
GROUP DISCUSSION

Jesus the Philosopher: Acceptance
Luke 23:13-26, February 23 & 26, 2023

Prayer Requests:

Group Discussion: When you are lost what are you most likely to do: 1) Stop and ask for directions 2) Check GPS 3) Pretend not to be lost 4) Keep driving till you find what you're looking for.

Read out loud: Luke 23:13-26,

How do we identify with the characters?

#1. Jesus recognizes God's sovereignty. The word sovereign means: chief, highest, supreme. So God being sovereign means, He is the Supreme Being over all the Universe and He is wholly righteous, just and loving as He reigns. What is easiest or most difficult: Trust in God's control when the circumstances of life feel out of control, or when you have a significant sickness, or when having relational stress, or when frustrated at work? When do you trust God's sovereignty when life is difficult or easy? Do you trust like Jesus?

#2. Pilate's 3 protests to the Jewish leaders. In Luke 23 Pilate pronounces Jesus "innocent," no less than 4 times. Yet he releases a very guilty, seditious and murderous man named Barabbas and crucifies a man he believes innocent! Pilate chooses the path of least resistance and crucifies Jesus because the crowd demands it. There's no pro Jesus riotous group to demand Jesus be released, even Jesus does not demand release. Do you ever go down the path of least resistance and avoid correcting your kids because it will cause bigger problems, avoid a conversation with your spouse because it might lead to an argument, avoid talking to a supervisor/boss because they won't receive it well, avoid controlling your spending habits because it will mean sacrificing, avoid speaking for Jesus because it might not be received well? Do you ever feel like Pilate?

#3. Barabbas' good fortune with Rome. Guilty of breaking Roman Law you wonder if Barabbas was grateful for his release? Did he go back to treasonous behavior? Was he thankful to Pilate? Barabbas plays an important role in Luke's Gospel because he represents you and I! We are guilty of breaking God's law and yet because of Jesus I am released from the punishment I deserve. Jesus takes my place on the cross. Do you value your spiritual freedom, your forgiveness, God's grace in your life, the righteousness Jesus gives you so you can stand before God totally pure? How do you express gratefulness to God?

#4. Simon's privileged position with Jesus. Jesus says in Luke 9:23, "If anyone wishes to come after Me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross daily and follow Me." Simon quite literally does it, he carries Jesus cross and Luke says, followed behind Him! He is forced to do it by the Romans. Because Cyrene is in North Africa Luke is insinuating that Simon is African, which would fit with Luke's Jesus statements that the gospel will invite all nationalities and races. How do you pick up the cross and follow Jesus?

Family Time: Read Luke 23:13-26 to your kids and ask them which person they would like to have been and why. Pilate could have set Jesus free. Barabbas was set free. Simon was forced to carry Jesus cross.