

## Good Friday? Why do we celebrate an execution?

Jesus Christ lived in Palestine, 2000 years ago. He preached the reign of God, healed the sick, and fed the hungry. Rich wives of government officials followed him as well as poor fishermen, prostitutes as well as collaborators with the Roman occupant forces. They all believed in him; they saw him as the son of God, the Savior.

But then, this Jesus was arrested, tortured and executed.

And all those who had followed him thought that they had been wrong. Only, this Jesus had showed up again after a few days. Talking to them, eating with them, showing them his still-open wounds. And he had explained to them that this all had happened according to God's will.

That was hard to understand back then, and it is hard today. Why did Jesus have to die?

Basically, all of the second part of the Bible tries out different answers to this question. And one of these answers is: God does not just stand idly by when injustice happens. God does not simply watch human suffering.

Rather, God cares about women and children freezing to death under the open winter sky in Syria as they are fleeing from bombardments. He does not overlook the fact that homeless people have to search for deposit bottles in trash cans.

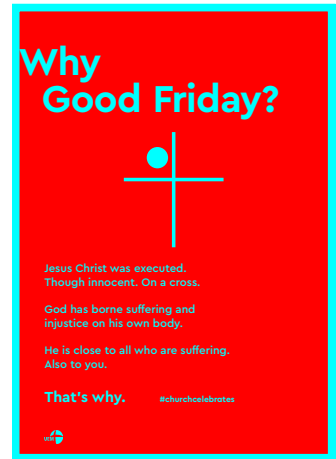
In Jesus Christ, this God bears suffering and injustice on his own body. And we believe: With the death of Jesus Christ, God shouldered everything evil, everything unjust in this world, and overcame it. Because Jesus did not stay dead. But we celebrate Good Friday because evil is still so very visible. Because one cannot yet see that God has overcome it.

On Good Friday, we put our hope against all the misery of this world: Wounds will be healed, tears will be wiped away. Evil and malice won't have the last word. The victors will not decide how history has to be read. It will matter at the end how I have lived. Love will remain.

On Good Friday, we celebrate that we find God in the Jesus who screams out in his Godforsakenness on the cross. The God who knows every misery – yours as well! Who bears the muck and the misery of this world so that it will change. Who leaves no one alone in their suffering – not even you.

That's why we celebrate Good Friday. And we invite you to celebrate with us.

Claudia Währisch-Oblau



Published by:  
United Evangelical Mission (UEM)  
Rudolfstraße 137  
42285 Wuppertal, Germany  
gospel@vemission.org  
www.vemission.org



Dr. Claudia Währisch-Oblau  
Executive Secretary Evangelism

 @VEMission  
 @unitedinmission  
 United Evangelical Mission  
 @VEMission

Design of posters: JoussenKarliczek GmbH