

CRUCIFIED

Jesus willingly sacrificed His life to pay the price for all of humanity's sin.



TRANSFORMATION
for Adult LifeGroups

MATTHEW 27:41-52

MARCH 14, 2018/MARCH 18, 2018

TODAY'S TEXT

Text: MATTHEW 27:41-52 (NIV), *In the same way the chief priests, the teachers of the law and the elders mocked him. 42 "He saved others," they said, "but he can't save himself! He's 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 rescue him now if he wants him, for he said, 'I am the Son of God.'" 44 In the same way the rebels who were crucified with him also heaped insults on him. 45 From noon until three in the afternoon darkness came over all the land. 46 About three in the afternoon Jesus cried out in a loud voice, "Eli, Eli, lema sabachthani?" (which means "My God, my God, why have you forsaken me?"). 47 When some of those standing there heard this, they said, "He's calling Elijah." 48 Immediately one of them ran and got a sponge. He filled it with wine vinegar, put it on a staff, and offered it to Jesus to drink. 49 The rest said, "Now leave him alone. Let's see if Elijah comes to save him." 50 And when Jesus had cried out again in a loud voice, he gave up his spirit. 51 At that moment the curtain of the temple was torn in two from top to bottom. The earth shook, the rocks split 52 and the tombs broke open. The bodies of many holy people who had died were raised to life.*

FIRST THOUGHTS

We honor people who voluntarily place their lives in harm's way for others. Military personnel who serve our country receive our respectful appreciation for their willingness to sacrifice their lives for the cause of liberty. Police officers protect and serve their neighborhoods, but not because someone forced them to do it. They willingly choose to go on patrol each day, even though they know that doing so may place them in danger. Firefighters and other first responders live with the same risk of losing their lives in the line of duty. Yet they are willing to take the risk. For that reason, we appreciate them.

- ° How do you respond to others who serve your community and country? How does their willingness to serve in this way affect the way you feel about them?

When we think about Jesus and what He has done for us, our thoughts go immediately to the cross. His crucifixion demonstrates that He intended to sacrifice His life once and for all so we could be saved. His death paid the price for our sin. When we study Matthew's account of His sacrifice on the cross for us, we are led to worship Him with sincere gratitude. Also, we are prompted to serve Him with complete devotion.

UNDERSTAND THE CONTEXT

Matthew wrote a careful account of Jesus' crucifixion. After Pilate gave the order to crucify Him, the soldiers led Jesus to Golgotha, where they nailed Him to a cross between two criminals. People who passed by ridiculed Him, and so did the religious leaders (27:39-44). Darkness covered the land as Jesus suffered in solitary misery for our sin and cried out to God (vv. 45-46). Then He took His last breath. Immediately His death made an impact on the temple, creation, and the tombs in Jerusalem (vv. 50-53). His death also made a powerful impression on the centurion who watched Him die (v. 54). Certain women who followed Him as faithful disciples were looking on from a distance. Matthew named them and noted that they came from Galilee (vv. 55-56).

After Jesus died, Joseph of Arimathea asked Pilate for His body. Joseph took possession of Jesus' body, wrapped it in linen, and placed it in a new tomb. The women from Galilee looked on as he closed the tomb by placing a huge stone over the door (vv. 57-61). Later the religious leaders complained to Pilate that Jesus' disciples might steal Jesus' body and then declare to everyone that He had been raised from the dead. In response, Pilate directed them to secure the area by sealing the tomb and posting guards (vv. 62-66).

EXPLORE THE TEXT

MOCKED

> Read Matthew 27:41-44

- ° Of those who mocked Jesus, who surprises you the most?
- ° In what ways were the crowds' accusations wrong or unfair?

FORSAKEN

> Read Matthew 27:45-49

- ° What do the three hours of darkness teach us about the nature of sin and the magnitude of its consequences? How is the darkness of sin expressed today?
- ° What is the significance of these supernatural events accompanying Jesus' death?
- ° How did Jesus' words reflect His anguish? The pain of sin? His separation from the Father?

SACRIFICED

> Read Matthew 27:50-52

- ° What events marked Jesus' death?
- ° What is the significance of each event? What do we learn about God from these supernatural acts?

SUMMARIZE AND CHALLENGE

- All of creation, knowingly and unknowingly, testifies to Jesus being the Messiah.
 - Sin causes separation from the holy God.
 - Jesus' death removed the chasm between God and sinful humanity, making it possible for humans to have an eternal relationship with God through faith in Jesus.
- ° How should we live in light of Jesus' sacrifice for us?
- ° Who should we tell? Who should we invite to church?

UPCOMING LESSONS

- Read Matthew 28:1-15
- Have you been an eye-witness to an accident or something alarming? How is that different than just hearing about an event secondhand?
- Next week we will look at the resurrection of Jesus and learn from the eyewitnesses.

READ THROUGH THE BIBLE

18th - Joshua 1-2; Psalm 37; 1 Corinthians 3 | **19th** - Joshua 3-6; 1 Corinthians 4 | **20th** - Joshua 7-8; Psalm 69; 1 Corinthians 5 | **21st** - Joshua 9-11; 1 Corinthians 6 | **22nd** - Joshua 12-14; 1 Corinthians 7 | **23rd** - Joshua 15-17; 1 Corinthians 8 | **24th** - Joshua 18-20; 1 Corinthians 9