

The Awful Plenty

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I. Introduction. Text: Mark 15:21-47.

II. The people gathered around the cross.

A. Those on the way to the cross.

1. Simon of Cyrene was compelled to carry the cross of Jesus by the Roman soldiers.

a. His feeling was one of unwillingness.

b. Many people are resentful that God should ever change their plans.

2. The soldiers were examples of the calloused individuals who have no interest in the great story of the cross. There is a wide spread philosophy today that one should get whatever one wants.

3. Many of the passersby derided Jesus.

a. There are people today who deride Jesus when there is any claim to the supernatural.

b. This falls short of acknowledging what God wants Jesus to see in a person.

4. The chief priests derided Jesus also.

a. They were threatened by Him.

b. They gloated over His helplessness.

c. The cross however stands at the center of the good news.

5. The man moved by curiosity to see if Elijah would save Jesus.

B. Those at the death of Jesus.

1. The centurion was brought to reality through the cross.

2. The women who were the first to love Jesus and the last to be with Him. They gather in hopeless commitment.

3. Joseph of Arimathea, the secret disciple who buried Jesus. Joseph took courage at the last moment.

III. The death of Jesus.

A. He asks why God has forsaken Him.

B. Jesus was made sin for the believer, which explains His agony. (Palm 22, II Corinthians 5:21)

C. The temple veil was rent showing that the way to God's heart was made wide open.

Application questions:

1. When has God changed your plans? What did you learn from the experience?

2. How do the different people around Jesus during His crucifixion parallel attitudes that people have about Jesus today? Explain.

3. Why was Jesus' death important in this text?
