

Participant Guide 12 Calvary

I. Celebrating Christ as Life

Jesus said to him, "I am the way, the truth, and the life. No one comes to the Father except through Me. John 14:6

II. Read this week's story: Matthew 37: 31-53; Mark 15: 20-38; Luke 23: 26-46; John 19: 16-30 DA 78

III. For Meditation:

There are seven sayings by Christ from the Cross: Reflect on the meaning of each one.

- a. Father forgive them for they do not know what they do." Luke 23:34_____
- b. Verily I say unto thee today shalt thou be with me in paradise" Luke 23:43 (without the controversially placed comma)_____
- c. "Woman, behold your son!...Son, Behold your mother," John 19: 25-27_____
- d. "My God, my God, why have You forsaken Me." Matthew 27: 46_____
- e. "I thirst." John 19: 28, 29._____
- f. "It is finished." John 19:30_____
- g. "Father into Your hands I commit My spirit." Luke 23: 46)_____
- h. Jesus prayed for His enemies, "Father, forgive them; for they know not what they do." His mind passed from His own suffering to the sin of His persecutors, and the terrible retribution that would be theirs. No curses were called down upon the soldiers who were handling Him so roughly. No vengeance was invoked upon the priests and rulers, who were gloating over the accomplishment of their purpose. Christ pitied them in their ignorance and guilt. He breathed only a plea for their forgiveness,—“for they know not what they do.” DA 744 What do these words mean to you?_____
- i. Christ's position between the thieves was to indicate that He was the greatest criminal of the three. Thus was fulfilled the scripture, "He was numbered with the transgressors." [Isaiah 53:12](#). But the full meaning of their act the priests did not see. As Jesus, crucified with the thieves, was placed "in the midst," so His cross was placed in the midst of a world lying in sin. And the words of pardon spoken to the penitent thief kindled a light that will shine to the earth's remotest bounds. DA 751 Your thoughts_____

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!