

Leaders Guide 12: Calvary

1. **Suggested Ice breaker: Outside of the Bible and Spirit of Prophecy what book has inspired you in recent years**
2. **Prayer time:** Wait^[e] on the LORD; Be of good courage, And He shall strengthen your heart; Wait, I say, on the LORD!
3. **Sharing from the week**
4. **Read for This week: Luke 23: 26-46; John 19: 16-30; DA 78. Background**
5. **Questions for Discussion**
 - a. When you hear the word Calvary does thoughts of joy or sorrow dominate your thinking? _____
 - b. Can you identify from Luke and John's account the seven times Jesus spoke from the cross? _____

 - c. When Jesus said "Father forgive them," about those nailing Him to the cross. Did this mean that everyone in every age was forgiven for any sin they committed? Was this just referring to those putting Him on the cross? Share your thoughts _____

 - d. When Jesus was on the cross and people taunted Him saying, "He saved others; let him save himself, if he be Christ, the chosen of God? (Luke 23:35) What kept Jesus on the cross _____

 - e. The repentant thief first ridiculed Jesus and later asked Christ to remember Him in His kingdom. (Luke 23: 42) What do you think changed His mind? _____
 - f. Consider these words: The Saviour could not see through the portals of the tomb. Hope did not present to Him His coming forth from the grave a conqueror, or tell Him of the Father's acceptance of the sacrifice. He feared that sin was so offensive to God that Their separation was to be eternal. Christ felt the anguish which the sinner will feel when mercy shall no longer plead for the guilty race. It was the sense of sin, bringing the Father's wrath upon Him as man's substitute, that made the cup He drank so bitter, and broke the heart of the Son of God. DA 753. If someone were to ask you, what was Christ's greatest suffering at Calvary, what would you tell them? _____
 - g. Does it impress you that even though He was suffering on the cross, Jesus was concerned for the care of His mother (See John 19: 26, 27) _____
 - h. As you reflect again on the story of Calvary, what impacts you the most? _____

 - i. In Romans 5: 10 it says, For if when we were enemies we were reconciled to God through the death of His Son, much more, having been reconciled, we shall be saved by His life." If Jesus had died and never been resurrected would we have hope today? _____

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!