

Good Friday: Search Warrant

Almighty God, we beseech thee graciously to behold this thy family, for which our Lord Jesus Christ was contented to be betrayed, and given up into the hands of sinners, and to suffer death upon the cross; who now liveth and reigneth with thee and the Holy Ghost ever, one God, world without end. Amen. *Amen.*

Isaiah 52:13-53:13;		
Psalm 22;		
Hebrews 4:14-16; 5:7-9;		
John 18:1-19:42		

Eucharist A (361)

NA—Rite I

“It is Finished!”

In the name of the Father and of the Son

And of the Holy Ghost. Amen

{Pause} Please be seated {Pause}

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What was it like?

What was it like to walk into the sanctuary this afternoon?

Were you a little bewildered?

Did you wonder Had we been robbed?

Did you wonder Why was so much stuff taken down?

Did you get just a little angry?

When you looked at the walls?

Where are the stations of the cross?

Where is the cross?

Why is the tapestry behind the altar in such disarray?

Wait, why are the large chairs toppled over?

What, this look ridiculous, → → →

What good does taking up the cushions do?

If you decided to make a point couldn't you have done it,

A little more orderly? Perhaps with a little less violence?

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What might it have been like for the disciples?

For Mary & Martha, for Mary & for everyone following Jesus?

Why did the violence have to be so great?

Couldn't Christ have just been speared in the chest?

I mean, the result would have been the same,

Why the cross, why the violence of the piercing nail,

Then another nail in the other palm,

The great explosion of pain,

Why the scourging before even that?

Why did the knees need to be brought up,

Then a third nail through both feet, /// /// /// ///

Oh, the violence has just begun,

The Romans have perfected this spectacle, ///

If you wanna live like a thug,

Well I guess you gonna die like a thug...

Why now does the cross need to be lifted up,

I am quite sure the lifting and the jostling is quite painful.

AND ... NOW ... WITH ... EACH ... BREATH ... IT GETS ... HARDER ...

EVEN ... MORE ... PAINFUL ... Woman here your son ...

Here is your mother ... I thirst ... It is finished



Is the violence, the destruction, -- necessary?

Does it somehow add to the experience?

Perhaps it is a deterrent against future bad actions?

Perhaps, it just makes the perpetrator happy?

Perhaps, it just must be that way?



What is it like to see the church so stark today?

What would it be like to be the subject of a search warrant?

Law Enforcement officers, toppling every chair,

Pulling the pictures off the walls,

Leaving them where they lie,

They pull the cushions off the couch,

The drapery off the windows,

And that's only the beginning of it.

What if they really want to teach you a lesson,

The trial of Christ Jesus might seem even gracious...

At least Jesus had a chance to defend himself,

The district attorney went to the judge,

Not a word to you...now all your stuff is torn



What must it be like?

Why did they need to do that?

There is nothing you can do,

The violence is just part of the equation,

Actually; the violence, the disorientation,

Is again part of the design...

A way of getting back at you,

AND ... EVEN ... IF ... YOU ... SCREAM ... THERE ... IS ...

NO-ONE ... TO ... HELP ... YOU ...

In-fact if you screamed, all that would likely happen,

Is laughter, a mocking-full-demonstration → →

Of your helplessness.



What is it like to be condemned to death?

What is it like to be the friend of one condemned to death?

The mother?



If this sanctuary offends you this afternoon, I am **NOT** sorry.

The violence, the destruction, the disorientation,

Is part of the experience...

The violence, the destruction, the disorientation,

Was part of the experience, 2000 years ago too.

It was not a mistake, it was planned,

Designed, & orchestrated,

To get attention.

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Has God gotten your attention today?

“This hour is yours and

“The time when the power of darkness reigns,”

Said Jesus to the Sanhedrin.

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The mess will eventually be cleaned up,

I do hope I will have a little help today & tomorrow,

But if not, God shall provide

Just as he provided on Easter Morning.

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The powers of darkness have violence, destruction, fear & death

In their arsenal, and they employ it for full effect,

But the powers of darkness, don't have the final word

In this passion narrative,

The final word shall be revealed,

As the resurrected Christ returns in glory

Though we reside for a moment

In the destruction of Christ's death

We are people of the eighth day, people of the resurrection!

This drama, ain't over, there's another act on the horizon

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I wonder what was it like to see Christ kick down the gates of hell,

The laughable gates, that never could contain Him,

Or anyone who claims Him as their King and Savior!

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In the name of the Father and of the Son,

And of the Holy Spirit. Amen.