

Day 6

THE CROSS

Matthew 27:1-62, Mark 15:1-47, Luke 22:63-23:56, John 18:28-19:37

Good Friday is the most confronting day of Passion Week. Christ's journey turned treacherous and acutely painful in these final hours leading to his death. Before the third hour (9 a.m.), Jesus endured the shame of false accusations, condemnation, mockery, beatings, and abandonment. After multiple unlawful trials, he was sentenced to death by crucifixion, one of the most horrible and disgraceful methods of capital punishment known at the time.

Before Christ was led away, soldiers spit on him, tormented and mocked him, and pierced him with a crown of thorns. Then Jesus carried his own cross to Calvary where, again, he was mocked and insulted as Roman soldiers nailed him to the wooden cross. Jesus spoke seven final statements from the cross. His first words were, "Father, forgive them, for they do not know what they are doing." (Luke 23:34). Followed by "It is complete" (Tetelestai), "Father, into your hands I commit my spirit." (Luke 23:46)

Then, about the ninth hour (3 p.m.), Jesus breathed his last breath and died. By 6 p.m, Friday evening, Nicodemus and Joseph of Arimathea took Jesus' body down from the cross and lay it in a tomb.

Questions

1. What does the cross mean to you?
2. Do you identify in Christ's death?
3. Do you believe in the success of this day?

Changing Your Mind

The power and impact of this day cannot be over stated. God reconciled humanity to His view of them (2 Cor 5:19). God was in Christ absorbing the confusion of humanity. Revealing His character in that He would rather die than lose connection to His children. What stands out is that Jesus did not come to change the mind of God about man. But He came to change the mind of man about God. God did not kill Jesus. Rather Jesus laid down his life. And even more than that - He died as us. When He died, WE died. And when we say "WE" it includes everyone. Yesterday, Today and Tomorrow.

Moving Forward

Our perspective of God cannot remain the same after we see Him revealed in Christ's death. How we see God (a self-giving saviour), ourselves (created in image and likeness), others (included). He unifies us. The veil of perceived separation was forever torn. There is no more distance or delay in our reference of who God is and where God is. The cross was a success. We stand in a time and place where we are aware of a Friday that is followed by a Saturday that culminated in a Sunday (resurrection Sunday). So even on this day where we identify in the death of Christ, we do so from a perspective of - VICTORY - as co-crucified and co-resurrected believers. Death was put to Death. Meditate on the scriptures and ask yourself - Implications? - Applications?

