

Sermon 2012 Good Friday  
Text: Luke 23:44-45a  
Theme: The Light

**Every eighteen months, somewhere around the world, the sun goes black in the middle of the day. One minute the day is bright and sunny; the next minute the sun goes dark, and you can even see the stars of night in the middle of the day. It's called a solar eclipse. At just the right time, in just the right place, the moon moves in between the sun and the earth and just about completely blocks out the sun. Instead of having that huge yellow ball of light in the sky, the day becomes as dark as night. You have to be in just the right place to see the eclipse, but somewhere on earth it can be seen every eighteen months. A total eclipse lasts only about seven minutes and it is rare.**

**Far rarer is when the sun literally fails to shine. It has happened only twice in history. The first time, the people of God were slaves in the land of Egypt. The ninth plague God sent was darkness. For three days, the land of Egypt was dark. The sun went dark. The moon stayed dark. The stars went dark. It was completely dark in the land of the Egyptians. The people of God, who lived nearby, had light, but the Egyptians were forced to live in complete darkness for three entire days. This was no eclipse. Solar eclipses**

**last only seven minutes. This lasted three days. God was judging sin and freeing his people.**

**Jesus came into this world and said, "I am the light of the world. Whoever follows me will not walk in darkness, but will have the light of life." Darkness is scary and more dangerous than the daylight. More crimes are committed at night. Even though no monsters live under our beds, children are afraid of the possibility especially at night. Once the light goes dark, imaginations run wild. Strange shapes and shadows make our pulse run faster. The dark unsettles us. Here is Jesus, in the middle of it all, saying, "I am the light of the world." He calls us away from dark deeds. He calls us away from dark thoughts. He calls us away from dark words. He calls us away from the darkness in which we are tempted to hide and into his marvelous light.**

**When the sun rose on that first Good Friday, Jesus was in front of men who desired to do dark things to him. All through the night, they had been moving in and out of the shadows; harassing him, mocking him, trying to condemn him of crimes they had thought up in midnight councils. The most horrible plots seem to be hatched in the darkness. They waited until dark to arrest Jesus, and as the sun rose the following day, they took him to Pontius Pilate and completed their plan demanding that Pilate put Jesus to death on**

**the cross. Pilate gave the order. Jesus was nailed to that cross on that first Good Friday. The sun rose higher in the sky as he hung on the cross and finally it reached its highest point—noon. There, from its highest point, the brightest place from which the sun could shine down, “the sun’s light failed.” It failed for three hours, until the last dying breath of Jesus was breathed out. The sky was as black as this robe but this was no eclipse. This was no solar flare. This was an act of God. It was as if the sun, which had been created through Jesus, was reeling at how creation had rebelled against its Maker. Here again God was judging, as he did in Egypt. God was judging sin. He was judging your sins and my sins, which were nailed to that cross in the body of Jesus. God was judging sin and, just as he did in Egypt, he was setting his people free. He was setting you free from your sins and giving you life through the death of his Son.**

**Jesus Christ, the light of the world, was put in a dark hole called a tomb. The door was sealed and he was left there to stay in darkness forever. Yet in the darkness of that grave, his light shone again. The tomb could not hold him. Death could not keep its dark grip on Jesus, for He is the light of the world.**

**But tonight, we sit in the shadows again, the shadow of sin, the shadow of betrayal, the shadow of loss...the shadow of the death we will never have to die because he died for us.**