

BE A BRINGER

“40 One of the two who heard John speak, and followed Him, was Andrew, Simon Peter’s brother. 41 He first found his own brother Simon, and said to him, “We have found the Messiah” (which is translated, the Christ). 42 And he brought him to Jesus....” John 1:40-42a

A bringer makes one touch each week by investing and inviting someone to Christ and church.

Name three people you will pray for their salvation this week:

PRAYER REQUESTS FOR THE WEEK

“Moreover, as for me, far be it from me that I should sin against the LORD in ceasing to pray for you;....” I Samuel 12:23a

Luther & Martha Smith

Missionaries to Papua New Guinea
Please Contact Them at lnsmith@smiths2png.com

At The Cross

With People Who Were There

GROWTH GUIDE

Handout: 03/04/18

Study: 03/11/18

The Roman Soldier

He is not just another Roman soldier. As a centurion, he is a commander over a hundred men, as his name might indicate. He and his men have been given the very unique responsibility of guarding Jesus. And the centurion has become very much aware of the issues surrounding Jesus. It may well have been that he not only heard all the cries of the Jews and their accusations, but well may as well have heard the conversation privately between Jesus and Pilate relative to Jesus' kingship. He has been a party to everything that's gone on because it's been his responsibility to guard the prisoner.

These also are the very men who have nailed Jesus to the cross. They are the very men who have pressed a crown of thorns into His brow, hit Him in the head with reeds, slapped Him, spit on Him, punched Him, mocked Him, thrown a robe over His open wounds that had been opened by the scourging ripped...which ripped and tore His flesh. They are the very men who gambled for His garments in an amazing display of indifference. Frankly, they are ignorant. They are uninformed. They are untaught. They are, at least from a Judaistic viewpoint, irreligious. They are pagans. They are part of the scene not because they have anything against Jesus, they don't even know Jesus. They're part of the scene because they--as Roman soldiers--have to do what their commander tells them and Pilate or somebody under him has put them in charge of the prisoner.

His duty has allowed the centurion and his men to hear Jesus' words on the cross, profound words which have penetrated his heart. He has seen all of this amazing miraculous phenomena taking place. And he knows that something has gone very wrong and the whole of the universe is convulsing in response to what is going on.

Their fear indicates the sense of sin. It is that reverential fear that comes to one who knows that he may be under the judgment of God. And though they were pagans, that no doubt penetrated their hearts. It was more than a human fear. And so, the awareness of their sin in doing what they did to this man, the sense of guilt--what have we done, what's going on, something is very wrong--leads them to one other step. And fearing greatly, he said, "Truly, this was God's Son."

First, the fear indicates the sin. Then the confession--may I be so bold as to suggest--indicates the salvation. If their fear was only a human fear, they would have cried for help or they would have run. But it wasn't only a human fear. It was awe in the sense that men reserve awe for God, for deity. In fact, in Mark 15:39, Mark who gives us his view of the same scene, says that it was immediately after the centurion heard Jesus say "It is finished. Father, into Thy hands I commend My spirit," it was immediately after that that he said, "Truly, this was God's Son." So it wasn't only the phenomena, but it was those final words of Jesus that just drove the truth into his heart. And he uses the word "truly" to make it very, very clear that he has no equivocation in his mind. He isn't saying, "Maybe it's the Son of God...possibly it's the Son of God." He is saying without equivocation and without contradiction, "This was God's Son." No doubt in his mind.

Do you understand the grace of God? Do you understand the mercy of God? Do you understand the love of God? If you want to understand it, then understand this, Jesus Christ in the process of being crucified, redeemed His crucifiers.

(excerpt from John MacArthur sermon: "Responses to the Death of Christ")

KEY VERSE

Matthew 27:54

“ So when the centurion and those with him, who were guarding Jesus, saw the earthquake and the things that had happened, they feared greatly, saying, ‘Truly this was the Son of God!’”

NKJV

WEEKLY READINGS

Monday: Ephesians 2:8-9; Romans 5:6-8

God’s Grace

1. How would you define grace?
2. How has God’s grace impacted your life?

Tuesday: Romans 2:4; John 6:44

God’s Is Always At Work Drawing People to Himself

3. What does it say about God that He draws people to Himself?
4. How did God draw the Centurion to Himself? How did God draw you to Himself?

Wednesday: Matthew 27:45—54; II Peter 3:9; I Timothy 2:4

God Desires All To Be Saved

5. What does it communicate to us about God that He desires all to be saved?
6. To a human mind, the Centurion may seem like an unlikely recipient of God’s grace. He helped crucify Jesus! Yet God’s grace was available to him. How did God save you?

Thursday: Romans 10:9

God’s Grace Is Available Now

7. Why do some people hear the gospel and not accept right away?

8. Who are some people in your life who need to hear the Gospel?

Friday: Romans 10:13-15

God Uses People to Share His Grace

9. Why do you think that God decided to include us in His plan to share His grace?
10. When sharing our faith with someone, how can we partner with the Holy Spirit?
11. What are some ways in which you will share your faith in the weeks leading up to Easter?