

The People Present at the Cross
Mark 15:16-46

1. When Christ was crucified there were many eyewitnesses and participators present. Today, by the grace of God, I would like to focus on a couple of these groups.
 - a. Each group is important to the narrative and they acted as they did according to their own particular reasons.
 - b. As we study these groups we get a clearer picture of who we are and where we stand in regards to our walk with God.

2. Verses 16-20 – The Centurions (those that hate Christ and yet do not know Him)
 - a. Because they saw no worth in an arrested Jewish messiah, these men took this opportunity to visit the viciousness in their heart on the one that was being hailed as the savior of the world.
 - b. We see their viciousness
 - i. Verse 16 – They call the entire battalion – this type of individual encourages others to show contempt.
 - ii. Verse 17 – They are mockers—Notice the purple robe and the twisting of a crown, driving it into Jesus’ head.
 - iii. Verse 18 – Ridiculers—feigning love and devotion
 - iv. Verse 19 –
 1. Violent—physically assaulting our Lord
 2. Contemptuous—Spitting on our Lord’s face
 - c. We see this group in our society today. We have a group of people that utterly hate the name of Christ (and would do much violence to His cause) and yet they truly do not know the Christ of the Scriptures.

3. Verses 21-22 – Simon of Cyrene – compelled to carry the cross (those that suffer ridicule for the sake of Christ).
 - a. Simon is compelled to help Christ.
 - b. Simon must suffer a great indignity in order to carry the cross.
 - i. As people yell, spit and blaspheme Christ—he becomes a recipient of their anger.
 - ii. This was a considerable and deplorable situation to be forced into.
 - c. However, Simon by this is transformed and he is actually credited with helping Christ in the work of redemption.

- d. This is the group that carries the cross of Christ and suffers greatly for the cause. They are looked down upon for walking with the cross of Christ and yet they are truly accomplishing something of great worth.
- 4. Verses 23-27 – Casting lots—This is the group that is indifferent to the suffering of Christ.
 - a. Verse 24 – As Christ is agonizing in His own blood, this group remains indifferent.
 - i. They think only of their own gain from such a tragic incident.
- 5. Verses 29-30 – Those that passed by (followers without an opinion of their own)
 - a. They deride – they are altogether uninformed and yet they join the crowd.
 - i. The crowd derides Christ therefore Christ must be worthy of derision
- 6. Verses 31-32A – The religious hypocrites
 - a. These are people that are extremely religious and yet they are enemies of the true Christ.
 - b. These men had a vision of messiah but it was shaped according to their own idolatrous view.
- 7. Verses 39 – The centurion – those that are converted when facing the power of the crucifixion
 - a. He truly looked at what was going on
 - b. God opened his spiritual eyes of understanding.
 - c. Have you ever come face to face with the cross of Christ?
 - i. Gospel
- 8. Verses 40-41 – Fair-Weathered followers.
 - a. **Luke 23:49** And all his acquaintances and the women who had followed him from Galilee stood at a distance watching these things.
 - b. They follow at a safe distance because they are afraid to be identified with Christ in suffering.
 - i. They rightly conclude that identification would be tantamount to persecution.

- c. Only John came close – all the others left him
- d. **Jesus had prophesied this in Matthew 26:31** Then Jesus said to them, "You will all fall away because of me this night. For it is written, 'I will strike the shepherd, and the sheep of the flock will be scattered.'
- e. You cannot follow Christ at a safe distance!

9. Verses 42-46 – Joseph or Arimathea (Those embolden by the Cross)

- a. He is a member of the Sanhedrin
- b. He has everything to lose
 - i. Anyone that stood would Christ would be excommunicated.
- c. He had been afraid of the cost while Jesus lived.
- d. At the death of Christ he realizes what Christ has done for Him
 - i. Because of His love of Christ he decides to live in such a way that all would know his love and devotion for Christ
- e. He asks for the body – the Sanhedrin would find out.
- f. He brings a linen shroud
- g. He took him down –
 - i. He becomes covered in coagulated blood
 - ii. He must pull the nails off of his body
 - iii. The tears
- h. He wraps him and together with Nicodemus—they anointed him for burial at great expense
 - i. Declared his kingship
- i. He buried him in a proper tomb—his tomb
- j. The sacrifice of Christ caused a new boldness

10. Benediction

- a. **Romans 1:16** For I am not ashamed of the gospel, for it is the power of God for salvation to everyone who believes, to the Jew first and also to the Greek.