



## Small Group Discussion Guide

November 12, 2017

**Sermon Title:**

“When Darkness Comes”

**Sermon Text:** *Matthew 27:45 – 28:10*

**Scripture Reading:** *Isaiah 9:1-7*

**Leader:** *Please allow a moment for introductions/visiting, and then have someone offer a brief prayer for God to meet with your group.*

**Getting Started:** What embodies evil for you? How have you seen evil manifested on a large scale? Is there are difference in sin that is common to us all and evil?

### Discussion:

- 1. It is ok to feel forsaken** (27:45-46). Last week when you heard of the church shooting in Texas, how did it make you feel? Did it raise any questions for you? Did you hear anyone ask, “How could God let this happen?” Why do we as Christians generally shy away from asking “Why”? Does knowing Jesus struggled with “why” offer any encouragement to you?
- 2. Some will scoff, some will believe** (27:47-49, 54). Moments of evil tend to highlight extremes. Some will use horrors to argue God is non-existent or does not care. Others will be moved toward faith as they seek answers. Where these extremes witnessed during recent events? How were the presented and received? Did you experience any tension between these two positions?
- 3. Look for Light moments** (27:51-53). See also Isaiah 9:2-3. In the Scripture text, life came even as darkness came. Where did you hear about or see stories concerning the Light over the past week? Is it hard to see Light in the midst of darkness?
- 4. One person can make a difference** (27:57-61). Joseph stepped in at his own expense and helped bring the dark scene of the cross to a conclusion. This selfless act fulfilled Scripture (Isa 53:9) and prepared the way for the greatest victory of all. What act of a singular person have you observed, or been a part of, that made a substantial difference?
- 5. Remember the promises** (27:62-66). The chief priests, the Pharisees, and Pilate all took seriously Jesus’ promise to rise in three days. They did not forget. There is some irony here in that Jesus’ adversaries believe his words enough to guard the tomb, but not enough to embrace him as the Messiah. Are you quick to recall God’s promises when darkness comes? Or, does it take you a little while to come back to them? What is one of God’s promises that speaks the most to you?

6. **Go anyway** (28:1-4, 5-8). Both Mary's knew they were going toward a very unpleasant experience. Why did they go to the tomb anyway? Beyond what was expected, they had an even more frightening moment. Then, Scripture then tells us, they hurried away afraid but carrying great joy. Fear is natural but it need not paralyze us. How does joy conquer our fear?
7. **Jesus will meet you** (28:9-10). As the women went, Jesus met them and reassured them. How does Jesus "meet us" in the midst of fearful moments, dark moments? How has Jesus met you in such times?

**Closing:** Close by sharing prayer requests.

*Pray for each another and for the needs that were shared.*

*Go anyway! As you go, **SHARE JESUS!***