

Sermon Discussion Guide

Encounters with Jesus: Men on the Cross

Luke 23:32-43

April 4 & 5, 2020

This discussion guide is written in three sections. The first is for private/individual reflection. The second is for couples or for small groups who may be meeting via video or phone. The third contains questions for family discussion. As many of you are sheltering in place, we encourage you to continue to read the passage and study it throughout the week. This way you can meditate on new truths each day and discover new things God might teach you in his word.

Section 1: Individual Reflection

1. Many of the stories we've discussed in our "Encounters with Jesus" series have depicted encountering Jesus in unexpected circumstances. What are some ways that you have encountered Jesus and seen God work during this unexpected time?
2. The first man on the cross was a cynical and angry man. Describe when and how you've been like this man, who was concerned with his own comfort and being the chief authority in his life.
3. The second man witnessed Jesus' obedience, righteousness and forgiveness. Think through why each of those is so important to you.
4. Consider how this sermon affects our head, heart and hands. What does the passage teach us - what knowledge/information do we gain from this passage (head)? What does this passage show us about our sinfulness and how our affections need to be changed by the gospel (heart)? How should this passage change our actions - what do we need to do or think in our everyday life because of these truths (hands)?

Section 2: Couple/Small Group Discussion

1. What portions of the sermon were most significant and helpful to you? Summarize some of your answers from the previous section.
2. Ray said that God is interested in giving us himself, not in giving us a life of ease. Discuss the implications of this idea. When have you perhaps viewed God as someone to give you a life of ease and comfort. What makes God giving us himself so much better?
3. Ray explained how the second man, even as he was suffering, did not ask for relief from his pain, but asked for Jesus? What does this practice look like in your life - think about some specific examples?
4. Our deepest longing is for a spiritual family - to not be orphaned in our sin any longer. Jesus' sacrifice gives us the family we've wanted. How have you experienced belonging to a family, particularly in this time of isolation and stay-at-home orders?

Part 3: Family Discussion

1. Share with your kids your reflections from Sections 1 and 2. Ask them to share some of their highlights and see if they can summarize the sermon.
2. Discuss as a family how the pandemic has challenged each of you and where it has cost you your comfort. Discuss what makes having God so much better than having comfort.
3. What makes trusting God so challenging and also so freeing in this unusual time? Pray together as a family that God would reveal more of your idols as parents and as kids and that he would teach you how he is much more valuable than those things.