offering on one of the mountains of which I shall tell you."
Genesis 22:2 ESV

How could this be? God had just promised Abraham that his descendants would outnumber the sand on the seashore! And now, He is asking him to sacrifice the only son that he has? Child sacrifice was common in the worship of local deities, but how could God ask for this? Devastated and confused, Abraham brings his son Isaac to the land of Moriah – the land that would later become Jerusalem – and he prepares to do the unimaginable.

As Isaac makes his way up the mountain, carrying the wood for the sacrifice, he asks his father a reasonable question:

“Behold, the fire and the wood, but where is the lamb for a burnt offering?” Genesis 22:7b
ESV

Abraham soberly replies:

“God will provide for himself the lamb for a burnt offering, my son.” Genesis 22:8a
ESV

When they reach the summit, they build an altar. The moment that Abraham has been dreading is finally upon him. He binds his son Isaac – his only son – the son upon whom all his hopes and dreams depend – and he lays him on the wood. He lifts the dagger above his head and prepares to pierce his beloved.

But – mercifully! – he is interrupted! The angel of the Lord calls out to him and says:

“Abraham, Abraham!” And he said, “Here I am.” He said, “Do not lay your hand on the boy or do anything to him, for now I know that you fear God, seeing you have not withheld your son, your only son, from me.” Genesis 22:11b-12
ESV

At that moment, Abraham noticed a stirring in a nearby bush and there he found a ram whose thorns were caught in the thicket. He unbound his son and offered the ram that God had provided as a substitute. As readers, we breathe a sigh of relief! His son was spared!

Abraham learned an important lesson that day: Our God is not like the idols of the nations.

He is not a *taker*. He is the God who gives.

Genesis 22 is a gripping story. But it takes on a whole new meaning when we come to realize that some 2,000 years later, in the same region – perhaps even on the same mountain – another beloved Son carried the wood for his sacrifice.

and he went out, **bearing his own cross**, to the place called The Place of a Skull, which in Aramaic is called Golgotha. John 19:17 ESV

He too was laid on the wood. Only, there would be no ram caught in the thicket this time. There would be no substitute. Because this beloved Son *is* the substitute.

There they crucified him, and with him two others, one on either side, and Jesus between them. John 19:18 ESV

On Good Friday God demonstrates that He is not only is the God who gives – He is the God who gives of HIMSELF!

That brings us to the verse that I would invite you to meditate on this morning. It's found in Romans 8:32. There, the Apostle Paul writes:

He who did not spare his own Son but gave him up for us all, how will he not also with him graciously give us all things? Romans 8:32 ESV

As I was preparing for this Good Friday sermon, I was struck by the fact that – while I often reflect on the sacrifice that the SON made at the cross – I rarely think about the sacrifice that the Father made. Marianne, could you please put the opening verse of that last song up on the screen for us? Let's sing this together again, but I want to challenge you to really reflect on these words:

How deep the Father's love for us
How vast beyond all measure
That He should give His only Son
To make a wretch His treasure

On Good Friday, God gave His Son for us.

Now, before we go further, let me point out one important difference between Good Friday and the story in Genesis 22. Unlike Isaac, Jesus did not go to the cross against his will. Some scoffers refer to the crucifixion as an example of ‘cosmic child abuse’, but Jesus himself said:

For this reason the Father loves me, because I lay down my life that I may take it up again. **No one takes it from me, but I lay it down of my own accord.** I have authority to lay it down, and I have authority to take it up again. This charge I have received from my Father. John 10:17-18 ESV

The cross is not the Father punishing an unwilling Son. It is the triune God accomplishing our salvation.

So, Jesus willingly CHOSE the cross.

But, this morning, I want to invite you to remember that so too did the Father.

Jesus suffered the wrath of God against sin. But the Father laid down the Son that He loved.

We don’t often reflect on the Father’s role on Good Friday. The Apostle Paul says that we should. Let me read Romans 8:32 once more:

He who did not spare his own Son but gave him up for us all, how will he not also with him graciously give us all things? Romans 8:32 ESV

Paul’s logic is simple, yet profound. He directs our attention to the cross and asks, ‘How can you possibly think that God will *withhold* from you? The most valuable gift that He could *possibly* give has already been given! If He would give His own SON for you, then what exactly do you think He’s going to keep back?’

Now the ‘all things’ that Paul refers to here is not a reference to tangible things. Paul’s not encouraging us to ask for a private jet. No, the context – this entire chapter – is centred on our *assurance of salvation*. The chapter begins with one of the most beautiful verses in all the Bible:

There is therefore now no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus. Romans 8:1
ESV

It seems as if Christians in Paul’s day suffered from the same internal struggle as Christians in our day. We read about forgiveness. We sing about forgiveness. We preach about forgiveness. But sometimes – if we’re honest – we really struggle to *believe* in forgiveness.

‘I know the Bible *says* there is no condemnation for me, but you don’t understand how dry my faith has been this year! I struggle to pray. I’m often depressed. My Bible reading feels like a chore. I come to church, but my heart feels cold. I *understand* forgiveness. But I’m just not sure that it applies to me.’

I can’t tell you how many times I’ve had some variation of that talk. I’ve wrestled through it myself on many occasions. When our *feelings* tell us that we are unworthy and unlovable – when we are in the valley – it’s hard to believe that we are still recipients of God’s grace.

But, if you find yourself in that place this morning, I want to invite you to consider the gift that you have received. God gave His own Son for you.

And He didn’t give this gift because of your merit. He didn’t wait until you were your best self.
No:

God shows his love for us in that **while we were still sinners**, Christ died for us. Romans 5:8
ESV

God SHOWS His love – he visibly, tangibly demonstrates His love such that you can see it PLAIN as day – in THIS: When you were at your worst, He gave you His very best.

The Father gave His Son. For you. To save you. To redeem you.

There was a moment when your eyes were opened, and your heart was awakened and you SAW and BELIEVED that! Perhaps you need to be reminded this morning that the good news is just as true today as it was the day you first believed.

‘But I’m not growing as quickly as I should be...’ Well, it’s a good thing He didn’t save you based upon the speed of your growth.

‘But I feel distant and discouraged right now...’ Well, it’s a good thing He didn’t save you based upon the quality of your feelings!

‘But how can I be sure that He still loves me...’ Because HE DID NOT SPARE HIS OWN SON! How could He then withhold His love from you?

THAT is Paul’s argument! As I said, it is simple. Yet, it is profound. If God has given His Son for you, then you can be CERTAIN that He will finish what He started. That’s what Paul goes on to say. Listen to these beautiful words of encouragement:

He who did not spare his own Son but gave him up for us all, how will he not also with him graciously give us all things? ³³ Who shall bring any charge against God's elect? It is God who justifies. ³⁴ Who is to condemn? Christ Jesus is the one who died—more than that, who was raised—who is at the right hand of God, who indeed is interceding for us. ³⁵ Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? Shall tribulation, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or danger, or sword? ³⁶ As it is written,

“For your sake we are being killed all the day long;
we are regarded as sheep to be slaughtered.”

³⁷ No, in all these things we are more than conquerors through him who loved us. ³⁸ For I am sure that neither death nor life, nor angels nor rulers, nor things present nor things to come, nor powers, ³⁹ nor height nor depth, nor anything else in all creation, will be able to separate us from the love of God in Christ Jesus our Lord. Romans 8:32-39 ESV

When Paul reflected on the cross – when he reflected on the fact that God gave His own SON for us – he could reflect on grace and declare: “I am SURE of it!”

Are you sure of it this morning? The cross is undeniable proof that you are more loved by the Father than you can possibly understand.

God knew that we would be inclined to forget this truth. And so – in His wisdom and grace – He gave us the Lord’s Supper.