

4Ws So That You May Know The Crucifixion

John 19:17-42

Dgroup's Curriculum: Leader's Copy

WORSHIP

Consider reading **Psalm 49** together, taking turns reading a verse at a time, or reading responsively with the leader reading a verse and the group responding with the next verse. You can discuss the Psalms you read and share what they mean to you.

Consider singing some of the songs on the sheets that were included in your packet if you have someone in the group that plays the guitar or can lead music and/or play the guitar.

WELCOME

Questions.

Have you ever been in a literal fight with punches thrown, or a figurative fight for someone's rights? How did the fight turn out? Would you fight again? Tell us the story.

WORD

Discussion Questions.

1. Jesus told Pilate that His people would have fought to prevent Him from being arrested, but they didn't fight. Why didn't Jesus' followers fight to keep Him from being arrested?

Answer:

Let them discuss this. (Read John 18:36.) Throughout this long night of the arrest and the trial, Jesus did nothing to prevent Himself from being arrested. Remind the group that in the Garden of Gethsemane, Jesus showed His power when the soldiers said that they had come to arrest Jesus of Nazareth. Jesus had spoken the 'I AM' to them and they were immediately thrown backward to the ground by the power of His words. Jesus then told the soldiers that they were free to arrest Him, but He insisted that they let the followers go. Jesus could have demanded that He be let go as well, but He did not do that. Here in this passage, Jesus tells Pilate that His servants could have fought to secure His release, but He did not allow it, and He did not allow it because it was not His intention to go free. All of this was because Jesus' Kingdom was not of this world. In other words, His Kingdom was not established by people here on Earth. Instead, His Kingdom was God's Kingdom and it was God who was establishing Jesus as the King of His Kingdom. For that to happen, Jesus had to die and present Himself before His Father in Heaven. That was why Jesus did nothing to resist arrest and did not allow His followers to fight on His behalf to set Him free.

2. How did Jesus respond to Pilate when Pilate said that He had the power to crucify Jesus or set Him free? What is the significance of this response?

Answer:

Let them discuss this. (Read John 19:8-11.) Pilate told Jesus that He – Pilate – had the power to crucify Jesus or set Him free. He did this as a means of attempting to force Jesus to talk to Him, to answer the charges that had been brought against Him. Jesus had been keeping silent, but this was another occasion when He knew that He had to speak up. He had to speak up because He wanted it to be clear that NO ONE was taking His life from Him, but rather He was laying down His life by His own choice. Jesus was not going to go to the Cross because Pilate decided that that would be His fate; Jesus was going to go to the Cross because THE FATHER had decided that that would be His fate. That's why Jesus speaks so forcefully here and tells Pilate definitively that He has NO authority over Jesus or Jesus' fate other than the authority that had been given to Pilate by God the Father. Jesus laid His life down; no one took it from Him.

3. When it comes time for us to stand before God we won't be able to use our good works as a means of forcing God to let us into Heaven. This is both good and bad news. Why?

Answer:

Let them discuss this. (Read Romans 3:19-20.) There are many people in the world today who believe that on the day that we stand before God's judgment, we will present our good works to Him. They believe that God will weigh our good works against our bad works and if our good works outweigh the bad, we get to go to Heaven. They believe that if our bad works outweigh our good works, then we will be sent to hell. Help the group to understand that, while this may be a logical way of looking at God's Judgment of us, it is NOT a Biblical way of looking at it. We will not carry our good works to the Judgment because God will not so much as consider our works when He pronounces judgment on us. This is bad news for some people because they are working hard to impress God and counting on the fact that God will be impressed with them and let them into heaven. The sad part of all this is that no one has ever or will ever be good enough to impress God. No one will ever be let into Heaven because of their own personal goodness. The Good News is that Jesus has thoroughly impressed God on our behalf. Jesus was perfect and perfectly holy, but He was executed as though He were a criminal. God did that because it was His will that Jesus be punished for us and die in our place. Our life and forgiveness does not come from our good works; our life and forgiveness comes from Jesus' death and resurrection on our behalf. THAT'S THE GOOD NEWS!

4. At around 3:00 PM on the afternoon of the crucifixion Jesus shouted, "IT IS FINISHED" from the cross. What was finished and why is this so important to us today?

Answer:

Let them discuss this. (Read John 19:28-30.) Jesus cried out, "It is finished" from the Cross and at first blush it appears that He is talking about His life, since right after He said this, He commended His spirit to His Father and died. It would be terribly short-sighted to think that Jesus was only talking about His life, though. Remind the group that Jesus had come to Earth to do the Father's will and to finish the Father's work. The Father's plan was that Jesus would be punished and die in our place, be buried and then rise again from the

dead. The Father was committed to raising Jesus back to life – that was the Father’s part in all of this. Jesus’ part was to die to pay the penalty for our sin. That’s what He did on the Cross, and that was His great redemptive work that was ‘finished’ just before He died. Remind the group that we owed a debt that we couldn’t pay, and that’s why Jesus paid a debt that He did not owe. That means that our debt before God has been paid in full, and as we trust the finished work of Christ for us personally, God cancels and forgives our debt to Him. That’s Good News for all of us, and it is also Good News for anyone we know and anyone we might get to know. Let’s start sharing the Good News with everyone who needs to hear it.

5. The story of the crucifixion is not the ‘end’ of the story, it is the beginning of the story, in fact it is the beginning of the beginning. Why would we say this and what does it mean for our lives today?

Answer:

Let them discuss this. (Read Matthew 28:16-20.) If we were to listen to the stories of everyone we know or have known, we would soon discover that all our stories end in the same way: And he or she died. Death is the end for those of us who live on Planet Earth. Some live longer than others, and some live better than others, but the result for all of us is the same: We die. Help the group to understand that we don’t mean to be morbid here, but this is a hard and fast truth. There was one exception to this rule, however. Jesus was born, He lived and He died, but then He came back to life and lived again, and now He will never die again. When Jesus had come back from the dead, He told His followers to meet Him in Galilee because He had something to tell them. There in Galilee He appeared to His followers and told them to go into all the world and make disciples of all people groups, and since that day, nearly 2,000 years have passed while Jesus’ followers have been busy trying to finish the job that Jesus gave them to do. To date, the church has reached 9,500 people groups, and there are still 6,500 people groups yet to be reached. This is something that should challenge the heart of every Jesus follower. Let’s get busy and get the job done that He has left us to do.

WORK

(Remember that the main question to ask during the Work time is, "Who else needs to hear about this?" You will be generating a list of people who we will plan to invite to a future meeting.)

This week of all weeks is the week when none of us should need to be reminded to tell other people about Jesus. We have just worked through the passage that talks about His trial and crucifixion, and we know that an innocent man was executed that day. He was executed in our place to be sure, but He was also executed in the place of our family, our friends, our neighbors, our coworkers, our classmates, and everyone who walks the planet. It's time for us to get serious about including others in our Life Groups who will be able to hear and understand the Good News about Jesus. Set a goal as a group and get busy including those who still need to hear.

Those of us who lead should remember that there is no better way to motivate others to share the gospel than to set an example for them. Speak to others about Jesus when you have the opportunity and set an example of lifestyle evangelism for the members of your group. They will be much more likely to follow your example than they will be to simply do what you tell them to do. Ask the group to discuss this and then ask them to think through the list of people you have been praying for each week. Discuss how we can be more aggressively involved in sharing the good news with these folks for whom God has burdened us. We will pray for these people tonight and each night we're together until they come to Life Group, or come to Christ through some other means. Have each couple or individual share the name of one couple/person to pray for and then ask one of the other people in the group to pray for them.

Close your time together in prayer.

WEEKLY PRAYER POINTS

I. Thanksgiving

- Worship God for who He is, what He has done, and what He will do in our lives

II. Country and the World

- Repentance and Salvation

III. Church

- That CCF Singapore Members would honor and love God and make disciples
- Core, Pastors, Leaders, and Families
- Ministries and Churches worldwide

IV. CCF Singapore Facilities

- CCF Singapore Center
- Equipments

V. Personal Concerns

- Deeper intimate relationship with God
- Righteous living
- Salvation of family and friends