

LESSON 17

Name: _____

How Jesus' Death on the Cross Saved Us From Sin

Directions: Read the cited scripture passages and related biblical footnotes to help you to fill in the blanks for each item.

1. Some people think Jesus saved us from sin because he alone was hung on a cross. But Matthew 27:38 says that on Jesus' right side and left were crucified two _____.
2. Others think he saved us because unlike all the others who were crucified, he alone was executed unjustly on a trumped-up charge. But Luke 23:2-5 and John 19:12 point out that Jesus was condemned for supposedly inciting a rebellion against legitimate authority. It made little difference that Jesus professed: "My kingdom does not belong to _____." (Jn 18:36)
3. Now how could a condemned criminal, simply by dying a painful death, save the whole _____?
4. Some people think that Jesus was the only person who was nailed to the cross, and hence he suffered more than anyone else who was ever executed. But John 19:18 makes clear that not only Jesus, but also two others with him, were _____.
5. Or again, maybe Jesus saved us from sin because he willingly gave his life for his beliefs. But Socrates, Nicanor (2 Mc 6:18-31), and John the Baptist (Mt 14:3-12) also died for their beliefs, and we don't say that they saved all mankind from _____.
6. It could not be the type of execution that Jesus endured which saves us. The Romans executed thousands of criminals over a period of five hundred years. Josephus in his *Antiquities* (17.10.10) notes that the governor of Syria in 4 B.C.E. crucified two thousand _____.
7. The Bible itself (Dt 21:22-23) says: ". . . God's curse rests on him who _____."
8. According to St. Paul in 1 Corinthians 1:23, the crucifixion of Jesus was a real stumbling block to belief on the part of both _____.
9. In the Roman empire, crucifixion was a type of torture reserved for slaves, rebels, murderers, and non-Roman _____.
10. Finally, if Jesus were cruelly executed in order to make up to God the Father for all the sins ever committed on earth since Adam and Eve, then his death would make God the Father seem very _____.
11. Well, then, did Jesus save us from sin simply because he was crucified? If Jesus had been beheaded or stoned to death instead of being crucified, would he still have _____?
12. It was not the style of execution suffered by Jesus that saved us. Rather, it was Jesus' behavior during his passion and death that _____.

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13. First of all, Jesus did not try to talk his way out of his impending death. When Jesus was questioned by Herod, Luke 23:19 says that Jesus “. . . gave him _____.”
14. Mark 15:5 agrees, saying that when Jesus gave Pilate no further answer to his questions, Pilate was _____.
15. Secondly, Jesus thought of the welfare of those around him, even while he himself was undergoing torture. According to Luke 23:28-31, while Jesus was walking to his death at the Place of the Skull, he thought not of himself, but of the _____.
16. Even after he was nailed to the cross, in Luke 23:34 Jesus prayed for his executioners: “Father, forgive them, they know not _____.”
17. Again, in Luke 23:42 one of the criminals crucified next to Jesus said: “Jesus, remember me when you come into your kingdom.” Jesus replied to him, “Amen, I say to you, today you will be with me in _____.”
18. Thirdly, Jesus did not die cursing his killers or bemoaning his fate. Instead, in Luke 23:46, with his last breath Jesus cried out in a loud voice, “Father, into your hands I commend _____.”
19. Jesus did not die reacting the way most people would react in a similar _____.
20. So how *did* Jesus save us from sin? By showing a whole new level of possibility for human beings. Certainly, humans are capable of loving relatives and friends. It is easy to love those who _____ . (Lk 14:12)