

Mary at the Cross

March 30

Read: Isaiah 53

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Sure we live in the knowledge of Easter, but still we wait. I'm thinking of the times when we are huddled together in grief and fear. Or maybe even in the best of times that are still tainted by sorrow. Every bit of life that is touched by sadness and death points us forward – to wait.

So now we wait – like Mary, standing at the cross; the Son of God hanging there without breath. After his last words, his last breath, his final heart beat, after the earth has stopped its shaking and everyone else has turned away, she stands there, left to wait and wonder. **“He was despised and rejected by others, a man of suffering, and familiar with pain.”**

Like Mary we are pulled away, but we cannot leave. The misery bids us find some escape. The horror makes us question how God's relationship to Jesus could look like this. The despair makes us wonder how our relationship to God could look like this! **Surely he took up our pain and bore our suffering, yet we considered him punished by God, stricken by him, and afflicted.**

I have days that feel like I'm standing in that dreadful moment, and maybe you do to - days when the misery is sharp, the despair shouts loudest, and doubt is the clearest. And there I wait. At the cross I wait and see my utter need for a Savior. When I hurry from the cross of Jesus (or even from my own misery) I miss the depth of God's mercy. **“Yet it was the Lord's will to crush him and cause him to suffer . . . After the suffering of his soul he will see the light of life and be satisfied.”**

Prayer: Holy Jesus, hold your cross before us and bring us closer to you. Remind us of your loving sacrifice.

Strengthen us in our doubts. Comfort us in our sorrows.

Gladden us with your perfect promise. AMEN
