

I. **Celebrating Christ as Lamb of God**

And looking at Jesus as He walked, he said, "Behold the Lamb of God!" John 1:36

II. **Read this week's story: Matthew 27: 2, 11-31; Mark 15: 1-20; Luke 23: 1-25; John 18: 28-40; 19: 1-16 and Da 77**

III. **For Meditation:**

a. Jesus answered him, "Are you speaking for yourself about this, or did others tell you this concerning Me?" ³⁵ Pilate answered, "Am I a Jew? Your own nation and the chief priests have delivered You to me. What have You done?" ³⁶ Jesus answered, "My kingdom is not of this world. If My kingdom were of this world, My servants would fight, so that I should not be delivered to the Jews; but now My kingdom is not from here." ³⁷ Pilate therefore said to Him, "Are You a king then?" Jesus answered, "You say *rightly* that I am a king. For this cause I was born, and for this cause I have come into the world, that I should bear witness to the truth. Everyone who is of the truth hears My voice." ³⁸ Pilate said to Him, "What is truth?" And when he had said this, he went out again to the Jews, and said to them, "I find no fault in Him at all. Taking the Place of Barabbas ³⁹ "But you have a custom that I should release someone to you at the Passover. Do you therefore want me to release to you the King of the Jews?" ⁴⁰ Then they all cried again, saying, "Not this Man, but Barabbas!" Now Barabbas was a robber. John 18: 34-40

b. "Pilate longed to deliver Jesus. But he saw that he could not do this, and yet retain his own position and honor. Rather than lose his worldly power, he chose to sacrifice an innocent life. How many, to escape loss or suffering, in like manner sacrifice principle. Conscience and duty point one way, and self-interest points another. The current sets strongly in the wrong direction, and he who compromises with evil is swept away into the thick darkness of guilt." DA 738

c. When Pilate said to Jesus that he had power to crucify Him what did Jesus answer in John 19: 11 _____

d. Pilates question to the mob of people clamouring for Christ's crucifixion is one each person must relate to, see Matthew 27: 22 _____

e. How would you answer the question, "what shall I do with Jesus who is called Christ?" _____

IV. **Prayer this week:**

1. Five People who need your prayer support;
2. Your Church in its witness for Christ;
3. Your Family it will be close and united.
4. The leaders of your church, conference, city and province.
5. That you will have the courage to leave your comfort zone to fulfill a calling from God.

Friday—Trials before Pilate and Herod, The crucifixion and burial. (All in Jerusalem)

As I begin to comment on this day I feel like a person trying to fill a swimming pool with water with only a spoon. This short post trying to address the enormity of the Christ's atoning sacrifice for the world is so inadequate. Hopefully you will be blessed by these few thoughts.

Chronology of the day: 6:00 Trial before Pilate begins. Religious leaders try and convince Pilate of Jesus guilt but he can find no fault with Him; The trial before Herod; The second appearance before Pilate where Pilate washes his hands because he believe Christ is innocent but gives in to the wishes of religious leaders to have Him crucified. He has tried two things as an alternative—scourging and giving them the choice of releasing Jesus or the criminal Barabbas—they cry "Release unto us Barabbas." Then Pilate says, "What shall I do with Jesus who is called Christ. They said crucify Him. 9 am Jesus crucified between two thieves: 12 noon darkness comes over the face of nature until 3 pm; Jesus utters It is Finished then dies; The earth quakes and the veil of temple rent in two; soldiers determine Jesus is dead; Joseph of Arimeathaea buries Christ in his unused tomb.

I could comment about the unjust and unfair trials of Jesus and the merciless flogging which tore His flesh and the struggles of Jesus trying to carry the cross but I want to focus on penetrating statements of Jesus on the cross.

The first words that Jesus uttered on the cross was "Father forgive them for they know not what they do." Jesus does not possess a vindictive spirit but a heart longing to redeem. Everyone of those who was responsible for nailing Him to the cross Christ was longing to forgive and have them accept His gift of salvation. His forgiveness is offered to every person on the planet knowing that through His forgiveness "whosoever believeth in Him shall not perish but have everlasting life."

In the midst of His six hours on the cross Christ cries out, "My God, My God why have you forsaken Me." The greatest suffering of Jesus that day was not the mocking, flogging, or the nailing to the cross but the feeling of separating from His Father. He had to bear the weight and guilt of the sin of the world and His Father's judgement of that sin. He experienced second death for us, so if we accept Jesus we will not have to die the second death of the judgement.

At the end of the six hours Jesus said "it is finished." Christ had accomplished the work He came to do. The cure for sin which mankind so desperately needed Christ had now provided. Yes, His resurrection would be an essential part of Christ's plan of redeeming mankind but He knew that once the atoning death was accomplished, His father through the power of the Holy Spirit would bring Him to life. Christ completed sacrifice for us is the good news of the gospel.

On the cross Christ heard the encouraging words from the repentant thief, "Lord, remember me when you come in your kingdom." Christ assured Him that day when everything seemed hopeless that he would be with Him in paradise. In other words He would be a part of those resurrected and taken to heaven with Christ. Hebrews says, "for the joy that was set before Him He endured the cross. The joy of Christ is His being united with all those who have accepted Him and His plan of salvation and thus Christ can claim as His at His return. With these He can enjoy eternal fellowship. This was His plan before the interruption of sin but now through Calvary that plan will be realized. Let's each ne determine to be a part of Christ's joy!