

Station 11: Jesus Dies on the Cross

NOTE - light a candle before continuing.

READ

At noon, darkness came over the whole land until three in the afternoon. And at three in the afternoon Jesus cried out in a loud voice, "Eloi, Eloi, lema sabachthani?" (which means, "My God, my God, why have you forsaken me?").

When some of those standing near hear this, they said, "Listen, he's calling Elijah."

Someone ran, filled a sponge with wine vinegar, put it on a staff, and offered it to Jesus to drink. "Now leave him alone. Let's see if Elijah comes to take him down," he said.

With a loud cry, Jesus breathed his last.

The curtain of the temple was torn in two from top to bottom. And when the centurion, who stood there in front of Jesus, saw how he died, he said, "Surely this man was the Son of God!" (Mark 15: 33-39)

REFLECT

Jesus dies but he lays down his life. He dies willingly and he dies for you and for the world. The earth goes dark and at 3pm Christ cries out. He does not die silently. What happens in Christ on the cross is a battle between good and evil. Throughout his journey, Christ is tempted to give up, to come down off the cross, to react with anger or hatred toward his oppressors. But, he does not give in and as he comes to the end he continues to direct his entire self toward God, his father. He commits his entire life into God's hands and trusts him and his desires. Because of this a Roman Centurion becomes one of the first gentile converts. Think of that: one of the men putting Jesus to death came to know Jesus as the Son of God.

We are all called to die and give our lives over to God. We are called to direct our joy and pain into God's hands and seek his will for our lives. Death is not easy but we are called to stare it down, trusting that we are not alone. Only Christ was forsaken so that we never would be.

ACTION

Extinguish the candle and take a moment to think about how Christ felt in those last moments: alone, forsaken, punished. And he did it all so you would never have to be alone, forsaken, or punished – give thanks for that.