

“Crosswalk”

A Six-Week Journey with the Cross, Part 3

“Stay Near the Cross”

“Standing near the cross were Jesus’ mother, and his mother’s sister, Mary (the wife of Clopas), and Mary Magdalene.” John 19:25

A. Some stand “near the cross” only out of duty...

“When the soldiers had crucified Jesus, they divided his clothes among the four of them. They also took his robe, but it was seamless, woven in one piece from top to bottom. So they said, ‘Rather than tearing it apart, let’s throw dice for it.’ This fulfilled the Scripture that says, ‘They divided my garments among themselves and threw dice for my clothing.’ So that is what they did.” John 19:23-24

1. There were four soldiers on duty that day; they fulfilled their responsibilities by standing near the cross.
2. The four soldier divided the clothes among them.
3. The four soldiers threw dice for the seamless garment.
4. The four soldiers had become hardened by the duty they had to fulfill.

B. Some stand “near the cross” out of gratefulness...

“Soon afterward Jesus began a tour of the nearby towns and villages, preaching and announcing the Good News about the Kingdom of God. He took his twelve disciples with him, along with some women who had been cured of evil spirits and diseases. Among them were Mary Magdalene, from whom he had cast out seven demons;” Luke 8:1-2

1. Mary Magdalene, had been freed from demon possession.
2. Mary became a grateful follower and supporter of Jesus’ ministry.
3. Mary stood at the cross with a few others.
4. Mary was the first privileged to announce the resurrection of Jesus!

“Mary Magdalene found the disciples and told them, ‘I have seen the Lord!’ Then she gave them his message.” John 20:18

C. Some stand “near the cross” out of a loving commitment...

1. Salome, wife of Zebedee, was also the mother of James and John, the ‘Sons of Thunder’.
2. Salome was the mother who asked if her sons could have the prime seats with Jesus.
3. Salome heard the response of Jesus, and must have been giving thought to all of this as Jesus suffered.

4. Salome’s son James was the first martyr and her son, John, the last.

“Saturday evening, when the Sabbath ended, Mary Magdalene, Mary the mother of James, and Salome went out and purchased burial spices so they could anoint Jesus’ body.” Mark 16:1

D. Some stand “near the cross” out of loyalty and a love relationship...

“As a result, the deepest thoughts of many hearts will be revealed. And a sword will pierce your very soul.” Luke 2:35

1. Mary, the mother of Jesus, stood there facing the suffering of her Son.
2. Mary must have reflected on the all the suffering she had faced up until this moment (the shame, the flight to Egypt, to release her Son, to stand by...).
3. Even if she did understand the message of His resurrection, to watch your Son suffer must have been beyond comprehension.
4. She stood as near as permitted so He would not suffer alone.

E. Some stand “near the cross” out of desire to fully follow, no matter what the cost...

1. John, the only disciple at the cross, stood with his mother.
2. John was standing “near the cross” after having followed at a distance.

3. John was entrusted with the greatest responsibility Jesus could give—the care of His mother.
4. John’s heart of love was evident once again!

5. Are you receiving forgiveness and grace with a grateful heart?

“But thank God! He gives us victory over sin and death through our Lord Jesus Christ.” 1 Corinthians 15:57

F. What are your thoughts as you stand ‘near the cross?’

“For to me, living means living for Christ, and dying is even better.” Philippians 1:21

1. Are you following out of duty?

“For when we place our faith in Christ Jesus, there is no benefit in being circumcised or being uncircumcised. What is important is faith expressing itself in love.” Galatians 5:6

2. Are you willing to suffer?

“For you have been given not only the privilege of trusting in Christ but also the privilege of suffering for him.” Philippians 1:29

3. Are you willing to give up expectations?

“Trust in the LORD with all your heart; do not depend on your own understanding.” Proverbs 3:5

“Now all glory to God, who is able, through his mighty power at work within us, to accomplish infinitely more than we might ask or think.” Ephesians 3:20

4. Are you willing to draw near, even though it may cause pain?

“But you should keep a clear mind in every situation. Don’t be afraid of suffering for the Lord. Work at telling others the Good News, and fully carry out the ministry God has given you.”

2 Timothy 4:5

Coming next:

40 Days of Prayer and Fasting –

March 5 – April 16, 2017

April 2: The Power of the Cross

April 9: Freedom Through the Cross

April 16: After the Cross - 3 Days Later