

2024.12.15



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 or Discussion

- What from Sunday's message interested you? ...made sense to you? ...confused you?
...intrigued you? ...upset you? ...encouraged you? ...and **why**?

Observation—*What do I see?*

- Review the seven things Jesus said from the cross (see the **Sermon Summary**).
As a group, discuss the context or motive for each of Jesus' statements.

What do you observe about the **character** of Jesus from each of the things he said?

Interpretation—*What does it mean?*

- Now, looking individually at each of Jesus' seven sayings...
 1. **"Father, forgive them—for they do not know what they are doing."**—Relate this to 1 Corinthians 2:7-8.
 2. **"Today you shall be with me in Paradise."**—Yet that night Jesus' **body** would be in a tomb. Explain.
 3. **"Woman—behold your son! Behold your mother!"**—How does this show Jesus obeying Ephesians 6:2?
 4. **"My God, my God—why have you forsaken me?"**—Read Psalm 22. Was Jesus confused about "why"?
 5. **"I am thirsty."**—This reveals Jesus' humanity. Which statement(s) emphasize his deity?
 6. **"It is finished."**—To what does "it" refer?
 7. **"Father—into your hands I commit my spirit."**—Three of these statements (#1, 4 & 7) are **to** God.
Why do you think that in #1 & 7 he address God as "Father" while in #4 it's a less relational term?

Application—*What do I do with this?*

- Which of Jesus' statements do you find most understandable? Most stunning?
On this continuum, mark how likely you might have said each statement—if **you'd** been on the cross.

"I could kinda
see myself saying
something like this."

"I'd be more likely
to say something
that's not fit to print!"

Look back at your answer to the **Observation** question regarding Jesus' character.

Which of **Jesus'** character traits does the above continuum suggest you most need to grow in?

How do you think you can develop that trait? What "inputs" or new habits will be required?

Sermon Summary Mark 15:21-41

Our study of Mark's gospel is drawing to a close. Today we will be studying Jesus' crucifixion. We refer to the day on which Jesus died as "Good Friday," but to those who witnessed it, "Bad Friday" or even "Dark Friday" seem more appropriate. But the events that transpired that Friday and the Sunday which followed have turned this world right side up. What man intended for evil, God intended for good. As we look at the events surrounding Jesus' crucifixion we'll meet some of the people whose lives were touched on that dark Friday.

Simon (not Simon Peter) was from a port city in North Africa called Cyrene. He'd traveled 800 miles to be in Jerusalem to celebrate Passover, so he undoubtedly was a devout Jew, committed to his faith. He happened to be present when Jesus stumbled under the weight of the cross, so he was "pressed into service" to carry Jesus' cross (v. 21). When we consider all that Jesus had been through—no food since the evening before, no sleep since the morning before, six trials, Roman scourging—his weakness is understandable. Simon must have been petrified when he was "laid hold of" (Luke 23:26)—he didn't know who Jesus was or what he'd done. He would have assumed that he was a criminal, like the other two men marching to Golgotha—the place of execution. To the crowd, Simon would have looked like just another criminal. Despite his innocence, he was forced to endure the jeers of the crowd, "Crucify, crucify!" Church tradition tells us that Simon of Cyrene later came to embrace Jesus as his Messiah and that his son, Rufus, became a church leader in Rome (Romans 16:13). If true, then Simon's encounter that dark Friday morning forever changed his life, and that of his entire family.

Mark speaks of two other men who were put to death that day—two criminals, probably associates of Barabbas. No doubt Jesus was crucified on the cross intended for Barabbas! Picture the scene: Jesus, the Son of God, crucified between two hardened criminals who observed up close and personal how he died. They heard all the things Jesus said from the cross:

1. "Father, forgive them—for they do not know what they are doing." (Luke 23:34)
2. "Today you shall be with me in Paradise." (Luke 23:43)
3. "Woman—behold your son! Behold your mother!" (John 19:26-27)
4. "My God, my God—why have you forsaken me?" (Matthew 27:46; Mark 15:34 cf. Psalm 22:1)
5. "I am thirsty." (John 19:28)
6. "It is finished." (John 19:30)
7. "Father—into your hands I commit my spirit." (Luke 23:46)

Consider Jesus' first statement, recorded by Luke in his gospel: "Father, forgive them—for they do not know what they are doing." Here he is, an innocent man in tremendous pain, asking his Father in Heaven to forgive his tormentors. Consider the scorn Jesus endured on the cross (v. 29-32). Yet the Greek text indicates that Jesus repeatedly said, "Father, forgive them"—as they drove the nails, as they dropped the beam into its hole, as the soldiers gambled for his clothes. By the way he died, we know that at least one of those Roman soldiers came to believe that Jesus was the Son of God (v. 39). In light of all that Jesus had experienced, his prayer for forgiveness is a remarkable prayer, isn't it? We get angry at the slightest offense. As we ponder Jesus' response, we are tempted to conclude, "I could never do that, what human could?" But that's not true: consider the account of Stephen in Acts 7:54-60. When opposed and killed by the religious leaders, he prayed: "Lord, do not hold this sin against them!" It really is possible for a person to be so transformed by the power of God. In fact, persecuted believers down through the centuries have followed Stephen's example.

In Jesus' day when a criminal was led away to be executed, his name and the crimes for which he was convicted were scrawled out and hung around his neck or posted on a placard above his head. In the case of the two criminals the charges would have read, "Insurrection and Murder." Over Jesus' head were scrawled these words, "This is Jesus of Nazareth, THE KING OF THE JEWS." Colossians 2:13-14

teaches that, in a spiritual sense, our placard enumerating our many sins was nailed to the cross with Jesus. The cross of Christ freed God to forgive those who place their faith in him as their Savior (John 3:16 and Romans 3:26). At first, both criminals hurled insults at Jesus (Matthew 27:44 and Mark 15:32). But then one of them repented (Luke 23:39-43). Jesus assured him that later that day they both would be in Paradise. Simple faith; no other requirement. Think about it—this criminal wasn't baptized, didn't attend temple services, didn't tithe. He just repented and believed! People often scoff at "deathbed conversions"—but you've got one here! Simple faith, when exercised, changes our destiny!

Then, the sun was supernaturally darkened as Jesus bore the guilt of the world (Isaiah 53:5-6; 2 Corinthians 5:21). Then Jesus cried out, "My God, my God, why have You forsaken me?" (v. 34) Jesus' quote of Psalm 22:1 is the most heart-wrenching cry in the entire Bible. Tim Keller has noted: *"This forsakenness, this loss, was between the Father and the Son, who had loved each other from all eternity. This love was infinitely long, absolutely perfect, and Jesus was losing it...Jesus was experiencing our judgment day...It wasn't a rhetorical question. And the answer is: He was forsaken for you, for me, for us. Jesus was forsaken by God so that we would never have to be. The judgment that should have fallen on us fell instead on Jesus."*

On the cross Jesus was abandoned by his Father as he took on every sin, of every man, woman, and child who has ever lived. But friends, in a very real sense we can say that Jesus was not murdered, for he willingly laid down his life for us (John 10:11, 15, 17-18). He didn't die as a martyr; he offered himself as a willing sacrifice for the sins of the world. Then, two remarkable events occurred: there was an earthquake (Matthew 27:51-53) and the veil of the temple was torn in two, from top to bottom (Mark 15:38)! Faithful women were the last at the cross on Friday, witnessing every agonizing moment, and they were the first at the tomb on that first Easter Sunday (v. 40-41). What a contrast to the disciples who had boasted that they would die for him! The church of Jesus Christ owes much to the devotion of godly, believing women. We need to recognize that the gift of forgiveness and eternal life comes in response to simple faith, that as long as a person is alive, the opportunity remains to trust Jesus Christ as Savior, and that we must follow Jesus' example by praying for those who have mistreated us. We must forgive as God has forgiven us.



It's time for TCC's
"Winter Mini"!

apologetics • [uh-pol-uh-jet-iks] • **rational defense of Christianity**

Hasn't science disproved God? Isn't faith a leap in the dark?
How can we perceive truth? Can we be good without God?
A merciful God wouldn't allow suffering.
A loving God wouldn't send people to hell...

Who?

all TCC adults

What?

get equipped to defend your beliefs

Why?

because there **really are** convincing reasons for faith!

When?

Four weeks, **beginning January 8th**
Wednesday nights (6³⁰-8⁰⁰pm) **or**
Thursday mornings (9³⁰-11⁰⁰am)
or anytime On-Demand!

Where?

TCC campus

How?

simply **scan here** for complete info



Digging Deeper in Your Daily Quiet Time

*Jesus was a good man—so why did he have to die such a gruesome death?!
Let's use the "Five Question Bible Study" method to get some answers...*

Monday— Study John 3:18 & 36.

Tuesday— Study 1 Peter 3:18.

Wednesday— Study Romans 6:23.

Thursday— Study Romans 5:10.

Friday— Study Galatians 3:13.

Saturday— Study 1 John 2:1-2 & 4:10.

Would you like to know God?

For free, confidential help, write to:

BiblicalHopeAndHelp@gmail.com

Bible Text: _____

Date: _____



What idea particularly strikes me from this text? [Note in which verse(s) it is 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? [and what was their response?]