

Matthew 27:27-44 “Jesus’ Crucifixion Was For You”

8.19.18

There’s an air of excitement in Jerusalem on this Friday morning...but, it’s not just any Friday morning in Jerusalem...it’s the Passover today. There are over 2 million people in around the city. Preparations are being made to celebrate this evening... But wait! There’s something else going on... Roman soldiers are moving through the streets...oh and they’ve got criminals. Nasty, stinking criminals...and in the crowd around these criminals... there are women crying and men shouting obscenities at these criminals...particularly named Yeshua...

For the Jews watching this they think: Oh man...the Romans are crucifying today! Not again! Couldn’t they do this another day? Those pagans...those rotten Romans...have they no respect for one of our most sacred day! Well, I wonder who is it today...ah...it looks three men...and one of them...oh my...one of them looks beaten to pulp. Oh yeah...He must really be a low-life. Probably deserves it!

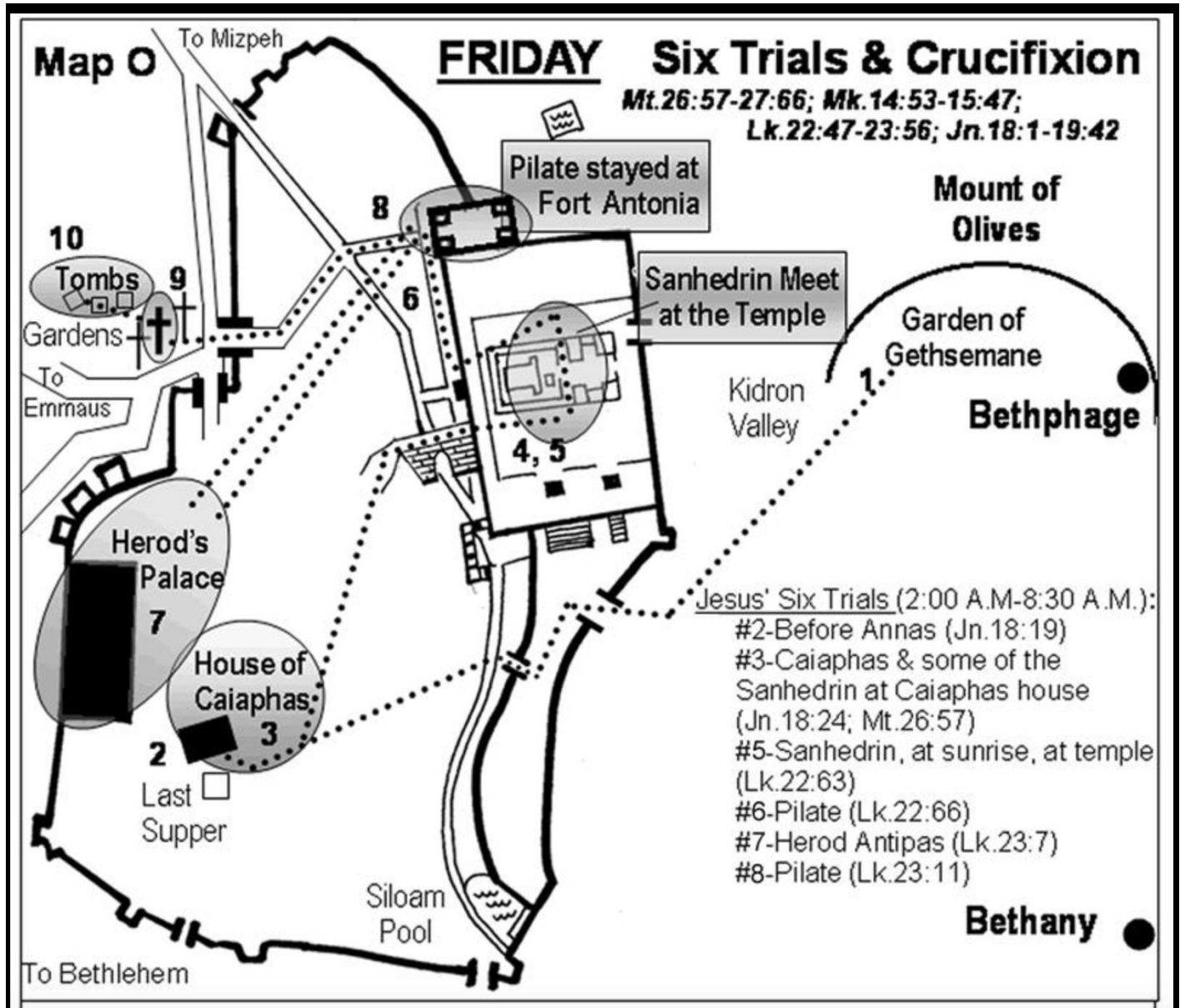
You know...for the average Jewish citizen on that Friday morning...it was just another day. But it wasn’t! This was the day Jesus would die No...this would be no ordinary day, because it’s not an ordinary man who will be dying that day. No...this day...this Friday...would mark time and eternity forever. For it was on this day that the Son of God would die on a cross for the sins of the world. It was on this day that forgiveness would be purchased for lost souls. It was on this day that Jesus would die for you!

The title of the message this morning is: **“Jesus’ Crucifixion Was For You.”**

Matthew 27:27-44

²⁷ Then the soldiers of the governor took Jesus into the governor's headquarters, and they gathered the whole battalion before him. ²⁸ And they stripped him and put a scarlet robe on him, ²⁹ and twisting together a crown of thorns, they put it on his head and put a reed in his right hand. And kneeling before him, they mocked him, saying, “Hail, King of the Jews!” ³⁰ And they spit on him and took the reed and struck him on the head. ³¹ And when they had mocked him, they stripped him of the robe and put his own clothes on him and led him away to crucify him. ³² As they went out, they found a man of Cyrene, Simon by name. They compelled this man to carry his cross. ³³ And when they came to a place called Golgotha (which means Place of a Skull), ³⁴ they offered him wine to drink, mixed with gall, but when he tasted it, he would not drink it. ³⁵ And when they had crucified him, they divided his garments among them by casting lots. ³⁶ Then they sat down and kept watch over him there. ³⁷ And over his head they put the charge against him, which read, “This is Jesus, the King of the Jews.” ³⁸ Then two robbers were crucified with him, one on the right and one on the left. ³⁹ And those who passed by derided him, wagging their heads ⁴⁰ and saying, “You who would destroy the temple and rebuild it in three days, save yourself! If you are the Son of God, come down from the cross.” ⁴¹ So also the chief priests, with the scribes and elders, mocked him, saying, ⁴² “He saved others; he cannot save himself. He is the King of Israel; let him come down now from the cross, and we will believe in him. ⁴³ He trusts in God; let God deliver him now, if he desires him. For he said, ‘I am the Son of God.’” ⁴⁴ And the robbers who were crucified with him also reviled him in the same way.

What an unbelievable and amazing ordeal for Jesus! He has now endured six illegal and immoral trials. **Remember our chart/map:**



Remember, He's been led like an animal from the Garden of Gethsemane, (right hand side) where He was betrayed by one of His own Apostles, to the house of the High Priest, Caiaphas, down to the Temple and the Chamber of Hewn Stones, and then to Fort Antonia (Pilate's headquarters). He was even hauled over to the Palace of Herod, where he was mocked and beaten, and now He's back to the Praetorium of Pilate.



He's been up all night...He's had no sleep and now the sun is peeking over the white limestone buildings of Jerusalem...and people are everywhere. There are four main groups of people that we read about earlier:

1. **Soldiers**
 2. **Bystanders**
 3. **Criminals**
 4. **Religious leaders**
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Let's begin with the soldiers...

Matthew 27:27

²⁷ Then the soldiers of the governor took Jesus into the governor's headquarters, and they gathered the whole battalion before him.

These soldiers came from Fort Antonia...the military garrison attached to the Temple...and Pilate has assigned a massive group of them...a battalion...a cohort (600 soldiers)...likely the same battalion that went with the Temple Guard to arrest Jesus in Gethsemane the night before. Jesus will be taken from the Praetorium to Calvary and Pilate knows there will be a huge crowd to follow and he's got to keep the peace...hence 600 men! Remember, he's a coward and was afraid of a riot when he was trying to release Jesus instead of Barabbas... Remember the scene...

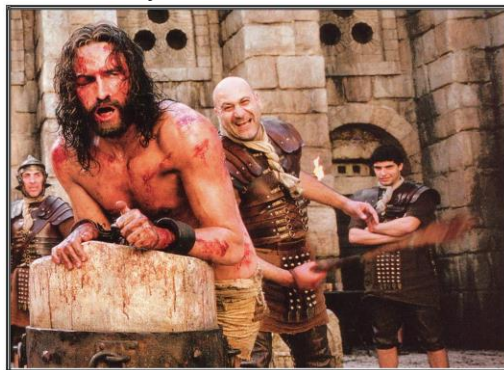


He wanted to release Jesus...he knew He was innocent...but, because the crowd had been stirred up by the chief priests and elders to the point of a riot...he released Barabbas and now he's taking no chances for a riot...he's got 600 men who will escort Jesus through the crowds to Calvary. But, the scourging comes first... Remember verse 26 from last week:

Matthew 27:26

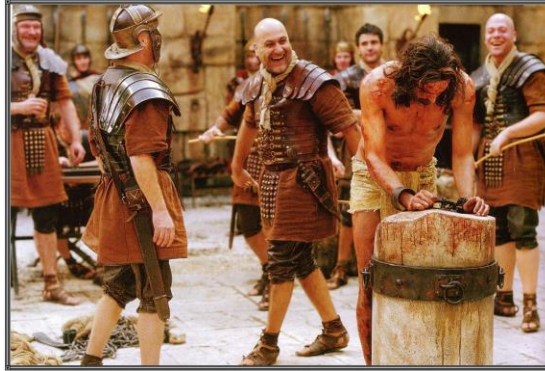
²⁶ Then he released for them Barabbas, and having scourged Jesus, delivered him to be crucified.

The scourging is WITH what is called a "cat of nine tails." An 18-inch stick with thongs of leather with metal, bone and shrapnel attached to the ends... Jesus was almost beaten to death by the soldiers before He even made it to Calvary.



This scourging was done to weaken the criminal so that they would die quicker on the cross. You see, the Romans used crucifixion to place fear and dread in the hearts of the citizens they domineered. Crosses lined major highways throughout the Roman Empire. And those crosses said to the citizens: "If you cross Rome...you will suffer mercilessly."

It was Friday morning, about 8 am and the soldiers didn't want to wait around all day. The sooner the victims were dead...the sooner they were off duty and they get to scourge Jesus. **Think about the soldiers**...what must they have thought of Jesus as they saw Him?



Jesus must have seemed a strange, pathetic character. A man who said next to nothing in His defense...a man who has been sentenced to death because He claims to be a King!? This is no King! They may have even thought Jesus was mentally deranged. A Jew, hated by His own people. A nut-job to them...so, let's have some fun with Him... So...

Matthew 27:28-31

²⁸ And they stripped him and put a scarlet robe on him, ²⁹ and twisting together a crown of thorns, they put it on his head and put a reed in his right hand. And kneeling before him, they mocked him, saying, "Hail, King of the Jews!" ³⁰ And they spit on him and took the reed and struck him on the head. ³¹ And when they had mocked him, they stripped him of the robe and put his own clothes on him and led him away to crucify him.

Oh, how those soldiers mocked and abused Jesus ...ramming a crown of thorns on His head...



making sport of Him. That's what the ignorant do. The soldiers are ignorant of who He is. They take an old, sun-faded Roman soldier's cape, a purplish/red, as faded by the sun:



They stripped Him naked...then put on that robe to mock Him and then they beat Him with the fake scepter and then they spit all over Him...the ultimate indignity. I can only imagine the amount of saliva running down Jesus' lacerated and mutilated body. Isaiah, the prophet, foretold this event, 750 years before Jesus was even born...

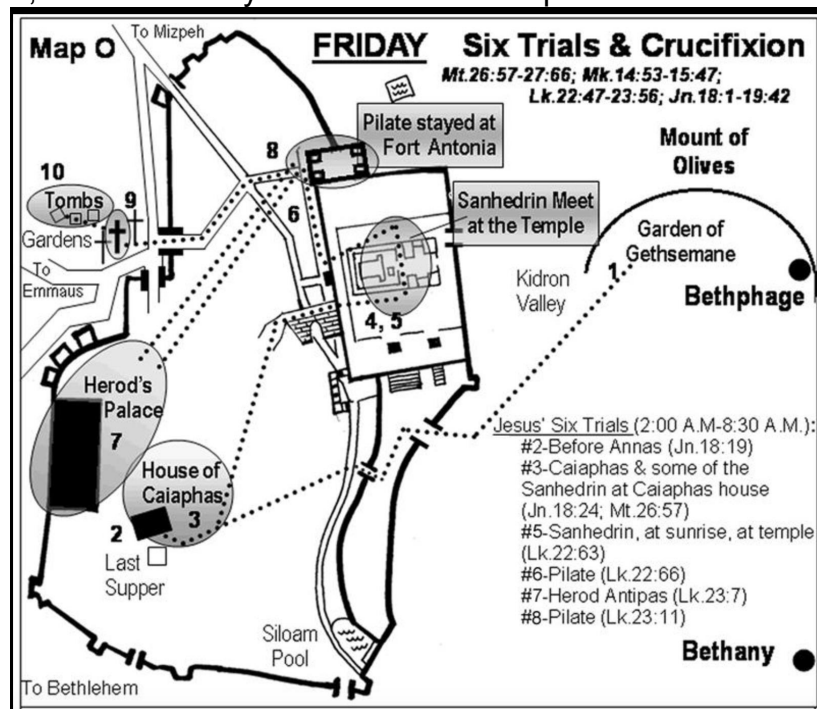
Isaiah 52:14

As many were astonished at you—his appearance was so marred, beyond human semblance, and his form beyond that of the children of mankind—

The soldiers were ignorant...Jesus would say as much to them and the crowd from the cross in a few minutes He would say: "Father, forgive them...for they don't know what they're doing!"

Listen, you're, here today and you ARE NOT IGNORANT. You can't be...even if you just heard for the first time in your life who Jesus and what He did for you. You and I are NOT ignorant today. We are accountable for what we know about Jesus. We either accept Him or reject Him. There is no middle ground. Will you accept Him or reject Him?

The soldiers have weakened Jesus greatly...and now they're headed to Calvary...a journey of about a third of a mile, outside the city walls... See the map...



Left side, from Fort Antonia to Calvary. **But, Jesus is struggling** to bear the weight of the 110-pound crossbeam. Enter Group #2:

1. Soldiers
 2. Bystanders
 3. Criminals
 4. Religious leaders
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In this group, we're introduced to a man from Africa...Simon of Cyrene... Jesus can barely walk...He's a heap of mutilated flesh...He's lost so much blood that, in His humanity, He can no longer bear the weight of the cross.

Matthew 27:32

³² As they went out, they found a man of Cyrene, Simon by name. They compelled this man to carry his cross.

Can you see this in your mind... See the depiction...



Simon...a bystander...thrown into the midst of something he hadn't planned. He had come from Cyrene. See the map.



See bottom left...that's modern-day Libya and you'll see Benghazi and then Cyrene. There was a large settlement of Jews there in the first century. This man Simon has traveled from Cyrene to Jerusalem for the Passover. He's obviously a believer in God...and now He's face to face with His Son.

If you're Simon...what do you do? Well, you obey the Roman soldiers. They likely have pulled a sword... So, you pick up the cross and carry it. Can you imagine Simon...looking over at Jesus and wondering, "What in the world has this man done... He's unrecognizable." He's hearing the

crowd...some are crying and calling out to Jesus in sorrow...while others are shouting insults and obscenities. Simon now has Jesus' blood on his clothes... He can hear Jesus laboring to breath. They're headed to Golgotha...

Matthew 27:33

³³ And when they came to a place called Golgotha (which means Place of a Skull),

Golgotha is the Aramaic word for the place of crucifixion outside the city walls. **Calvary** is the Latin word. Both words mean: SKULL. The hillside looked like a skull. It's a hideous place!

Simon was just a bystander, pulled into this drama. Listen, I'm not a Roman soldier and I have no sword to compel you...but, I am inviting you...compelling you...to come and be part of drama...the life that Jesus is offering to you...to take up your cross and follow Him. Will you?

Jesus arrives to Golgotha...and the soldiers nail Him to the cross with these...spikes...



5" spikes through the wrists and a 7" spike through His feet. The pain and agony would have been beyond description. And so they offer him something for the pain...

Matthew 27:34

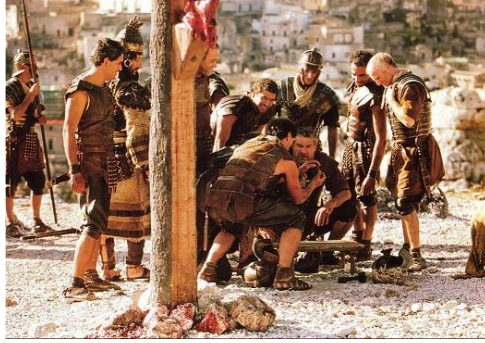
³⁴ they offered him wine to drink, mixed with gall, but when he tasted it, he would not drink it.

Jesus spit it out. Why? Because this was a narcotic. Now listen, the soldiers didn't give this to the criminals because they cared about them and were showing mercy...remember, they've just beaten them. No, they offer it to them because it drugs them to the point that they don't have the mental faculties to push up on the nails to get air in their lungs to keep breathing. It actually makes them die quicker. Jesus wouldn't take it...He spit it out...He wanted His mind to be clear so He could say what He needed to say. He needed to take care of His momma. He needed to talk to the thief and bring Him salvation. He needed to talk to His Father to say "It is Finished." So, He spit it out!

Matthew 27:35

³⁵ And when they had crucified him, they divided his garments among them by casting lots.

Did that first phrase stop you as it did me? Matthew just said, "And when they had crucified him." That's it. Just six words to describe 6 hours. Matthew gives no details beyond that. But, he does go back to the soldiers again. The ignorant... They cast lots...rolled the dice for Jesus' clothes. Jesus clothes...yes...He's naked on the cross. Artists are respectful and gracious...because the Romans humiliated and degraded you by crucifying you naked. And the soldiers got your clothes. And so they gambled...see the depiction...



You know every Jew had five articles of clothing:

Jewish Articles of Clothing:

1. Sandals
 2. Head covering
 3. Belt (sash)
 4. Cloak (outer garment)
 5. Inner Garment (under clothes)
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Apparently, there was an argument or fight for the one-piece under garment. It was seamless. So, they gambled and this was prophesied. The soldiers had no idea that it was foretold 1,000 years before it happened...some 950 years before crucifixion had even been invented:

Psalm 22:18

they divide my garments among them, and for my clothing they cast lots.

A reminder once again...that this is a book of fulfilled prophecy. No other “holy book” can make that claim. That’s why you can trust this as God’s Holy Word! And then, the SOLDIERS SAT DOWN AND WAITED...

Matthew 27:36-37

³⁶ Then they sat down and kept watch over him there. ³⁷ And over his head they put the charge against him, which read, “This is Jesus, the King of the Jews.”

They sat down because they were not only ignorant of who this was, but they were also totally indifferent. And we see that Pilate gets back at Caiaphas. “King of the Jews” was his sentence. The sentence was written in three languages (Hebrew, Greek and Latin) and placed over the criminal’s head.



John 19 tells us the chief priests asked to have the sign removed: “He’s not our King.” Pilate knew they were a bunch of religious thugs who had tried to blackmail him, and he said, “I’ve written what

I've written." Get out! **And so, now we come to the third group...Group #3, the criminals...** See the list again...

1. **Soldiers**
 2. **Bystanders**
 3. **Criminals**
 4. **Religious leaders**
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Matthew 27:38

³⁸ Then two robbers were crucified with him, one on the right and one on the left.

Jump down to verse 44...

Matthew 27:44

⁴⁴ And the robbers who were crucified with him also reviled him in the same way.

They were hurling insults at Jesus...these thieves...robbers... They too, offer their sarcasm and scorn...they mock Jesus. They don't care about him, initially, according to Matthew. **At this point both of them:** CARE ABOUT MONEY...like Judas...like the Sanhedrin. They are self-indulgent. They care only about themselves.

Listen, I believe their leader was most likely Barabbas. He was on the docket for that day...remember. Plundering bandits...yeah...they deserved to be hanging there. They were the criminals...they were the insurrectionists trying to mount up a revolt against Rome...not Jesus! He was totally innocent, and He was hanging there beside of them...dying for them too.

And now **Group #4**...the worst group of all.

1. **Soldiers**
 2. **Bystanders**
 3. **Criminals**
 4. **Religious leaders**
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REALLY worse than the soldiers, the criminals...yes... The religious leaders...the very ones who were leading this whole mess!! The plot to kill Jesus! They were the very ones who have been leading this charge for literally months! The religious leaders...

Matthew 27:41-43

⁴¹ So also the chief priests, with the scribes and elders, mocked him, saying, ⁴² "He saved others; he cannot save himself. He is the King of Israel; let him come down now from the cross, and we will believe in him. ⁴³ He trusts in God; let God deliver him now, if he desires him. For he said, 'I am the Son of God.'"

Listen, the Soldiers and many of the Bystanders...even perhaps Simon of Cyrene, were ignorant of all that was happening. But not them...



Oh, they have dogged Jesus' steps for months...and now they're gloating at the foot of the cross. Religious leaders...scribes, Pharisees, teachers of the Law. They knew the Scriptures...the prophecies He had fulfilled...they knew (because it was common knowledge) that He had even raised Lazarus from the dead! Oh...they knew He was the Messiah; and yet, they refused to live by what they knew. And that's how a lot of Christians live today. They refuse to live by what they know.

Listen Church...listen Christians...for those of us who call ourselves Christ followers... people listen. People are watching us. The bystanders... of life. Think of that Friday...the bystanders and even the criminals were taking their cues from the religious leaders... Listen...and people are taking their cues from us about Jesus...about the truth...because we claim to have the truth...

People are watching what we say...watching what we do...watching what we post on social media...how we react at the ball fields...in the office...in the halls at school. People are watching and it's all public... On that Friday 2000 years ago: IT WAS ALL PUBLIC FOLKS... See it here... It was all public!!!



None of this was done in secret! This was for the world to see. And whether we like it or not...people are watching our lives...and we want them to. Why? Because we want them to look at us and see something different about us and want what we have! Almost 3 years earlier on another hillside, Jesus said these words:

Matthew 5:13-14

¹³“You are the salt of the earth, but if salt has lost its taste, how shall its saltiness be restored? It is no longer good for anything except to be thrown out and trampled under people's feet. ¹⁴“You are the light of the world. A city set on a hill cannot be hidden. ¹⁵ Nor do people light a lamp and put it under a basket, but on a stand, and it gives light to all in the house. ¹⁶ In the same way, let your light shine before others, so that they may see your good works and give glory to your Father who is in heaven.

Is your light shining before the world, or are you like the religious leaders... You know those leaders were a stumbling block to everyone around them! Are you causing others to stumble by what you're doing? Are you flippant in what you say and what you do? Please listen, some of you need to think carefully about the things you are saying and doing...things you are posting...people

you are hanging out with...stuff you are doing that's not of God... Ask yourself...is this that I'm getting ready to do...will it bring glory to Jesus or to me!

You see, if we're truly followers of Christ...then we're walking in the light. We don't hide stuff. We don't try to get away with it...no...we live in public folks...this life of ours is public life...Jesus said that we are to confess Him before men! The Bible is clear...Romans 14:21 says:

Romans 14:21

²¹ It is good not to eat meat or drink wine or do anything that causes your brother to stumble.

Oh, those religious leaders were a stumbling block to the people. No, the religious leaders didn't care one wit about the truth, they didn't care about others, they cared only about themselves. And so, in essence they looked up at Jesus on the cross... See Him...



and they said, "I'll do it my way!" And they chose to live like the world, disguised in a cloak of religion...hoping they wouldn't get caught.

You know all the disciples waffled in Gethsemane didn't they. They all fled from the Garden... But, all of them, short of Judas, returned...didn't they! After the crucifixion and the resurrection, they found their courage and they saw Jesus alive and they returned and what did do? He said, "Peace be unto you, come" and Jesus received them back.

Is that you today? Maybe that needs to be you today! Come back. Return. Come to the Cross...