

4Ws EYEWITNESS: Lessons from People Who Saw Jesus Suffer

MARCH 22, 2026



WORSHIP

Suggested worship songs: Can't Stop Singing, Oh How Great, Beautiful Savior, Nothing but the Blood, Living Hope

WELCOME

How do you view events happening around the world right now, and in your own life? Is it from a human point of view, or is it from God's vantage point?

WORD

Luke 22:66-23:1-11

⁶⁶ When it was day, the Council of elders of the people assembled, both chief priests and scribes, and they led Him away to their council *chamber*, saying, ⁶⁷ "If You are the Christ, tell us." But He said to them, "If I tell you, you will not believe;⁶⁸ and if I ask a question, you will not answer. ⁶⁹ But from now on the Son of Man will be seated at the right hand of the power of God." ⁷⁰ And they all said, "Are You the Son of God, then?" And He said to them, "Yes, I am." ⁷¹ Then they said, "What further need do we have of testimony? For we have heard it ourselves from His own mouth."

Then the whole body of them got up and brought Him before Pilate. 2 And they began to accuse Him, saying, "We found this man misleading our nation and forbidding to pay taxes to Caesar, and saying that He Himself is Christ, a King." 3 So Pilate asked Him, saying, "Are You the King of the Jews?" And He answered him and said, "It is as you say." 4 Then Pilate said to the chief priests and the crowds, "I find no guilt in this man." 5 But they kept on insisting, saying, "He stirs up the people, teaching all over Judea, starting from Galilee even as far as this place." 6 When Pilate heard it, he asked whether the man was a Galilean. 7 And when he learned that He belonged to Herod's jurisdiction, he sent Him to Herod, who himself also was in Jerusalem at that time. 8 Now Herod was very glad when he saw Jesus; for he had wanted to see Him for a long time, because he had been hearing about Him and was hoping to see some sign performed by Him. 9 And he questioned Him at some length; but He answered him nothing. 10 And the chief priests and the scribes were standing there, accusing Him vehemently. 11 And Herod with his soldiers, after treating Him with contempt and mocking Him, dressed Him in a gorgeous robe and sent Him back to Pilate.

Why is it important for us today to learn from those who witnessed Jesus suffer on His way to the cross 2,000 years ago? Jesus asked His disciples what others say about who He is. Then He asked them directly who they say He is (**Matthew 16:13-15**). This age-old question must be answered; no one can be neutral towards Jesus. Our answer to Jesus' question, "Who do you say I am?" is a decision that will determine our destiny --- both on earth and in eternity. Looking through the events of Jesus' life through the vantage point of eyewitnesses will help us greatly in answering that same question.

Jewish Leaders (Luke 22:66-71)

The Sanhedrin was a powerful group of Jewish leaders who were all sternly opposed to Jesus because of their pride and self-righteousness. They asked the Lord if He really was -- the Son of God. But their motive was not because they truly wanted to know Him, but to entrap Him. We learn from these Jewish leaders that many people today prefer to trust in their own religiosity, spirituality, or righteousness rather than in Jesus for salvation. Are you trusting in something else for salvation other than Jesus?

Pilate (Luke 23:1-7)

Pontius Pilate is a historical person; he really did exist. The "Pilate stone", discovered in an ancient Roman theater bearing the inscription of Pontius Pilate, the "Prefect" or governor of Judea! After confronting Jesus about who He claimed to be, Pilate concluded that Jesus was not guilty of the crimes that He was accused of (**v.4**). Although Pilate concluded that Jesus was innocent, it wasn't a conviction of his heart. Pilate did not give a "not guilty" verdict to Jesus. Instead, to avoid conflict and not wanting to displease people in his jurisdiction, Pilate turned Jesus over to someone else (**Luke 23:5-6, Matthew 27:24**). Sometimes, we choose to please people---including ourselves --- rather than please God. Perhaps we give in to unethical/immoral behavior due to peer pressure, or refuse to tell others about Jesus because we fear rejection, etc. Pilate literally washed his hands off Jesus and sent Him to Herod.

Herod (Luke 23:8-9, 11)

Herod was eager to meet Jesus because of what he thought he could get out of Jesus --- a miraculous sign. When Jesus kept quiet, Herod and his soldiers mocked the Lord and treated Him with contempt (**v. 10-11**). Herod Antipas was the same 1st century ruler of Galilee, the same one who killed John the Baptist (Jesus' cousin). Like Herod, there are those who seek Jesus, but only because they want something from Him. If we seek Jesus only for what we can "get" from Him, we are not truly seeking God, but a "genie". Learn to seek Jesus for who He is, not for what He can give.

Barabbas (Luke 23:18-21)

Barabbas was a criminal awaiting the death penalty. He

was guilty of rebellion and murder. He was set free and delivered from death that day because Jesus took his place. Many people do not understand --- nor care --- that Jesus took their place on the cross. We need to pray that God will open people's hearts to Jesus. Ironically, "Barabbas" means "son of the father". We don't know if he eventually placed his faith in the Son of God. But if he did, then Barabbas would have become a son of his Heavenly Father. Jesus took the place of Barabbas, and our place through His substitutionary death on the cross (**1 Peter 3:18**). We find this truth throughout the New Testament, and the Old Testament as well (**Isaiah 53:5**). What Jesus suffered should have been on us, but it would have been for nothing because we can never pay for our own sins.

Simon of Cyrene (Luke 23:26)

This man just came in from the country and was taken from out of the crowd --- a nobody just standing there--- and was given the unique privilege of embracing the cross and following Jesus. Simon of Cyrene paints a picture for how we are to follow Jesus (**Luke 9:23**). To take up our "cross" is to die to ourselves, follow His example and embrace His mission. Is Jesus the One we die to ourselves for? Do we follow Him and is it His mission that we embrace?

Daughters of Jerusalem (Luke 23:27-29)

The term "daughters of Jerusalem" was first mentioned in the Song of Solomon as a reference to a "choir". They probably knew He was innocent, and they were His followers. They were crying and lamenting, but Jesus stopped on His way to the cross, to talk to them. That was a special moment at a time that women in that culture were treated as second-class citizens. When Jesus addressed them as "daughters of Jerusalem", it was a term of endearment. Jesus told them not to weep for Him, but cry for themselves and their children because God's judgment is coming (**Luke 23:30-31**). Jesus' words to the women that day will be spoken again about God's judgment on the guilty in the last days (**Revelation 6:15-17**). With all that's going on in the Middle East, we are made aware of the end times. Like the "daughters of Jerusalem", Jesus warns us about the end times. How are we preparing for it? Do we even recognize the fact that we are at the end times? Even if you don't believe that, how about considering the end of your life?

The Two Criminals (Luke 23:32)

It was foretold hundreds of years before that Jesus would be crucified between two thieves (**Isaiah 53:12**). His death on the cross and being crucified between two criminals shows how reliable and accurate Biblical prophecy is! It was prophesied and fulfilled that Jesus, though sinless, would die a sinner's death to pay for our sins.

Believe that Jesus took all your sins upon Himself, embrace Him as your Lord and Savior and be an "I witness" for Jesus!

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

(Leaders: Please choose questions that are appropriate to the level of spiritual maturity of your members)

1. If Jesus asked you, "Who do you say I am," how would you answer and why?
2. Which of the eyewitnesses did you find most relevant to you? Explain your answer.
3. What will you do this week to be an "I Witness" for Jesus and tell others about Him?

WORKS

PRAY CARE SHARE IN ACTION

Pray that more people will encounter eyewitnesses of Jesus from the Bible, and His people today. Share about who Jesus truly is to others through your life and words. Witness for Christ and share the gospel to someone this week.

WEEKLY PRAYER POINTS

I. Thanksgiving

- Worship God for who He is, what He has done, and what He will do in our lives.

II. Country and the World

- Upright and moral governance of public servants; repentance and salvation for government leaders and citizens for a Christ-centered Philippines.
- For legislators to promote and support bills and laws aligned with God's Word.
- War in Ukraine to end, loss of lives prevented.
- Pray for persecuted Christians in Sudan and Nigeria) --- many have been beheaded and murdered; earnestly seek God's intervention to stop the bloodshed. Pray for freedom from oppression, that God's word and His people bring them comfort and hope.
- PRAISE God that all Israeli hostages have been restored to their families! Continue to pray for Israel's war with terrorists to end according to God's purpose and for His glory. For Jewish people worldwide who are experiencing a surge of antisemitism. May this lead them to the Messiah, Jesus as they turn to God for help and comfort.
- For nations in turmoil (e.g., Ukraine, Middle Eastern countries, etc.) to experience true freedom in Christ and become centers for massive spiritual revivals in their regions. For new Iranian leadership to rise up that will be for the people of Iran, will promote freedom of worship that the Iranian believers will be

able to reach out to the rest of their countrymen and the people of the Middle East.

III. Church

- That CCF Members would honor and love God, and make disciples
- For elders, pastors, deacons, and families to become holy, humble, harmonious, happy, and heart-working)
- For ministries and church expansions worldwide.

IV. CCF Facilities

- Worship and Training Center
- Prayer Mountain (MMRC)

V. Personal Concerns

- Deeper and intimate relationship with God
- Righteous living.
- Salvation of family and friends

MEMORY VERSE

Matthew 16:15

He said to them, "But who do you say that I am?"