

Appendix 1. Questions for Group Discussion

You may reprint these questions at no cost to encourage participation and discussion in a group or service that is meditating on the Seven Last Words. To reprint the entire study you'll need a reprint license available at: www.jesuswalk.com/books/7-last-words.htm

1. Father, Forgive Them (Luke 23:34)

1. What term do you usually use to address God? Why? How might your faith be affected if you started addressing God in your prayers as "Father"? How would it help you better understand the relationship between you and God?
2. In what sense can your sin be seen as a debt owed to God? How do you pay off a debt like that? On what just basis can God forgive this debt of sin?
3. What does knowledge of sin have to do with Jesus' forgiveness? At what level did Jesus' killers understand what they were doing?
4. Who was most responsible for killing Jesus? What responsibility do we bear for Jesus' death on the cross?

2. This Day You Will Be with Me in Paradise (Luke 23:43)

1. Why do you think one of the criminals on the cross insulted and mocked Jesus? What human trait prompted him to do this? (Luke 23:39)
2. Why does the other criminal rebuke him for his insults? On what grounds does he try to stop him? (Luke 23:40-41)
3. What did the thief have to believe about Jesus to cause him to ask him, "Jesus, remember me when you come into your kingdom" (Luke 23:42). What are the elements of his faith?
4. Did the thief confess his sins? Was he repentant?
5. How do you think the thief's request make Jesus feel?
6. What are the elements of Jesus' promise to the thief in Luke 23:43?
7. What are we disciples supposed to learn from this strange exchange on the crosses above our heads? What does Jesus intend us to get out of this?

3. Woman, Behold Your Son (John 19:26-27)

1. What do you think Mary is feeling while she is waiting at the cross for Jesus to die? What kinds of thoughts are going through her mind? (John 19:29-27)
2. Why, of all the disciples, do you think John is at the cross?
3. Why didn't Jesus make his brothers responsible for Mary? Why John?
4. What does this Third Word teach us about Jesus?
5. What are the implications of Jesus' Third Word for our own personal family relationships?

4. My God, My God, Why Have You Forsaken Me? (Mark 15:34)

1. How long was Jesus on the cross? In what way did the period seem to change about half-way through? (Mark 15:25, 33-34)
2. Why do you think the sun stopped shining? What did it signify? (Mark 15:33)
3. What does the loudness of Jesus' voice tell us about his mental and emotional states? (Mark 15:34)
4. What is the significance of Mark 15:34 including a quotation from Psalm 22?
5. In what sense was Jesus forsaken? Why must he be forsaken at this time? (Mark 15:34)
6. What was the "cup" that Jesus accepted in the Garden of Gethsemane? (Luke 22:41-44)
7. In what way does this Fourth Word reveal love? (Mark 15:34)

5. I Thirst (John 19:28)

1. What are the reasons that Jesus would have been thirsty? Physiologically what would have been going on in a person suffering as Jesus did?
2. What Scriptures are fulfilled by John 19:28-30 or may refer to this aspect of the crucifixion? Why was fulfilling Scripture important to Jesus?
3. What is the significance of the sponge being offered to Jesus on a branch of hyssop? (John 19:29)
4. Why do you think the New Testament makes such a strong point about Jesus' physical suffering? What difference would it make if Jesus were a divine person who didn't actually suffer on the cross? What difference would it make if Jesus were only a human being martyred on the cross?

6. It Is Finished (John 19:30)

1. What did Jesus come to accomplish? What was his "prime directive"?
2. What was the "cup," the "baptism" that he faced in order to accomplish his mission?
3. What was the significance of the word "Finished" written on ancient papyrus receipts?
4. Why did Jesus shout out this Sixth Word, rather than say it quietly? (John 19:30)
5. What do we learn from the Sixth Word about purpose? About focus? About obedience? (John 19:30)
6. How is the willingness to suffer vital to finishing one's mission?

7. Father, Into Your Hands I Commit My Spirit (Luke 23:46)

1. What is the meaning of the curtain of the temple being torn in two? (Luke 23:45b)
2. What does Jesus mean when he says, "Father, into your hands I commit my spirit" (Luke 23:46)? Why does this saying comfort us so much?
3. What would you have felt like had you witnessed Jesus' crucifixion – if you didn't know the next chapter in the story?
4. Why is faith so important during the dark chapters of our lives? What does it take to shake off the numbness and depression and take hold of that faith once more.