

Stations of the Cross
Episode #4 - **The Way of Suffering**

Jesus Bears the Cross - Station #7

1. Read together the following passages - Mark 15:20 - After mocking him, they stripped him of the purple cloak and put his own clothes on him. Then they led him out to crucify him. Numbers 15: 35. Then the Lord said to Moses, “The man shall be put to death; all the congregation shall stone him outside the camp.” (NRSVUE)
2. How does the Numbers’ passage clarify why they led him out of the city to be crucified?
3. How common were crucifixions in Jesus Day? Why do you think the Romans preferred this method of torture and death?
4. Read together Isaiah 53:2 - For he grew up before him like a young plant and like a root out of dry ground; he had no form or majesty that we should look at him, nothing in his appearance that we should desire him. 3 He was despised and rejected by others; a man of suffering and acquainted with infirmity... (NRSVUE) . Why do you think this stream of messianic description as a suffering servant was not prevalent in Jesus day?

Jesus and Simon - Station #8

1. Read together Luke 23:26 - As they led him away, they seized a man, Simon of Cyrene, who was coming from the country, and they laid the cross on him and made him carry it behind Jesus. (NRSVUE)
2. What do we know of this Simon? Where is Cyrene? Mark includes the names of his sons, Alexander and Rufus - why do you think these details were included?

Jesus Meets the Women - Station #9

1. Luke 23:27 says - “A great number of the people followed him, and among them were women who were beating their breasts and wailing for him.” (NRSVUE) Why do you think these women were so upset? Is it somewhat comforting to know that there were everyday people whose lives were touched by Jesus? How might Jesus have affected their lives?
2. 2 Corinthians 5:21 says, “For our sake He made Him to be sin who knew no sin, so that in Him we might become the righteousness of God.”(NRSVUE) How does this verse seem to make sense of the women’s anguish? May they have had a glimpse of the grace being given by one who did not deserve such a punishment?

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Jesus is Crucified - Station #10

1. Luke 23: 33 says - When they came to the place that is called The Skull, they crucified Jesus there with the criminals, one on his right and one on his left. 34 Then Jesus said, “Father, forgive them, for they do not know what they are doing.” And they cast lots to divide his clothing.
2. Why was the place known as the place of “the Skull?”
3. Considering that James and John argued early in ministry of who should be on his right and left when he came into his Kingdom, who actually was?
4. Deuteronomy 22 “When someone is convicted of a crime punishable by death and is executed and you hang him on a tree, 23 his corpse must not remain all night upon the tree; you must bury him that same day, for anyone hung on a tree is under God’s curse. (NRSVUE) How does this enlighten Paul’s statement in I Corinthians 1:23 “but we proclaim Christ crucified, a stumbling block to Jews and foolishness to gentiles...?” How is Jesus death and resurrection still a stumbling stone for people as they consider discipleship?
5. How has God changed what seemed cursed to become something life transforming in your life? How have you seen suffering used in mysterious ways toward something good?
6. How does it affect you that Jesus was willing to forgive those who were killing him? Have you had to forgive someone who truly hurt you? How did you go about that?
7. Psalm 22 describes the death of the suffering servant. In Psalm 22:18, it records that they cast lots for his clothing. Why do you think the Gospel writers included this detail?

Jesus Speaks to the Thief - Station #11

1. Luke 23:39 says - One of the criminals who were hanged there kept deriding him and saying, “Are you not the Messiah? Save yourself and us!” 40 But the other rebuked him, saying, “Do you not fear God, since you are under the same sentence of condemnation? 41 And we indeed have been condemned justly, for we are getting what we deserve for our deeds, but this man has done nothing wrong.” 42 Then he said, “Jesus, remember me when you come in your kingdom.” 43 He replied, “Truly I tell you, today you will be with me in paradise.” (NRSVUE)
2. What is the difference in response between these two thieves? How does it represent the primary responses of all persons who come face to face with the claims of Jesus?
3. What hope does this “death bed confession” bring to us?

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Jesus Speaks to Mary and John - Station #12

1. John 19: 25-27 says - ...Meanwhile, standing near the cross of Jesus were his mother, and his mother's sister, Mary the wife of Clopas, and Mary Magdalene. 26 When Jesus saw his mother and the disciple whom he loved standing beside her, he said to his mother, "Woman, here is your son." 27 Then he said to the disciple, "Here is your mother." And from that hour the disciple took her into his own home. Why do you think Jesus says this? (NRSVUE)
2. How revealing of Jesus humanity is that, in his last moments, his concern is for his mother?
3. What would you have done if you were Mary? How did John respond to this request of Jesus?