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| **For Our Salvation He Came Down**  *Promise: Christ came down from heaven for our salvation…* Pastor Timothy A. Duesenberg (Good Friday Tenebrae Service, 4/18/25)  **Lead In –** I am struck this year by the following words in the Nicene Creed: “who for us men and for our salvation came down from heaven…” Yes, He came down. The Incarnate Birth is part of that descent. His baptism at one of the lowest geographic points on earth is a part of it. So is His death and burial. He further descends to hell, the place of the dead. But this evening I want us to especially pay attention to the fourth word from the cross as a clue to just how far He came down. As I will note, He came all the way down to “God-forsakenness”… But for now, we will start with the first word…   1. **Father, forgive them; for they know not what they do.** (Lk 23:34)    1. Jesus is not protesting our innocence, but depth of deception…    2. He is willingly paying the price…    3. Jesus is not a tragic victim, but innocently heroic… 2. **Truly, I say to you, today you will be with me in Paradise.** (Lk 23:43)    1. The difference between the two criminals…    2. Perhaps the simplest, most basic prayer: “Lord, have mercy…”    3. You can’t count on waiting until the last moment… 3. **Woman, behold, your son! … Behold your mother!** (Jn 19:26, 27)    1. Jesus also obeys the Fourth Commandment…    2. Mary becomes stellar model of having saving faith…    3. She accordingly because a figure for the Church… 4. **My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?** (Mt 27:46)    1. Jesus’ deepest anguish was not likely the physical suffering…    2. He bore our sin and experienced alienation from God…    3. He came down, all the way down to “God-forsakenness”…    4. A Psalm on His lips… Psa 22 5. **I thirst** (Jn. 19:28)    1. Jesus does not just appear to be a human, but is true…    2. He became like us in every way but one. He was without sin…    3. Humans grow tired, hungry and thirsty… 6. **It is finished** (Jn 19:30)    1. Not a cry of exasperation, but a declaration of mission accomplished…    2. It was the ‘hour’ for which He came…    3. We can trust that God’s timing is impeccable… 7. **Father, into thy hands I commit my spirit!** (Lk 23:46)    1. The gift of saving faith is to fully entrust ourselves to God…    2. “I commend myself, my body and soul, and all things…”    3. Remember, where we fail He succeeds (with our humanity)…    4. His grace does not absolve us from imitating. Instead it relieves us of the impossible burden of succeeding apart from Him…   **Parting Shot –** The remainder of the service is your chance to meditate on… | **Scriptural References**  **Romans 5:8** but God shows his love for us in that while we were still sinners, Christ died for us.  **1 John 1:9** If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.  **Exodus 20:12** “Honor your father and your mother.” (Fourth Commandment)  **2 Corinthians 5:21** For our sake he made him to be sin who knew no sin, so that in him we might become the righteousness of God.  **Hebrews 4:15** For we do not have a high priest who is unable to sympathize with our weaknesses, but one who in every respect has been tempted as we are, yet without sin.  **John 12:31-32** Now is the judgment of this world; now will the ruler of this world be cast out. 32And I, when I am lifted up from the earth, will draw all people to myself.”  **He 12:2** [We are to be] looking to Jesus, the founder and perfecter of our faith, who for the joy that was set before him endured the cross, despising the shame, and is seated at the right hand of the throne of God |