

THE PEOPLE AT THE CROSS

2 August 2024

The various groups of people who surveyed the cross of Jesus Christ 2,000 years ago show us the many ways in which people today view Jesus Christ when they look at Him on Calvary's cross, dying for our sins.

Matthew 27:36 "And sitting down they watched him there."

Matthew 27:39 Some passed by and reviled Him

John 19:25 Those that loved Him stood by the cross.

Who was at the cross?

1. **The Religious crowd.** Religion was there, but religion didn't pay for your sins.
 - a. **Priests**, responsible for bringing sacrifices which could never satisfy God.
 - b. **Pharisees**, responsible for teaching the commands and ordinances of God and the conduct expected by God.
 - i. Their doctrines were right, but their conduct was not (Mat. 23:3).
 - c. **Scribes**, responsible for making exact copies of the scriptures to replace old copies.
 - i. They wrote down the scriptures which spoke of the dying Savior.
2. **The Political world.** They wield great power, but they cannot save your soul.
 - a. **King Herod**, mocked and ridiculed Jesus and sent Him back to Pilate (Luke 23:11).
 - b. **Governor Pilate**, pressured by threats (Jn 19:12), condemned Jesus, though he found no fault in Him (Luke 23:4, Jn 19:4-6, Mat 27:24).
3. **The Judicial world.**
 - a. **Sanhedrin** determined how to apply the law and decided the punishment for violating it.
 - i. They could have prevented the improper use of the law (Jn 19:7).
 - ii. They could have stopped the mock trial and the abuse. But they did not judge righteous judgment (Prov 31:9, Jn 7:24).
4. **The Criminal Element.**
 - a. **Murderers, malefactors, thieves** (Luke 23:25, 39, Mark 15:27, Mat 27:38, 44).
 - i. One thief died unrepentant and unredeemed, not interested in God's mercy.
 - ii. One thief died after he repented and trusted Jesus Christ.
5. **The Military Element.** Military service is commendable, but does not grant you entrance to heaven.
 - a. **Soldiers**: abused Christ, mocked Him, gambled for His belongings.
 - b. **Centurions**: officers in charge of 100 men. He saw something different about Jesus, glorified God, and said, "**Certainly this was a righteous man**" (Luke 23:47).
6. **Family and Friends.** (John 19:25)
 - a. **Mary**: well-known, but impoverished.
 - b. **Mary's sister**: Unknown.
 - c. **Other women.**

They watched Him

Everyone who was at the cross saw the same event, but they saw it differently.

1. **Soldiers:** they saw somebody who couldn't fight back, so they took advantage.
2. **Women:** saw Christ with sorrow. He treated them with kindness like they'd never known before.
3. **Mary:** looked at Him with anguish (Luke 2:35).
4. **The Disciples:** looked on in perplexity (confusion). Christ told them many times that this would be His end, but they never understood up to this point. (Mark 8:31, 9:31, 10:33, Lk 9:44, 24:7)
5. **Thief #1:** looked upon Christ with hardness.
6. **Thief #2:** looked upon Christ with repentance in his heart.
7. **The Centurion:** Looked at that scene with conviction that Jesus was the Son of God (Mark 15:39, Mat 27:54).
8. **The Priests:** Looked at Him and mocked.
9. **The Angels:** Looked on with wonder (1 Pet 1:12).
10. **The Devil:** Looked on that scene with dismay and panic. His control over mankind was at an end. Men would no longer need to fear death.
11. **Passers-by:** watched Jesus with indifference.
12. **God the Father:** watched with wrath. Our sins were upon His Son. He also watched with love and satisfaction. Now there was a way for Him to save sinners.

Lamentations 1:12 *"Is it nothing to you, all ye that pass by?"*

What do you see when you think about the cross of Jesus Christ?

John 3:16 God gave His Son so we could have everlasting life.

John 3:18 If you don't believe on Him, you remain condemned for eternity. Believe Him and you'll not perish.

Where you will spend eternity depends upon how you view the cross of Jesus Christ and how you respond.