

Painting Caption

Because paintings of the crucifixion are so familiar, creating a fresh image is a challenge. The model for the painting looks more like a conventional Jesus figure than all the other images of Jesus in this series of paintings – he is a Middle Eastern man with long hair and a beard. The striking modern detail in this artwork is the tattoo on the forearm with the cross and the rose. Iain chose to use the rose motif throughout the painting, stencilled in the background, with an emphasis on the thorns. Roses have appeared earlier in this series of paintings in *The Widow's Son*, where these flowers were used as a symbol of death and resurrection.

Study

Read the text twice

Look at the painting

Read the Painting Caption

Questions

What jumps off the page at you?

FGP

List what the text records Jesus says and what others say about Jesus

3s/ FB

Discuss the various reactions to the death of Jesus (including creation!)

FGP

In what ways do Jesus' words, "Father, forgive them they do not know what they are doing" and his response to the criminal on the cross speak of the salvation Jesus brings through his death?

3s/ FB

The painting caption and the text speak of the familiarity of the crucifixion. What things can we do, so that God might speak fresh things to us through texts we know well?

FGP

As we consider our own context, how can we apply the death of Jesus today? How can we tell the story of the salvation Jesus offers?

3s/ FB

Study Key

3s / FB - Groups of 3 with feedback to whole group

FGP - Full Group

GPS - Larger groups of 6 (if desired)



The Project

The Gospel Sketchbook is a three-year project based in St George's Tron, Church, Glasgow, in which Artist in Residence Iain Campbell is painting 24 canvases from Luke's Gospel, one for each chapter.

Key to each painting is reflecting on the Biblical text and how it might apply to contemporary Glasgow.

The Study

The following Bible Study considers both the Biblical text and the painting on which it is based, encouraging participants to think about how to apply the Biblical text to their context. The study is designed to be used with *The Portrait Gospel*, a special edition of Luke's Gospel that features Our Last Supper on the cover, the first canvas painted as part of this project.

Conversations Bible Study

Each of the individual studies uses the Conversations style. Conversations is a method of Bible study developed by the Scottish Bible Society and the Contextual

Bible Study Group. Conversations seeks to encourage people to actively engage with the Bible and apply it to life.

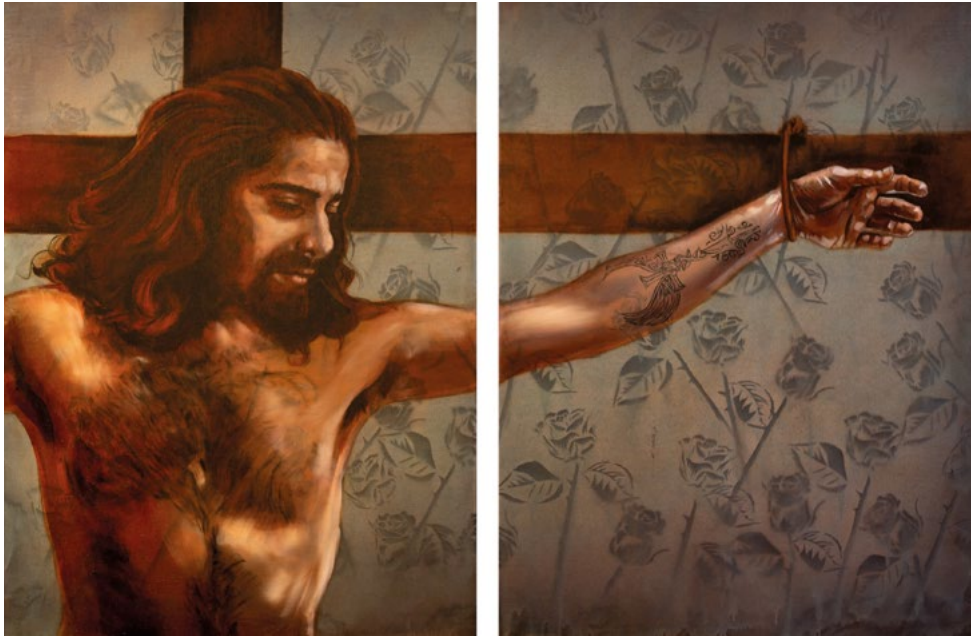
The questions are designed to stimulate conversation within groups where people may have varying backgrounds and knowledge of the Bible. You will notice a similar pattern of questions used throughout the studies. All of the questions are 'open' questions which don't presume an answer but instead invite people to reflect personally on the text. The first question is always, "What jumps off the page at you?" – an opportunity for people to begin to share their thoughts on a passage. Then there are 'listing' questions that encourage a closer reading of the text, 'theological' questions that seek to understand the meaning, and finally 'contextual' questions that begin to apply the text to life.

We hope you find this a refreshing and stimulating way to study the Bible.

More Bible study resources that utilise the Conversations method can be found at: scottishbiblesociety.org/equip

The Crucifixion

Study 23 • Luke 23:26-49



Text: Luke 23:26-49 Page 91-93 of The Portrait Gospel

²⁶ As the soldiers led him away, they seized Simon from Cyrene, who was on his way in from the country, and put the cross on him and made him carry it behind Jesus.

²⁷ A large number of people followed him, including women who mourned and wailed for him. ²⁸ Jesus turned and said to them, ‘Daughters of Jerusalem, do not weep for me; weep for yourselves and for your children. ²⁹ For the time will come when you will say, “Blessed are the childless women, the wombs that never bore and the breasts that never nursed!” ³⁰ Then

“they will say to the mountains, ‘Fall on us!’ and to the hills, ‘Cover us!’”

³¹ For if people do these things when the tree is green, what will happen when it is dry?’

³² Two other men, both criminals, were also led out with him to be executed. ³³ When they came to the place called the Skull, they crucified him there, along with the criminals — one on his right, the other on his left. ³⁴ Jesus said, ‘Father, forgive them, for they do not know what they are doing.’ And they divided up his clothes by casting lots.

³⁵ The people stood watching, and the rulers even sneered at him. They said, ‘He saved others; let him save himself if he is God’s Messiah, the Chosen One.’

³⁶ The soldiers also came up and mocked him. They offered him wine vinegar ³⁷ and said, ‘If you are the king of the Jews, save yourself.’

³⁸ There was a written notice above him, which read: this is the king of the jews.

³⁹ One of the criminals who hung there hurled insults at him: ‘Aren’t you the Messiah? Save yourself and us!’

⁴⁰ But the other criminal rebuked him. ‘Don’t you fear God,’ he said, ‘since you are under the same sentence? ⁴¹ We are punished justly, for we are getting what our deeds deserve. But this man has done nothing wrong.’

⁴² Then he said, ‘Jesus, remember me when you come into your kingdom.’

⁴³ Jesus answered him, ‘Truly I tell you, today you will be with me in paradise.’

⁴⁴ It was now about noon, and darkness came over the whole land until three in the afternoon, ⁴⁵ for the sun stopped shining. And the curtain of the temple was torn in two. ⁴⁶ Jesus called out with a loud voice, ‘Father, into your hands I commit my spirit.’ When he had said this, he breathed his last.

⁴⁷ The centurion, seeing what had happened, praised God and said, ‘Surely this was a righteous man.’ ⁴⁸ When all the people who had gathered to witness this sight saw what took place, they beat their breasts and went away. ⁴⁹ But all those who knew him, including the women who had followed him from Galilee, stood at a distance, watching these things.