

## The Wake for Jesus

I imagine that the friends of Jesus gathered after his burial and began to reminisce about all they had done together and what Jesus meant to them. It's not hard to imagine something like that happening because we do it in every culture around the world. After a death, there is always a time of mourning where friends get together to share stories and memories about the deceased. Look at the stories that are already being shared about Steeler's owner Dan Rooney who passed away yesterday. There are probably small groups all over Pittsburgh that are gathering to talk about and remember Dan Rooney. Those that were closest to Jesus would have shared a very special bond and it makes sense that they would have been drawn together to comfort each other and to share special moments.

They might have talked about how each one of the first met Jesus and how after meeting them their lives were changed in a good way. The fishermen might have talked about how they had gone places and done and seen things that they never would have done had they stayed on their boats and not followed Jesus. The tax collector and the prostitute would have talked about how they went from being scorned and outcast to being loved and accepted because of Jesus. They all probably remembered the healings on the Sabbath, the curing of lepers, lame and blind. They might have remembered the excitement when they were given their first mission trip to cities around Galilee and Nazareth and how Jesus gave them power to heal and cast out demons in His name. Remember when He helped us feed five thousand people? Those were the good times.

Then there were the quiet moments when Jesus just sat with them and they learned how to pray and what true faith really looked like. The meals they shared. The walks they took. The times when they marveled as Jesus taught the multitudes. What about those stories he would tell and how each one had a special lesson. Sometimes they weren't always easy to understand, but Jesus always took the time to explain it to them.

Nicodemus might have been with them to share his story about Jesus and how Jesus told him that "God so loved the world that He gave His one and only son that who so ever believed in him would not perish but have everlasting life." And they might begin to talk about what Jesus told them about how all of this that has happened was supposed to happen. Jesus told them that he would turned over to the chief priests and the scribes and that he would be condemned to death. He told that them that he would be beaten and then be lifted up on a cross and that he would die. Remember what he said about the sign of Jonah? What was that—oh yeah, He said: "For as Jonah was three days and three nights in the belly of a huge fish, so the **Son of Man** will be three days and three nights in the heart of the earth."

Mary and Martha and Lazarus might have joined them to talk about Jesus. They would have shared how their lives and had changed and everyone might have turned to Lazarus for an answer about coming back from the dead. After all, Jesus had done that for him, do you supposed He could do it for himself? But how, Jesus was alive when He brought Lazarus back from the dead. Now Jesus is dead. Who's going to bring Him back?

Then their thoughts might have turned to preparing for the Sabbath and wondering what they were going to do now

that Jesus was gone. It would be a long day tomorrow and then they will have to go and give Jesus a proper burial on the first day of the week. But that's two long days from now.

Let us pray: Heavenly Father, Elohim, Yahweh, Abba we have enjoyed our time with Jesus and have learned many things that have made us better people. Be with us now as we face this time of mourning and tribulation. Help us to never know a time when Jesus is not with us. Strengthen our faith and empower us to go into our community and share Jesus with those who do not know him and do not have him in their lives. As we become more like Him in every way help us live and love like Him. Help us to be accepting of the prostitutes and tax collectors of our day, those living on the edges of our society. Help us to have the courage to go to them as Jesus did. And as Jesus did help us to show and share agape, Godly love in Jesus' name. Amen.