

## The Mystical Aura Of Jesus

On Sunday, we continued our intensive study of Jesus' experience on the cross by focusing on how his clothes were distributed.

1. Warm up question. What's the most treasured piece of clothing you've ever had?
2. The stories we internalize have a way of coming alive within us, repeating their pattern in and through us. An anonymous author once said, "What we most need is not to be taught something new, but rather to be reminded of vital truths we already know. We need to be brought back to that which we already know again and again, and encouraged to live it." That's why it's so important to tell and re-tell the great stories of the Bible again and again. Tell us about a Bible story that has made a big impression on you? Why is that story so meaningful to you?
3. In our current sermon series, we're focusing intensively on the story of Jesus on the cross. Let's once again read Matthew 27:31-44.
4. On Sunday we focused on verse 35, "When they crucified Jesus, they divided his clothes among themselves by casting lots." John 19:23 offers additional detail, "When the soldiers had crucified Jesus, they took his clothes and divided them into four parts, one for each soldier. They also took his tunic; now the tunic was seamless, woven in one piece from the top. So they said to one another, 'Let us not tear it, but cast lots for it to see who will get it.'" As implied here, there were 5 key components of the wardrobe of 1<sup>st</sup> century Jewish men: headdress, sandals, cloak, tunic, and belt.
  - a. Jesus' tunic was special, woven from top to bottom without seams. It was an expensive piece of clothing, like a priest or a man of means would wear. We're not told how Jesus came by this tunic. What are the possibilities? How do you imagine he may have gotten it?
  - b. Read Matthew 9:20-22 and Matthew 14:34-35. How do you understand these stories? Do you think there was special power in the clothes of Jesus?
  - c. In the novel "A Separate Peace," a high school boy named Gene secretly tries on the clothes his roommate, whom he idolizes. Gene says, "When I looked in the mirror . . . , I was Phineas. . . . I even had his humorous expression on my face, his sharp, optimistic awareness. I had no idea why this gave me such intense relief, but it seemed, standing there in Finny's triumphant shirt, that I would never stumble through the confusions of my own character again. . . . The sense of transformation stayed with me throughout the evening. . . ." Have you ever worn somebody else's clothes? How did that feel?
  - d. Now imagine yourself as one of the soldiers at the cross or as a 1<sup>st</sup> century person who, through purchase or gift, ended up possessing the tunic or cloak of Jesus. Imagine yourself putting it on. What do you think you would have felt?

- e. Galatians 3:27 says, “As many of you as were baptized into Christ have clothed yourselves with Christ.” Romans 13:14 says, “Clothe yourselves with the Lord Jesus Christ.” What do you think it means to “clothe yourself with Christ”?
5. On Sunday, Jeff suggested that clothing ourselves in Christ means wrapping ourselves in the values of Jesus, starting with the values he exhibited on the cross. With that in mind, we looked at three famous statements Jesus made on the cross and the values they illustrate. **First Statement: “My God, my God, why have you forsaken me.” In this statement, we see profound honesty and truth telling.** It makes us uncomfortable to think that Jesus felt abandoned by God. If Jesus had been trying to put up a good front, he would have said, “This is bad, but I have so much faith in God, I know it’ll all be fine.” But Jesus refused to lie about how he felt just to make the people around him feel better.
- a. In your own life, when has someone spoken difficult truth to you? Or when have you felt called to speak difficult truth to someone else? What happened?
  - b. It can be hard to speak the truth. So often it’s much easier to just say what people want to hear. How good are you at truth telling – good, bad, or average? Why is it so hard to be a faithful truth teller?
  - c. Why is it so important to be a faithful truth teller?
6. **Second Statement: “Father, forgive them, they know not what they do.” In this statement, we see profound love, even for enemies.**
- a. Jeff talked about how angry he is about what happened in Charlottesville and how the President responded, and about how the President is trying kick trans people out of the military. He confessed to feeling a strong impulse to hate those who direct hate at vulnerable populations. When you hear about the transgender military ban, the marches in Charlottesville, etc., what feelings arise within you?
  - b. Jesus said, “Do not be overcome by evil, but overcome evil with good.” Dr. King said, “Darkness cannot drive out darkness; only light can do that. Hate cannot drive out hate; only love can do that.” Gandhi said, “You must be the change you wish to see in the world.” As individuals and as a church, what does it look like for us to overcome hate with love? What are some ideas? (Feel free to email any church-related ideas to [Board@lifejourney.church](mailto:Board@lifejourney.church).)
7. **Third Statement: “Father, into your hands I commend my spirit.” In this statement, we see holy surrender.** Although we can influence the direction of our lives, we cannot control it. Life is going to take us where it will; the only thing we can control is how we react.
- a. Where in your life right now do things feel beyond your control? Are you reacting with fear and resentment or serenity and surrender?
  - b. How can we get to that place of holy surrender? Any practical suggestions?