



THE WONDERFUL CROSS

Small Group Discussion Guide: The Pierced Heart

Scripture Focus: John 19:31–37; Colossians 1:15–20

Opening Reflection

The sermon opened with a story about accidentally damaging a loved one's car—a reminder that even in love, we often cause damage.

- **Icebreaker:** When was a time you "dented" a relationship without meaning to? How did you go about fixing it?

Part 1: The Lamb and the Evidence

Read John 19:31–37

In this passage, John highlights two specific details: Jesus' legs were not broken, and his side was pierced, releasing "blood and water."

- **The Passover Connection:** John links the fact that Jesus' bones weren't broken to the Passover Lamb (Exodus 12:46). How does seeing Jesus as the "Perfect Lamb" change how you view the "mess" of the crucifixion?
- **The Physical Toll:** The medical reality of "blood and water" (pericardial effusion) shows the extreme physiological stress Jesus endured. Why do you think John (the eyewitness) was so adamant about including this specific, somewhat graphic detail?
- **The Heart of the Matter:** The sermon noted that Jesus' heart was literally under such pressure for us that it produced this water. How does that physical reality impact your emotional connection to the Cross?

Part 2: The Firstborn and Reconciliation

Read Colossians 1:15–20

Paul describes Jesus as the "Firstborn over all creation" and the one who "reconciles all things" through the blood of His cross.

- **The "Rib" Symbolism:** In Genesis, Eve was formed from Adam's rib—from his side, to be a partner. The sermon suggested that in our sin, we have "broken ribs" (damaged the partnerships God intended). Where do you see "broken ribs" in our world or culture today?
- **Defining Reconciliation:** Colossians says Jesus is reconciling *all things* to Himself. Is it harder for you to believe God can reconcile a broken world, or a broken relationship in your own life? Why?

Part 3: The Tools of Healing

The sermon identified two essential tools for healing: **Repentance** and **Forgiveness**.

- **Repentance:** If reconciliation is the goal, why is repentance (admitting the "broken rib") the only way forward? Why is it so difficult to do?
- **The Gavel:** The sermon defined forgiveness as a "legal transfer"—stepping off the judge's stand and handing Jesus the gavel.
 - Who are you currently trying to "judge"?
 - What would it look like to practically "hand the gavel" to the Pierced One this week?

Part 4: The Day of Preparation

The Jewish leaders wanted the bodies cleared away for the "High Day" (the Sabbath). For us, this season is a "Day of Preparation" for Easter.

- **The Invitation:** The sermon concluded with the idea that "The closer we get to the Heart of God, the closer we will naturally get to one another." How can your group support one another in seeking God's heart this week?

Closing Prayer & Action

The Challenge: Is there someone you need to seek out for repentance or extend forgiveness to before this week is over?

Prayer: *Lord, thank You for being the Pierced One. Thank You that Your heart was broken so that ours could be made whole. Give us the courage to put down the gavel, to admit our part in the brokenness, and to walk in the peace You purchased with Your blood. Amen.*