

# Good News

# for all people.

## The Gospel of Luke



Week 27 **LEADER** Discussion Questions  
Week of 4/9/23

LifeGroup Leaders: Thanks for your leadership across these 27 weeks! This is our final week of the series, and we will be moving on to the first part of the book of Daniel next. Discussion questions will be written for that series as well, but we will pause from having weekly questions over the summer. Feel free to send feedback on the questions (+ or -) to [pmarshall@calvarybible.com](mailto:pmarshall@calvarybible.com). We want the questions to be as useful as possible.

Text: Luke 23:26-24:53

Icebreaker: What's the best news you've ever received?

1. Read verses 26-49 of chapter 23. What different reactions to Jesus do you see from the people who witnessed the crucifixion?

We see a multitude of women following Jesus to his crucifixion site “mourning and lamenting.” We see the response of the people, which is contrasted (“but”) with that of the rulers in v. 35. We see the soldiers mocking in the next verse. Soon after, we read about the contrasting responses of the criminals. Finally, there’s the response of the centurion alongside the people and, specifically, the women. In all, the response is mixed. Some are heartbroken and some remain hard-hearted. A “surprise” in all of this is who’s not mentioned—the disciples.

*Application:* Do you think people today are still reacting in similar ways to Jesus’s crucifixion? If so, can you think of examples?

2. The Roman philosopher and politician Cicero wrote that crucifixion was a “most cruel and disgusting penalty, the extreme and ultimate penalty for a slave, and that the very name ‘cross’ should not only be far from the body of a Roman citizen, but also from his thoughts, his eyes, and his ears.”<sup>1</sup> Do you think it matters that Jesus *was crucified* and not put to death through some other, more dignified means?

This might be difficult to answer if you’ve never thought of it before. Some have suggested that crucifixion uniquely placed Jesus in a category that no other form of execution could have. One author who has thought about this a lot, for example, proposes that “God in Christ on the cross has become one with those who are despised and outcast in the world. *No other method of execution that the world has ever known could have established this so conclusively.*” (Fleming Rutledge, *The Crucifixion*, p. 143). Others have also pointed out how the horror of crucifixion matches the horrible nature of our sin in a way that “cleaner” execution methods can’t touch. Finally, from Cicero’s quote, the fact that crucifixion was reserved for criminals who were often slaves and

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<sup>1</sup> Raymond E. Brown, *The Death of the Messiah: From Gethsemane to the Grave: A Commentary on the Passion Narratives in the Four Gospels*, vol. 2 (New York: Doubleday, 1993), 947.

devoid of rights shows just how dramatic it is to say that—in the words of Paul in Phil. 2:8—Jesus “humbled himself by becoming obedient to death, even death on a cross.”

*Application:* Today, the cross shows up as jewelry, a tattoo, on a t-shirt, or as part of the architecture of a church. What do you think should come to our minds when we see the symbol of the cross?

**3.** Read from verse 50 of chapter 23 to verse 12 of chapter 24. Who are the people who seem most engaged in caring for Jesus’s body? What’s surprising about this?

We read about Joseph of Arimathea who is a member of the Sanhedrin (the Jewish legal body that condemned Jesus) and of the women, including Mary Magdalene and Joanna and Mary the mother of James. It’s surprising because we would expect to see the disciples at least in the scene. They’re not found, though, until the women report to them what had happened. It’s surprising as well because, as v. 11 implies, women’s testimony in this culture had little value. Their words were like “an idle tale.”

*Application:* In what way could this add credibility to what Luke has recorded in these verses?

The added credibility comes from the argument that Luke and the other Gospel writers would never write it this way if they were making it up! It is beyond unlikely that they would have made up a story where women are the first to report the resurrection since their testimony was often disregarded. You would never make up that a member of the Sanhedrin was more concerned than the disciples about taking care of Jesus’s body. The only way these details would be included is if they are true!

**4.** Verses 13-49 describe Jesus’s post-resurrection appearances. What do you notice that’s similar in what Jesus says both to the two on the road to Emmaus and to the disciples later on?

In both cases, Jesus points to what we call the OT Scriptures. In other words, Jesus is saying that these events are not a new twist in God’s purposes and plan, but a fulfillment of them.

*Application:* What difference do you think it makes to us that Jesus’s death and resurrection were “according to the Scriptures” as Paul puts it in 1 Corinthians 15:3-4?

**5.** 27 weeks! That’s a wrap for this series! What are one or two highlights that demonstrate how Jesus’s life and ministry are “good news for all people?”

*Application:* How has this series impacted your faith? Be as specific as possible as you answer.