

Mercy Without Bounds

During July we have been looking at Jesus from an emotional perspective. What were the attitudes and feelings driving Him as He moved about in His earthly ministry? Our challenge is to examine how we respond to others as we become a place to heal. Today, our look at the emotions driving Jesus in His mission takes us up to the very end ... the cross. In today's lesson we'll examine the four groups of people in Luke 23:35-39 who hurled insults at Jesus. Then we'll refocus on Jesus ... who with the greatest amount of mercy ever known utters words you or I would never have.... *father forgive them for they know not what they do.*

I. Heartless Blasphemy

- A. Demonstrated by the Crowd
 - 1. Luke 23:35a - *the people stood **watching***. They stand with no love in their hearts.
 - 2. See Matthew 27:39 - they shook their heads ... *yelling insults at Him*.
 - 3. Mark 15:29 - hearts of unbelief; manipulated by their leaders; vicious and merciless.
- B. Demonstrated by their Leaders
 - 1. Luke 23:35b - *the leaders were **scoffing***. *He saved others; let him save himself if this is God's Messiah, the Chosen One!*
 - 2. Scoffing: "to turn up the nose." To hold someone in derision; to sneer at.
 - 3. Matthew 27:42; Connect Psalm 22:6-8 - they fulfilled this to the letter.
- C. Demonstrated by the Soldiers
 - 1. Luke 23:36 - *The soldiers also mocked him*.
 - 2. Luke 23:36b - offered Him **sour wine** ... pretending to bring royal wine to a king.
 - 3. Luke 23:38 - the inscription ... *this is the king of the Jews*.
 - 4. Luke 23:34b - soldiers cast lots for His clothes.
- D. Demonstrated by the Thieves
 - 1. Luke 23:39 - these men were probably one of Barrabas' band. *Aren't you the **Messiah***? It's said with sarcasm and scorn. The other thief has gone silent.

II. Mercy Without Bounds

- A. Luke 23:34a - shocking. *Father, **forgive** them, because they do not know what they are doing*.
- B. Luke 23:40-43 - The overwhelming point here is the amazing mercy of our God.
- C. 6 Things About the Penitent Thief
 - 1. 23:40a - He feared God - *Don't you even **fear** God?*
 - 2. 23:40b - He understood his guilt.
 - 3. 23:41a - He accepted his punishment ... *We are punished **justly**...*
 - 4. 23:41b - He acknowledged Jesus' righteousness ... *This man has done nothing wrong*.
 - 5. 23:42 - He acknowledged Jesus as king
 - 6. 23:42 - He pleads for help... **remember me**.

III. As We Close

- A. What Really Matters
 - 1. Luke 23:43 - **You will be *with me***. In the end, this is all that matters.
- B. Will We Return Good for Evil? Blessing for Cursing?
 - 1. Matthew 5:44 - *But I tell you, **love** your enemies and pray for those who persecute you,*
- C. Will We Learn Patience?
 - 1. Will we take the longterm view and trust in God's providential working?

IV. What About You? Jesus died for you. If you need Him, all things are ready.