

## Sunday Assembly Reflection

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**REFLECTION:** Diann Garnett preached on Palm Sunday about the Cross, the deepest revelation of God's love. The Cross is the definition of the power of God, though it looks like the hugest defeat. It is foolishness and upside down, compared to the world's view of power. That's because its power is not about dominating others or driven by self-interest. Instead, the Cross is healing, life-giving and humble, and lifts people up. Diann said that Jesus was able to submit himself to the anguish and suffering of the Cross because he knew his identity as the Son of God. Most of us try to avoid suffering, and when we cannot, we begin to doubt God. But if we remember our identity as beloved children of God, we might also be able to better endure suffering and the taunts of the enemy by speaking truth against lies and trusting that God will work good out of horrific evil.

I was challenged by Diann's comment that when Jesus was in severe pain, what came out was character and compassion. Even though he entered into the most agonizing physical, emotional and spiritual suffering the world has ever known, he refused to retaliate and responded instead in love. I'm with Diann, in that I tend to respond with "claws" when I'm under stress and in pain, rather than the compassion of Jesus. Yet the Holy Spirit in me can prompt a different response. I want to grow up to be like Jesus! My life stresses are nothing compared to what he experienced for the benefit of the whole world.

**REFLECTION QUESTIONS:** *Please pick one of the questions below to answer in your small groups; more if you have time. Be sure to pray for each other at the end.*

- Do you know your identity as a beloved child of God? What difference would it make in your life to realize that you are indeed his favorite?
- Where have you been most tempted to "hurl insults" and retaliate toward others? How will remembering your identity in Christ prompt a different response?
- What suffering are you enduring now that Jesus might be using to make your soul "cross-shaped"? What are some truths you need to hear that would enable you to submit to the anguish and let God deal with the outcome for good?

Read through an account from the Gospels this week about the suffering and crucifixion of Jesus, and "sit with it" awhile. Share any insights you receive with your group.

Sunday Assembly Reflection is written by Lake Highlands Church members for Lifegroups and individuals to receive more from the spoken Sunday Assembly message through reflection and quick discussion. It is published on the first three Monday's of the month. If you are interested in knowing more about a Lifegroup or have a question about the reflection, please contact Donjalea Crane, [donjalea@lakehighlandschurch.org](mailto:donjalea@lakehighlandschurch.org) or contact one of our Lifegroup leaders by going to [lakehighlandschurch.org/Lifegroup-listings](http://lakehighlandschurch.org/Lifegroup-listings).

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