

HIStory – Week 4

Day 22 – Peter Denies Knowing Jesus

Read Luke 22:54-65

Jesus had just been betrayed by one of His disciples, Judas (Luke 22:47-53) and now Peter was denying him even after Peter disagreed with Jesus' prediction about this situation even happening (Luke 22:33,34). Imagine if your best friend, or someone that you looked up to, told you that they were about to go through one of the hardest times in their lives and just when it looked like it wouldn't get any worse, they tell that would deny ever knowing them and essentially abandon; you would be outraged, correct? Tell them that they must have had it all wrong?

Now imagine that exact scene playing out and every time someone asks you if you know the accused you tell them that they are a stranger to you. Imagine that they look at you when you say that, what would you do?

Peter saw what was happening to Jesus and those three times when asked about Jesus; Peter panicked and reacted without thought. But this experience for Peter changed him. He was no longer the follower of Jesus who reacted first and thought second, he became one of the prominent people in the early Christian Church. Sometimes those experiences that we regret, or humiliate us in front of those we love, can shape us to become stronger in the path that we were meant to take.

1. Has there been an experience that you have wanted to change?
2. If you did change it, what do you think would be the result?

Day 23 – The Biggest Trial of All Time

Read Luke 23:1-25

Every now and again, the news will announce something along the lines of "it's the trial of the century" or "the trial of the decade" and many of those trials involve a famous person who has allegedly broken the law. But this trial was the biggest trial in history.

Pilate was not a big fan of the Jewish people and took great pleasure in harassing them; from taking money from the Jewish temple and using it to build other things, to insulting the Jewish people by bringing imperial images into the city. But Pilate really loved his position and if the people of the city issued a formal complaint then he would be withdrawn from His position by Rome, so to avoid losing his reputation and job, he sent Jesus to Herod.

This is not the same Herod that tried to kill Jesus as a baby, but it is the same Herod that killed John the Baptist. He ridiculed and mocked Jesus before sending Him back to Pilate with a verdict of not guilty. Pilate had every intention of releasing Jesus with a punishment but did not find him guilty enough to be put to death (however that punishment could have killed him).

But the Jewish people demanded that a convicted criminal, Barabbas, be released and Jesus should be put to death. It was a real life illustration; Jesus took the place of a guilty sinner.

Day 24 – Jesus is place on the Cross

Read Luke 23:32-43

As this man was about to die, he turned to Christ for forgiveness, and Christ accepted him. This shows that our deeds don't save us – our faith in Christ does. It is never too late to turn to God; even in his misery, Jesus had mercy in this criminal who decided to believe in Him.

1. What does it mean to you that Jesus has this mercy?
2. What do you think it means that Jesus asked God to forgive those who were mocked Him?

Day 25 – Jesus dies on the Cross

Read Luke 23:44-49

When Jesus died on the cross the curtain of the temple was torn.

The temple has 3 parts, the first was the temple courts where all people could enter, the second was the Holy Place where only the Priests could enter, and then the Most Holy Place where only the High Priests could enter. This was the place that Ark of the Covenant resided along with God's presence; the curtain was what separated this section with the rest of the temple. It was a thick curtain that went from the ceiling to the floor and impossible for human hands to rip. When it ripped it showed that the barrier between God and His people had been removed and anyone could approach Him.

1. What does it mean to you that your relationship with God doesn't have to be mediated by a third party?

Day 26 – Jesus Rises from the Dead

Read John 20:1-9

Sometimes when we talk about Jesus we talk about Him as if He is dead; we still talk about Him, but in the same way that we talk about someone who has passed away. Jesus is alive today, so we should do everything we can to make Him a part of our everyday lives.

Day 27 – Jesus Challenges Peter

Read John 21:15-25

Peter denied Jesus 3 times at the time of Jesus' crucifixion and I have no doubt that that event had been playing on Peter's mind every night since then and I believe that Jesus knew this and was giving him a chance to put his mind at ease.

Jesus didn't need Peter to do this for Jesus; Jesus wanted Peter to do this for Peter.

How great is that Jesus knows what we need and will help us feel better about who we are?