

**“That was Friday!...but Sunday’s comin’!”  
Isaiah 53:3-6; John 20:1-18, 19-29; Acts 10:34-43**

**Easter Sunday: April 1, 2018  
Heritage Christian Church (Disciples of Christ)**

In October of 1998, Category 5 Hurricane Mitch devastated Central America, and struck Florida as well. 22,000 Central Americans were killed or missing, and nearly 3 million were left homeless. Drawing an analogy to Christianity’s Holy Week, our annual remembrance of tumult in biblical Jerusalem, we may say, of a storm leaving death in its wake: “That was Friday!”

A year after Mitch, I led 14 volunteers to rural Honduras, to help rebuild a village leveled by the raging waters. With the villagers, we constructed simple, box-like homes sitting atop 8-foot cement pillars that supported 20-foot long floor beams, a design that would allow future flood waters to rush under the homes rather than into them with full-force. In the analogy to Holy Week, we may say, of the cooperative effort to resurrect a rural village: “But Sunday’s Comin’!”

The hurricane? “That was Friday!” The recovery? “...but Sunday’s comin’!”

We expected to rebuild, at most, two homes that week. But it became apparent that we could very well complete a third home before our scheduled departure. It was also apparent to me that the women in our group had been subjugated to secondary status, kind of like “go-fers”, in part because of their lack of confidence, but largely because men in our group thought only they knew how to do the job. On Wednesday morning, I announced that we were going to build a third house. As for those who would finish what was left to do at the first two homes, I named all the men. As for those who would begin work on the third home, I named all the women.

The men were aghast, in disbelief! The women were astonished, in disbelief! Walking with trepidation 200 yards from one end of the village to the third site, the women could be heard: “Who will raise the heavy floor beams eight feet up to fix them atop the pillars!?”

Following a different but also devastating tragedy in ancient Jerusalem, some women were walking 200 yards or so from Friday's Golgotha to Sunday's Garden Tomb. The women could be overheard: "Who will roll away the stone?" It is apparent from historical accounts that these women had been subjugated to secondary status, for much of their three years with Jesus in Galilee, kind of like "go-fers", in part perhaps because of their lack of confidence, but likely because, in the culture of the day, men among the disciples thought only they could do the job.

The women discovered that, mysteriously, the stone was already rolled away! The body they had intended to care for was not in the tomb! The women were astonished, in disbelief! Mary recognized the figure of Jesus, who instructed her to run to tell the men: "I have seen the Lord!" The men were aghast, in disbelief! Just two days before, their beloved Master had been subjected to undeserved suffering, inhumane abuse, cruel humiliation.

That was Friday!...but Sunday's comin'!

Weeping may endure for a night, but joy cometh in the morning!

Nearly 80 years ago, the internationally acclaimed contralto Marian Anderson suffered the abuse and humiliation of being denied an appearance at Constitution Hall, because of her race.

That was Friday!

By the intervention of Eleanor Roosevelt, Anderson performed instead at the Lincoln Memorial, before seventy-five thousand admirers—on Easter morning!

But Sunday's comin'!

Weeping may endure for a night, but joy cometh in the morning!

71 years ago, Jackie Robinson was subjected to suffering, abuse, and humiliation as the first African American in major league baseball.

That was Friday!

On a designated day last spring, across Major League Baseball, every player and coach wore Robinson's #42.

But Sunday's comin'!

In 2012, the Taliban attempted to kill 15-year old Malala Yousafzai, who had been publicly advocating for the education of women and children in Pakistan.

That was Friday!

Yesterday, Malala, author of a best-seller, recipient of the Nobel Peace Prize, and honored speaker before the United Nations assembly, returned to her family home for the first time in six years, to a grand celebration.

But Sunday's comin'!

Weeping may endure for the night, but joy cometh in the morning!

This winter, on February 14, 17 members of a school family in Florida died from bullets fired from an AK-47 automatic weapon.

That was Friday!

Six weeks later, survivors David Hogg and Emma Gonzalez and others have inspired millions in their nation and the world in an unprecedented movement against gun violence.

But Sunday's comin'!

Weeping may endure for the night, but joy cometh in the morning!

Justin Skeesuck and Patrick Gray have maintained the closest of friendships since boyhood. When Justin was 16, a car accident triggered a progressive autoimmune disorder that ultimately paralyzed his arms, hands, and legs, requiring him to become wheel-chair bound.

That was Friday!

Now in his 30's, Justin learned about the mountainous 500-mile Camino de Santiago trail across northern Spain, and was inspired to accept its challenge. Without hesitation, his life-long friend Patrick said: "I'll push you!" Over 35 days, with the assistance of villagers along the way, and the help of countless international hikers, the two companions entered the plaza of Santiago de Compostela to a hero's welcome.

But Sunday's comin'!

Weeping may endure for the night, but joy cometh in the morning!

During my lifetime, from a Christian faith perspective, I have felt both personally and professionally that our nation and the world have been evolving gradually from the dark night of a self-centered Friday existence toward the bright joy of a selfless Sunday existence. I have embraced the notion that the human family is in an enlightened Saturday existence, somewhere between the crucifixion of self-destruction, and the resurrection of universal love.

Yet now, with the proliferation of bombastic rhetoric, hate crimes, international provocations, the sacrifice of innocent multitudes, and proxy wars, I am as uncertain as I have been in fifty years of ministry about the prospect of Creation as we know it fully attaining the mind and heart and spirit of the Creator.

But that, I believe, is what our Creator God intended for us, when living in Jesus in the flesh, and dying in Jesus on the cross, and living again in Jesus resurrected.

I believe that God took Jesus from Friday to Sunday in Jerusalem, so that we would know that God will take us from any and every Friday, to re-assuring Sunday, eventually. God will take us from every dark night of self-centered squalor, to the bright morning of selfless joy.

There is always Friday!

But Sunday's comin'!

Oh! About that third home built by volunteers in rural Honduras? The women were astonished to find that their efforts could indeed secure the floor beams atop the pillars. And after walking 200 yards down the road--about the same distance as that between Golgotha and the Garden Tomb in Jerusalem—a group of disbelieving men joined the astonished women to complete the house together.

One more Honduran family was assured that Sunday was comin'!