

APRIL 4

Communion is...

Communion is strength... As I eat and drink of Jesus, I am strengthened to live in righteousness.

Read Matthew 27:11-26

Matthew 27 already started out dark, and the darkness will continue to close in as we read each verse. Thankfully we already have the knowing that chapter 28 will follow. The hope of the resurrection surely will spur us on through the evil that is coming as the verses continue.

Yesterday in verses 6-9 we saw the religious leaders making effort to mix religious law with their evil motives, and it really only gets worse as we read on. Verses 11-26 give us a front row seat to seeing that not one leader stood up for Jesus.

How heartbreaking this is. As I read it, my heart is crying out for somebody to stand up and do the right thing. To stand up and say, **“Enough!”** **But not one person did.** Not the governor. Not one of the chief priests or elders. Not even Pilate, who knew crucifying Jesus was wrong. Oh, he tried to stand for Jesus a little bit, but he wasn't willing to stay standing. And his wife wasn't either. **Once the crowd got involved, it was over.**

In fact, that is what it had really been about all along. If you read back through the Gospels, the religious leaders were always concerned about the crowds. And obviously Pilate was too.

I wonder how many in that crowd had interacted with Jesus in the days prior. I wonder how many had experienced a blessing from Him, a healing, a provision of bread and fish, a word from heaven. But now, every single one in this crowd is following the religious leaders and shouting out for His death. **See just because a crowd is religious, it doesn't mean it is righteous.**

People are prone to following the crowd, even a crowd motivated by evil. We would hope that leaders would have the strength to live differently, but they often don't. However we can.

We can't go back to that awful day and be the one to stand up for Him. But we can be the one today. Because in daily life there is moment after moment after moment to stand up for Jesus.

Left to ourselves, more than likely we will find ourselves mixed in with the crowd. But coming to the communion table will strengthen us to live different. To be that one who stands!

Prayer Conversation Starter...

Jesus, I want to think that I would have stood up for You on that day and yet I will never really know. But I can stand up for You today. As I partake of Your body and Your blood, **strengthen me in righteousness to be a person who will always stand for You...**



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