

## WERE YOU THERE WHEN THEY CRUCIFIED OUR LORD?

### MEDITATIONS ON CALVARY

Linda Bonney Olin

#### Chapter 1 Discussion

Picture a soldier standing watch over Jesus' tomb that Friday night, silently pondering all the things he had witnessed at Golgotha.

1. How might the soldier have answered the question "Who was—  
Who *is* this man?"
2. If the same soldier stood guard again on Saturday night and Sunday morning, how do you think he would have answered the same question Sunday afternoon?
3. Has God ever used a display of awesome power or extraordinary tenderness or forgiveness to get your attention? How did that experience affect your thinking? Did it change your behavior?
4. What hard-hearted ways do you have now? What do you think it would take to shake you into changing?

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#### Chapter 2 Discussion

1. Followers of Jesus still come under attack from his enemies. What examples have you seen in the news or your own experience?
2. What can we learn from Jesus' disciples about how best to act in the face of persecution?
3. Have you, like Judas Iscariot and Simon Peter, done or said something that caused serious harm to someone else? To someone you loved?
4. Did that person forgive you? Have you forgiven yourself? Do you know, as Peter knew, that there is hope for forgiveness in Jesus?
5. Have you, like John, ever put your faith in a dream that you were sure was God's plan, only to have your expectations crushed? Did you begin to question your faith? Or God's faithfulness?

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#### Chapter 3 Discussion

1. The Bible doesn't tell us whether either of the Marys spoke to Jesus while he hung on the cross. If you were there, what would you say to the dying Jesus?
2. Do you believe, as Jesus' mother did, that God has the power to make the impossible happen for you?
3. Do you express your fears and questions to God honestly, as Mary Magdalene did in the song?

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#### Chapter 4 Discussion

1. Has anyone ever taunted or bullied you when you were down and out, as the jeering onlookers did to Jesus? How does being treated that way make you feel?
2. Think about the spectators at Calvary who had previously cheered for Jesus and witnessed his miracles. What reasons might they give for keeping silent? For joining in the mockery?
3. Have you sometimes used the name of Jesus disrespectfully, or behaved in such a way that you hope he *won't* remember you?

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#### Chapter 5 Discussion

1. Has God given you a mission? Have you sensed the presence of God watching over you as you carried out his work? Does he seem close or sometimes far away?
2. Have you ever felt as if God abandoned you when your mission ran into difficulties?
3. Has a psalm or other scripture verse or a familiar hymn ever strengthened or comforted you by expressing exactly what you're going through?
4. Our closing song is "God Be with You till We Meet Again." What do you think is the significance of asking God to "be with" a person?

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