




TALKINGPOINTS WALKINGPOINTS

A publication of , the adult discipleship ministry of Triangle Community Church.

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

- In the Garden of Gethsemane, Jesus faced his greatest challenge: Would he bear the sins of mankind? Pastor Doug mentioned last week that at some time in our lives **all of us** face a Gethsemane-like experience—a time of deep soul searching and struggle. What has been **your** "Gethsemane"?
- Have you ever heard something like this: "The God of the Old Testament is judgmental but Jesus is loving."? How would **you** respond to that statement?

Read John 3:16. **Who** does it say loves?
Read John 5:22. **Who** does it say judges?

Need to know that your sins are forgiven?
Write to:
BiblicalHopeAndHelp@gmail.com

- One of the most offensive statements in our multi-cultural world is: "Jesus is the only way to God." Tell about a time when **you** participated in that debate. **Which** position did you take—**and why**?

In Gethsemane, Jesus prayed: "Father, **if it is possible**, let this cup pass from Me." (Matthew 26:39). Jesus' "cup" contained all the world's sin. So, **was it** possible for sin to be atoned for in some other way?

- Pastor Doug controversially stated that **everyone** responds to Jesus with **either** humility **or** hostility. Read John 1:9-12. It states the world's response to "the Light"—to Jesus—**negatively** (in terms of what they did **not do**): "the world did **not know** him" (v. 10) and "his own did **not receive** him" (v. 11). Now read John 3:20. It states people's response to Jesus **positively** (in terms of what they **did** do). It says: "Everyone who does evil _____ the Light."
In light of those verses respond to this statement:

"Not knowing Jesus, not receiving Jesus, ultimately qualifies as hostility toward him."

Application-Challenge

Will you respond with hostility or humility to God's love, forgiveness, and power?

- If you're a Christian, but have gotten distracted and wandered away—**come home!** We would love to help you with that journey.

- If you're still considering becoming a Christian, begin reading the Gospel of John. We'd also like to give you a copy of "The Case for Easter." Just contact us at...

- If you would like to trust Christ as Savior, contact us at: BiblicalHopeAndHelp@gmail.com



Sermon Summary

Gethsemane is really a special place. It was there that Judas betrayed Jesus. It was there that Jesus decided to lay down his life for you and me, telling his Father: “If it is possible, let this cup pass from me.” In that “cup” was everything that Jesus hated—sin. And yet he said, “Not my will but your will be done.” While Jesus was praying in the garden, the high priest sent for and arrested him. A trial took place in the dark of night, false witnesses testified, and Jesus was condemned to death (Matthew 26:62-68). But since the Jews did not have authority to carry out the death sentence, they sent Jesus to the Roman governor Pilate. Pilate asked, “Don’t you want to respond to these charges?”, but to his amazement, Jesus remained silent, like a lamb before his shearers (Isaiah 53:7).

Truth is, Pilate didn’t want to be involved in all this. He would have preferred that King Herod decide. When Herod sent Jesus back, Pilate hoped to release him through a Passover custom of releasing a criminal of the people’s choice. Pilate was certain that Jesus had done nothing worthy of death. The Jews incited the crowd to cry out: “Away with Jesus, and release for us Barabbas.” Pilate then washed his hands of the matter before the jeering crowd, and Jesus was scourged, mocked, and sent to be crucified. Jesus was crucified in the same place that many years earlier Abraham brought his son Isaac to sacrifice him (at the last moment God provided a lamb to take Isaac’s place). In the same way, God has provided a sacrificial lamb to die for our sins. Jesus drank every last drop of that “cup” of sin that he had asked God in the garden to take away. Seven hundred years earlier the Prophet Isaiah predicted these events (Isaiah 53:3-11).

Today we join together with 2.2 billion believers around the world to celebrate the most important event in the history of mankind, Jesus’ resurrection from the dead. Two thieves were crucified with Jesus that day. But they responded to Jesus in completely different ways (Luke 23:40-43). They both died that day, but one died all alone in his guilt and in his shame. The other joined Jesus in paradise! The difference was in their response. Each of us likewise will respond to Jesus with either hostility or humility, and our response will determine the rest of our eternity.

Why do some respond to Jesus with hostility? Some respond with anger, others with fear, while others are so embarrassed by their failures that they deflect attention from themselves by blaming others. For example, last Easter, Islamic terrorists bombed churches in Egypt, killing 49 people. A month later they killed 29 more Christians who were traveling to a monastery. These Christians were no threat to anyone. In fact, they are the ones digging wells, running health clinics, setting up orphanages, and establishing schools. One of those criminals cursed Jesus, while the other turned to him in humble faith. Everybody responds to Jesus with either humility or hostility—there’s no third option (Luke 11:23). Jesus says to all: “Choose today hostility or humility.” Sometime in your life you are going to ask three vital questions:

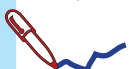
[1] Does God really care about me? Easter answers that question forever; Jesus’ answer is the cross! When he stretched out his arms on the cross, it was him saying: “This is how much I love you!”

[2] Can God forgive me? Easter also answers this question. To a criminal who deserved the cross (Luke 23:41), Jesus said, “Today you will be with me in Paradise.” To some, such grace is scandalous.

[3] Can I really change? Again, Easter answers with an empty tomb. The Bible teaches that the same power that raised Jesus from the dead is available to transform us. If you have not yet experienced that power it means that you have not yet submitted yourself to God.

So, how will you respond to Easter?

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



Digging Deeper in Your Daily Quiet Time

"Five Question Bible Study" (see page below) is a simple way to study any passage. We can use it to explore the redemption Jesus purchased for us...

Monday— How does Romans 3:9-18 describe *all* humanity?

Tuesday— What does Romans 3:19-20 say God's law does for all humanity?

Wednesday— What hope does Romans 3:21 hold out to all humanity?

Thursday— On what basis does Romans 3:22-24 offer redemption?

Friday— What does Romans 3:25-26 say is demonstrated through reemption?

Saturday— ***In preparation for worshipping your risen Lord tomorrow with your church family,*** study John 2:1-11.

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?