

But... Good Friday

Acts 13:27-31

The People of Jerusalem

- The people of Jerusalem became a blood crazed mob.
- The people of Jerusalem 2000 years ago were no different than people today.
- When Jesus claimed to be the Son of God and challenged their morality, they were outraged.
- The people were just pawns for their leaders.

The Religious Leaders

- Jesus threatened the status quo of the religious leaders.
- The priests viewed themselves as the people's access to God.
- Jesus' gospel of Grace was at odds with the religious leaders' teaching of the law.
- The religious leaders tried to discredit Jesus and when that did not work, they decided to kill Him.
- The religious leaders could have accepted Jesus and His teaching, but they rejected the very One for whom they had waited so long.
- The religious leaders did not have the authority to deal with Jesus the way they wanted.

The Roman Leaders

- Since blasphemy was a religious charge and Pilate could not have cared less, the religious leaders changed the charge from blasphemy to treason.
- Pilate did not want to execute the carpenter, but he did not want to alienate the religious leaders either.
- Herod wanted to meet Jesus and see Him perform a miracle.
- Neither Herod or Pilate could find truth in the charges leveled against Him.
- Pilate stood Jesus next to a known murderer named Barabbas and offered the crowd their choice of who should go free.

The Disciples

- Of Jesus' closest friends, all but two disappeared... John stayed, and Judas hung himself.
- Peter, where were you?
- Andrew, James, Philip, Bartholomew, Matthew, Thomas, James, Simon, Thaddeus, where were you?
- The only difference between Peter and the other nine was that he verbally did what they did silently.
- Every day Christians find themselves in the same position as the apostles.

The Women

- Four out of the five people who stood at the foot of the cross were women.
- Jesus had more contact with women than His culture found acceptable.
- God uses whoever is willing to be used, and whoever He wants to use.
- Of all the people He had touched, only five people stood by Him.

Conclusion

- One thief acknowledged Christ for Who He was, the Son of God.
- The choices of the world today come down to the same choices of these two men who hung next to Jesus on that Friday afternoon:
 - To scoff and ridicule Jesus and dismiss His claims and spend an eternity separated from God.
 - To accept Jesus' claims and His offer of grace.
- On Good Friday, Jesus died for each one of us, but... on this Good Friday each one of us will have to decide how we will respond to that gift.