

## Good Friday Sermon—Lord of Life Lutheran, Westfield, IN 4/9/2004

**Text: Revelation 11: 15-19 & Matt. 27: 50-53**

**Title: “The Way to God Laid Open”**

**Introduction: Ills.: Highway reopened**

**Theme:** Rather than being a subdued memorial to his death, Good Friday becomes a triumphant proclamation of the one-for-all victory Jesus’ won to open the way back up to the Father.

*Opening a way to the Father that had been impossibly blocked by sin*

- The account of Revelation is a look back to the past and a futuristic view of the End
  1. **Print and read Revelation 11: 15-19 & Matthew 27: 50-53**
  2. From God’s perspective the Fall, the Cross, and the Last Day all in view at same time
    1. **Ills.: the Look at a mirror through a mirror — multiple pictures to infinity**
    2. Jesus’ death view from eternity as God’s solution for undoing our sin’s problem
    3. *“Long ago, even before he made the world, God loved us and chose us...his unchanging plan has always been to adopt us into his own family by bringing us to himself through Jesus Christ.” Ephes 1:4-5 (NLT)*
    4. In terms of humbly repenting and turning from sin to God
    5. In terms of guiltless living in relationships, life’s calling, and philosophy of life
  3. The temple of Jerusalem was always a symbol of sin’s separation of God and people
    1. Both at Jesus’ death (Matt 27: 50-51) and in Rev. picture of final judgment torn open
    2. **Once for all time (aorist tense vs. 19)** by the one who is eternal (is, was, is to come)
    3. Living with clear confidence of a victory won and a way secured
      1. Temple curtain painful, foreboding reminder of sin/ark reminder of God’s grace/mercy
      2. Ripped from top to bottom—it took God to do it ()

*Opening the way to the end of all things when we will be with God, forever*

- No fear of death as a final word on sin
  1. *People die once, and after that they are judged. Likewise, Christ was sacrificed once to take away the sins of humanity, and after that he will appear a second time. This time he will not deal with sin, but he will save those who eagerly wait for him.” Heb 9:27-28 (GW)*
  2. **Ills.: God’ punished his son for your sins**
- No fear of the Last Day as those who stand “marked” by the last words of Jesus
  1. When Jesus said, “It is finished” he had last word on sin and punishment for believers
  2. When Jesus comes back, he will bring a reward secured on the cross for his “saints” made holy by him
    1. *For he has rescued us from the dominion of darkness and brought us into the kingdom of the Son he loves, in whom we have redemption, the forgiveness of sins.” Col. 1: 13*
    2. **Ills.: Uncertain transfer of power in Iraq**
    3. Blessed by being transferred over into the heavenly Kingdom under Jesus’ rule

## **Rev. 11:15-19**

<sup>15</sup>The seventh angel sounded his trumpet, and there were loud voices in heaven, which said: "The kingdom of the world has become the kingdom of our Lord and of his Christ, and he will reign for ever and ever." <sup>16</sup>And the twenty-four elders, who were seated on their thrones before God, fell on their faces and worshiped God, <sup>17</sup>saying: "We give thanks to you, Lord God Almighty, the One who is and who was, because you have taken your great power and have begun to reign. <sup>18</sup>The nations were angry; and your wrath has come. The time has come for judging the dead, and for rewarding your servants the prophets and your saints and those who reverence your name, both small and great--and for destroying those who destroy the earth." <sup>19</sup>Then God's temple in heaven was opened, and within his temple was seen the ark of his covenant. And there came flashes of lightning, rumblings, peals of thunder, an earthquake and a great hailstorm.

### **Matthew 27:50-53**

<sup>50</sup>And when Jesus had cried out again in a loud voice, he gave up his spirit. <sup>51</sup>At that moment the curtain of the temple was torn in two from top to bottom. The earth shook and the rocks split. <sup>52</sup>The tombs broke open and the bodies of many holy people who had died were raised to life. <sup>53</sup>They came out of the tombs, and after Jesus' resurrection they went into the holy city and appeared to many people.

### **Highway Reopened – December 16, 2003**

KABUL (CP) - Afghan and American forces lined one of Afghanistan's most dangerous roadways Tuesday as the 480-kilometer stretch between Kabul and Kandahar was officially reopened. Interim President Hamid Karzai called the highway project an important step in the rebuilding of Afghanistan after more than 20 years of conflict. "The reconstruction of our highways is something asked of me every day by the people of Afghanistan," said Karzai after dedicating the roadway. "I thank all those people that worked on this highway - the Afghans and non-Afghans - and pray for those that gave their lives." Four workers were killed during construction on the highway and several others were injured in mine explosions and attacks by pro-Taliban insurgents. There have also been several kidnappings of workers along the highway, closer to Kandahar, including two Indian engineers who were abducted Dec. 6 and remain in the hands of suspected Taliban militants. Before the highway was reopened, it was closed for several hours as a security precaution, a sign of the continuing troubles in Afghanistan two years after U.S. forces toppled the Taliban regime. Still, the reopening was a symbolic move that Karzai hoped would send a message to his people that Afghanistan's infrastructure is being rebuilt. The \$250-million-US construction project funded mostly by the U.S. government, relinks Afghanistan's two largest cities and is key to the country's economic recovery. It used to take up to two days to travel between Kabul and Kandahar. Now, the trip can be made in about five hours. More than 35 per cent of Afghanistan's population lives within 50 kilometers of the highway.

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### **God punished his son for your sins**

A distressed father sat at the bedside of his comatose son, hurt playing basketball. At a crucial point in the game, the 16-year-old lunged for an errant pass going out of bounds. As he toppled over a spectator's chair, one of its legs caught him in the stomach and damaged vital organs. Because he felt little pain, the teen continued to play the game's final minutes while he hemorrhaged internally. By the time the pain grew enough to warrant a trip to the hospital, it was almost too late. The doctors worked frantically to save him, but the outcome was uncertain. Though the son eventually recovered, those awful hours of waiting for the slightest signs of recovery forced family members to ask questions they'd never before faced. The father was alone on his bedside shift one evening when the pastor visited. Trembling with emotion, the father asked, "Will God kill my son to punish my sin?" "No," said the young minister, searching for words that would comfort and grant renewed trust in the God this father now so desperately needed. "The Lord's not punishing *your* son for your sin. He couldn't, because God punished *his* son for your sin."