

Jesus is Crucified

Notes for 3 Dec

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Background

Matt	Mark	Luke	John
27:32-66	15:21-47	23:26-56	19:17-42

Introduction

We will spend a few moments examining the history of 'crucifixion'.

"Christ redeemed us from the curse of the law by becoming a curse for us, for it is written, 'cursed is everyone who is hanged on a tree'".

Gal 3:13

Was it necessary for Christ not just to die, but to die on a cross?



Photo by Jim C, taken in Cadiz Cathedral

Discussion

Now for some issues arising from the texts:

1. Why do you think the people turned against Christ at the crucifixion?
2. Matt 27:45. "My God, my God, why have you forsaken me?" Had God the Father forsaken Christ the Son at this time?

3. The centurion and those guarding Jesus felt the earthquake and all that had happened. The centurion exclaimed, "Surely He was the Son of God!" What prompted him to make this statement? Was it the 'terror'?
4. Matt. 27: 55. Many women were there... They followed Jesus from Galilee to care for His needs. Not one woman has been identified with letting Christ down during this whole process. They were constantly supportive. Do you think women have special emotional gifts, and do you think that churches which relegate women to a secondary role are the poorer for that decision?
5. Who was Joseph of Arimathea? Why should we admire him? What is the significance of Nicodemus being introduced in John's gospel as his companion?
6. Why do you think Pilate submitted to the chief priests' and pharisees' request to secure the tomb?
7. Both Matthew and Mark indicate that those crucified with Christ insulted Him. However, Luke reports that one of the criminals rebuked the other for his remarks. Why the inconsistency?
8. "Truly I tell you, today you will be with me in paradise? Is the comma in the wrong place?
9. "Father forgive them, for they do not know what they are doing." Jesus requested forgiveness even although they had not repented. Discuss!
10. Back to Matthew 27:52. "And the tombs broke open. The bodies of many holy people who had died were raised to life." What is going on?

In the past we have touched on the question, "Why does God allow suffering?" I think this is a rhetorical question, in that it is unanswerable in any absolute sense.

"Why is there a God of love?" Again, I am unable to answer this, but I know God is a God of love, and it gives a huge amount of direction and meaning to my life.

The suffering of Christ on the cross is the ultimate expression of love. My limited imagination is incapable of creating a scenario that even begins to come close to this. This purpose in suffering gives me a great deal of comfort in my darker moments.