

Last Sunday of the Church Year, at Immanuel, Mercedes, TX

INTRO: Today is the last Sunday of the church year, and the end of its non-festival season. The focus is on 'end'. Based upon this text, I am using five categories of people facing their ends, especially the end and outcome of their lives.

I. DAUGHTERS OF JERUSALEM FACING THEIR END

A. Who also mourned and lamented Him (v.27)

1. as mothers are inclined to do
2. 'of Jerusalem' maybe excluded disciples of Galilee (more later)
3. pitying Him, w/o confessing Him Messiah; jeopardizing their end

B. Jesus warned them (vv.28-31)

1. better not to see their children suffer
2. asking for an earthquake to deliver them from Romans (present now)
3. v.31 – green/dry wood = Jesus visibly present, vs. ascended
4. foretelling 70 AD Jerusalem destruction; its end; their end
5. a picture of God's wrath against sin, rejection of/opposition to Jesus

II. RULERS, SOLDIERS, AND ONLOOKERS FACING THEIR END

A. Rulers sneered (v.35)

1. rulers = those who wielded power
2. and did so illegally, knowingly, with respect to Jesus (Don Hanson)
3. defying God, trying to get rid of him; ignore Him
4. as humanistic educators; atheists; evolutionists; media (beware)

B. Soldiers mocked (vv.36-37)

1. aiding and abetting sinful leaders; our constitution/Bible rules us
2. joining the leaders in unnecessarily mocking Jesus
3. as screen writers, TV 'comedians', ridicule anything Biblical

C. Pilate, a civil ruler, disrespected Him (v.35)

1. knowing Jesus' innocence, and publicly admitting it
2. still driven by vocal opinions (today: ANTIFA; vocal 'gay' minority)
3. superscription is his last jab at the Jews, and thus Jesus, also

D. People stood looking n (v.35)

1. now we are down to people like you and me
2. no active part in His crucifixion, or did we?
3. not any defense of Jesus, either
4. just observing, not too involved; loose change vs. tithe commitment

III. CONTRASTING CRIMINALS, FACING THEIR ENDS

A. One blasphemed Him (v.39)

1. blaspheme = say nasty things about God or to God (continued)

2. this criminal here, doing so in person!

3. denying Jesus' divinity with 'if'

B. Other criminal repented

1. Matthew 27:44... even the robbers... refilled Him

2. Luke 23:41 rebuked the first criminal, publicly!

3. confessed himself sinner (v.41) "this man has done nothing wrong"

4. and as Lord of heaven (... when You enter Your kingdom)

IV. JESUS, FACING HIS END

A. Warning, and prophesying (vv.28-31)

1. John called Jesus the Word made flesh

2. Jesus shows us God's nature; He hides Godhead to reveal Himself

3. giving Himself as the ransom for the world's sins

4. caring for and warning individuals; even while busy with redemption

B. Forgiving (v.43)

1. those who were crucifying Him; sinning against Him

2. which did not stop them; hence they were impenitent

3. forgiveness transfers the matter from our hands into God's hands

4. since impenitent, not absolved; hence, damned

C. Absolving (v.43)

1. only man in (hi)story assured personally, verbally, of heaven

2. upon his confession of sin, appeal for mercy

3. he applied Jesus' words to himself

4. and heard personally the most wonderful words before His end

V. US, FACING OUR END

A. Guilty of all of the above sins, in one degree or in another way

1. at various times and in varying degrees

2. probably most like the onlookers

3. complacent and non-committal; weekly Sunday AM priority test

B. Repeatedly repenting

1. bible study and sermons do prompt that, don't they

2. and how many other ways we sin, especially by omission

3. hence we confess our sins each Sunday publicly, besides privately

C. Departing in peace, absolved

1. I live for His words of absolution

2. and His 'depart in peace' from the Lord's table

3. thus enabled to depart in peace, also, into eternity (double entendre)

CONCLUSION: Because of how Jesus faced the end of His earthly life and work of redemption, we can face with confidence our end as redeemed, penitent, absolved believers in Jesus. Amen.