

AMAZING LOVE 07: JESUS AND THE GROUPS AROUND THE CROSS

As ever, please use (or discard!) these ideas as is most suitable for your group. Don't feel you have to use everything.

Please read Matthew 27:27-44, 55-56

For discussion:

1. Look through the passage to see how Jesus was treated by the soldiers. In what ways was He abused physically ... mentally ... emotionally? How does this speak to situations where we have suffered through the behaviour of others? Compare Hebrews 4:15-16.
2. Think about how this picture of the soldiers helps us to appreciate the greatness of God's love for this fallen world. What kind of people do we here see Jesus dying for? How does this assure you of His love for you?
3. See vv.38-44: In what ways was Jesus mocked and misunderstood as he was crucified? How do you feel when you are mocked and misunderstood? How do you tend to respond? Why? How did Jesus respond? Compare 1Peter 2:23-24.
4. What does it show us about the depth of God's love for us that Jesus died for these people? Why is this important for us?
5. God draws our attention in His word to the presence of the women at the cross (vv.55-56). Why do you think God wants us to know this? "The mother of Zebedee's sons" (v.56) has appeared earlier in Matthew's gospel (20:20) when she had misguided ambitions for her children to have places of special honour in Jesus' Kingdom. Her presence at the cross shows that, like all of us, she was a mixed bag - wanting to follow Jesus but not always getting it right. How does it help you to know that Jesus died for people like that, and welcomes them as His followers?
6. Sum up what you see about Jesus' love in this passage. Where do you most need to lean on His love today?

In Conclusion:

- What has encouraged you most in this study? What has challenged you most? Pray about your response.

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