


The Day Christ Died

TALKINGPOINTS WALKINGPOINTS

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Talk together about the glory of God's kingdom. —Psalm 145:11
Love the Lord your God and **walk** in all his ways. —Joshua 22:5

Questions for Reflection and Discussion



- Pastor Doug described Jesus' condition. He looked something like this...

Pastor Doug then highlighted three individuals who intersected with Jesus: Simon of Cyrene (Luke 23:26), a Roman centurion (v. 47), and a deathrow criminal (v. 40-42). All were transformed by their encounter. Which of those three vignettes do you find most intriguing?

Given Jesus' condition, which of those reactions surprises you most—and **why**?

- Pastor Doug said: "In a very real sense, we are all responsible for Jesus' death." Think—*privately!*—about **your own** sins for a moment. Be honest—doesn't that statement sound **at least a bit** like an **overstatement**? **Why or why not?**

Since Pastor Doug's statement **is** true, what **must** we conclude about God? about ourselves? about sin?

- With which of those three individuals—Simon, the centurion, or the criminal—do you **most** identify? **Why** that one? **In what ways** is your response to Jesus similar? dissimilar?

How do you **typically** respond to Jesus today? Why **that** way?

In what ways does your response to Jesus need to change? How can **we** help you?



Application-Challenge

- Recognize that the gift of forgiveness and eternal life comes in response to simple faith.
- Recognize that as long as a person is breathing and in their right mind, an opportunity remains to trust Jesus Christ as Savior.
- Follow Jesus' example by praying for those who mistreat you. Forgive as God has forgiven you.

Take One Step: What is one small, concrete step of obedience you will put into practice this week?



Sermon Summary

Looking at the events surrounding Jesus' crucifixion, we meet some people whose lives were touched on that dark Friday. First, there was a man named Simon...not Simon Peter, this is another Simon. He hails a port city in Africa called Cyrene (Luke 23:26). He happened to be in Jerusalem on the Friday that Jesus was arrested; no doubt he had come to celebrate Passover. To make that 800 mile trip across the Mediterranean he must have been a devout Jew, committed to his faith. But let's check in on Jesus first.

Jesus had not eaten since the Passover meal he ate with his disciples nearly fourteen hours earlier. Consider Jesus' physical and emotional condition: he'd been up all night and had endured six emotionally draining trials. He'd been punched and scourged (Matthew 26:67; John 19:1). One eyewitness of a Roman flogging wrote: "The sufferer's veins were laid bare. The very muscles and tendons and bowels of the victim were laid open to exposure." Can you imagine having endured all this and then being forced to carry a heavy cross up the streets of Jerusalem? Jesus fainted under its weight (John 19:17), but Simon of Cyrene just happened to be in the crowd, and a Roman soldier pressed him into duty.

Simon must have been petrified. He didn't know who Jesus was. After the fact, do you think Simon might have done a little research to figure out just who this Jesus was, whose cross he had carried? Church tradition tells us that Simon of Cyrene came to embrace Jesus as his Messiah, a fact the Bible corroborates (Mark 15:21). Church tradition tells us that this church leader in Rome was none other than Rufus, the son of Simon of Cyrene! (Romans 16:13) How cool is that? Simon's encounter that dark Friday morning forever changed his life, and the life of his family, as apparently his wife and kids also embraced Jesus as their Messiah.

But others were touched by Jesus' life that day. The Son of God, was crucified between two hardened criminals who observed up close and personal how he died. They heard what he uttered from the cross: Even as they mocked him, Jesus repeatedly said "Father, forgive them; for they do not know what they are doing" (Luke 23:34-39). One wonders at the fruit that was born from Jesus' prayer that day. At least one of the Roman soldiers was convinced that Jesus was innocent (v. 47). Stephen, the first Christian martyr, was transformed by Jesus' example (Acts 6:8; 7:54-60), and persecuted believers down through the centuries have followed Stephen's example of forgiving their enemies.

In a very real sense, we are all responsible for Jesus' death. After all, it is our sin that compelled the Father to send his Son to die as a substitute for us, that we might be forgiven (Isaiah 53:5,11; Colossians 2:13-14; 1 John 2:2). But the fact that Jesus bore the guilt of mankind's sins does not mean that all are forgiven. Christ's death freed God to unconditionally accept those who place their faith in Jesus Christ as their Savior (John 3:16).

The two criminals beside Jesus heard him pray, "Father forgive them..." As one criminal continued to hurl abuse at Jesus the other turned to him in faith (v. 40-43). Jesus replied: "Today you shall be with me in Paradise." No baptism, no good works, just simple faith.

Across town, the veil of the temple was torn in two, top to bottom (v. 45) The way into God's presence was open to all who would come to him through faith in Jesus Christ (Hebrews 9:1-10:25). No intermediaries (priests) needed.

Then, Jesus died, and was laid in a tomb (v. 46-56). ...well, that is not quite the rest of the story, but to find out the rest, you are going to have to come back next week!

Digging Deeper in Your Daily Quiet Time

"Five Question Bible Study" (see page below) is a simple way to study any passage.
This week let's use it to study how we should—and shouldn't!—respond to Jesus...

Monday— Study John 4:3-26; 39-42

Tuesday— Study John 5:1-16

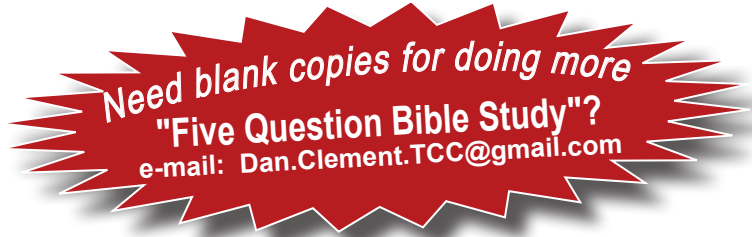
Wednesday— Study John 6:53-69

Thursday— Study John 7:1-9

Friday— Study John 9:1-41

Finally, in preparation for worshipping your risen Lord tomorrow with your church family...

Saturday— Study Luke 24:1-35



Bible Text: _____

Date: _____



What idea particularly strikes me from this text? [Note in which verse(s) is it found.]



What question does this text raise in my mind—and how would **this text** answer it?



What about Jesus Christ—his character and/or his redemption—relates to this text?



What action must I take as a result of this text? Be concrete and specific.



With whom will I share what I learned from this text?