

➤ “into your hands”

■ 9:44; 20:19; 22:21; 22:53

iii. It is in the midst of the darkness that Christ is seen.

III. The Great Divide and You (23:47)

A. Isaiah 52:13 – 53:12:

B. What do you see?

LIVE THE STORY

We must not only love the Gospel Story, we must begin to live the Gospel Story, indeed, to have the Central Character live in us.

- What does it mean to say that the human race, though ultimately unified in its condemnation of Jesus, is ultimately also divided by the cross of Christ?
- How do you think it happened that this criminal who hung on a cross next to Jesus thought Jesus was going to come into a kingdom? Why should that surprise us?
- Does it ever seem like darkness has conquered in your life? How did Jesus faith respond in this moment? What did Jesus “not do” that some might expect in a moment of crisis?
- What does it mean to say that faith is about entrusting yourself to the Father's hands even when you are in the hands of others?
- What does Isaiah 53:1 tell us we must do to be on the right side of the Great Divide? How does it tell us this happens?
- What does this account tell us that might give us hope for the advance of the Gospel even though the world gets darker?
- What does this account direct us to put our hope in for any confidence that others will believe in Christ?
- What are the various ways Isaiah 52:13 – 53:12 describes the responses of people to the suffering Messiah? How have you responded?

The Cross as the Great Divide

Jerry Cisar — April 13, 2014

Text: Luke 23:26 – 56

Introduction

A. Unification and Separation

i. Proverbs 24:11-12

ii. While mankind is united in its condemnation of Jesus Christ, this unity is short lived.

iii. Romans 11:32

B. The Cross and the Great Divide

I. The Great Divide Symbolized and Prophesied (23:26–34a)

A. Not only the words of Jesus, but the actions surrounding them are instructive.

i. Simon

ii. A group of women mourning and wailing for Jesus.
a) Men mocking and beating Jesus (22:63).

b) Jesus turns.

B. Jesus speaks twice: *One pronounces judgment; the other forgiveness.*

- i. "Daughters of Jerusalem" (28-31)
 - a) Jesus entered Jerusalem, "Rejoice." (Zech. 9:9)
 - b) Jesus leaves Jerusalem, "Weep"

C. Jesus prays for their forgiveness. (34)

- i. This "*them*" was the "*their*" to whose will Jesus had been surrendered (25).
- ii. The cross of Jesus stands right between two criminals.
 - a) *Just as Barabbas, the convicted insurrectionist and murderer represented the generic man—all of us—these two criminals represent all of humanity.*
 - b) *How we respond to the crucified Messiah, what we see when we behold Him on the cross, will determine which of the two convicts we are.*

II. The Great Divide Revealed (23:34b–56)

A. The dividing of Jesus clothes as the soldiers cast lots.

- Psalm 22:6-8, 17-24

B. Observe with me...

- i. v35 The people with the Jewish leaders
- ii. v36-37 The soldiers
- iii. v39 One of the criminals

C. A contrasting chain of events begins with the cross.

- i. V40 "*But the other criminal...*"
- ii. V47 Then a Centurion
- iii. V48-49 All the people seeing what happened and the appearance of the woman disciples.
- iv. V50-52 *a member of the Council...*

D. What starts this division?

- i. The criminal... (23:40-43)
 - a) He sees himself.
 - b) He sees the righteousness of Jesus.
 - c) He sees something surprising.

ii. The Triumph of Darkness (23:45-46)

- a) "*...when darkness reigns.*" (22:53)
- b) "*Father, into your hands I commit my spirit.*" (Psalm 31:5)
 - Psalm 31:11-14
 - While others mocked, "*Save Yourself,*" Jesus was quietly trusting God.