



WEEK 1:

The Cross of Jesus

LUKE 22

Introduction

“Christians who do not have the feeling that they must flee the crucified Christ have probably not yet understood him in a sufficient radical way. Even the disciples of Jesus all fled from their master’s cross.”

(Jürgen Moltmann, in *The Crucified God*, p 33)

Discuss this quote

Background

Perhaps we are very comfortable (*too comfortable*) to deal with Jesus' cross, or in other words we may have become so used to the event that the violence and abomination and pain and God-forsakenness of it no longer touch us. Jesus was killed on the cross. He was nailed to a wooden structure and He physically suffocated because He was no longer able to breathe. It is very violent to think about it, and many times we do not want to think about it in this way. But that is the reality and what he was going through on the cross was so much worse. CS Lewis is convinced that the cross has become part of art, only after all who have been at a real crucifixion died!

And now Jesus calls us in **Luke 9:23** "If anyone wants to come after Me (follow me), he must leave himself, take up his cross every day, and follow Me ..."

Do you think this means we must die like Jesus?

Or do you think that means something else to us?

We're going to try to get answers to these questions over the next 40 days ...

Scripture reading: LUKE 22:1-6, 24-27, 31-34, 39-62

- ❖ What is the cross a symbol of, or in other words: What does Jesus' cross mean to you?

It is possible that, as mentioned above, that we easily forget that the cross also wants to tell of humiliation and cruelty and fear and pain and of being cursed and that it was used

as a cruel deterrent to criminals. For us, the cross tells of forgiveness sin, victory over death. Jesus dies on the cross and He gives us another chance.

- ❖ But the cross also tells of **Jesus' disciples' failure**. We could easily think they should have known better. They did see his miracles, heard his teachings, people were healed, they even shared in the fish and bread at the multiplication, drank the water that became wine at Cana. **What do we read about his disciples in this passage?**

- o What happened to **Judas**? (v 1-6, 47-48)
- o What happened to **Peter**? (v. 31-34, 45-46, 54-62)
- o What happened to the **disciples**? (v. 24-27, 45-46, 49-51)

- o **How are we - just like the disciples - for Jesus a disappointment?**

- ❖ **Or do you think Jesus' cross wanted to teach us something else?**

- o What did Jesus do on the cross?
- o What did He tolerate?
- o What gave Him assurance, did He hold on to?

The purpose of the cross was to save, to forgive our sins, to give us another chance ... it doesn't matter how many times you have failed Him...

Our challenge: (works)

- i. *What is our first reaction if things don't work out? What do you need to help you to follow Jesus' example?*
- ii. *Be honest about what you're struggling with most...*
- iii. *What promise from this passage will you hold on to during this week?*

Worship

1. *Name one thing from this study that you have learned, and which will challenge you. Ask the group to pray for it.*
2. *Give thanks to the Lord for His example on the cross and the challenge it holds for us, as well as His promise of another opportunity we are getting!*