
a *Grace Notes* course

The Gospel of Mark

an expositional Bible study

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Lesson 15

Mark 15:1-36

Grace Notes

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The Gospel of Mark
Lesson 15: Mark 15:1-36

Lesson Instructions

Lesson 15: Mark 15:1-36..... 15-4

Lesson 15 Quiz..... 15-18

Instructions for Completing the Lessons

There are sixteen (16) lessons in the MARK course curriculum, one lesson for each chapter.. There will be questions in the Quiz for each lesson on the topics that are named here.

Begin each study session with prayer. It is the Holy Spirit who makes spiritual things discernable to Christians, so it is essential to be in fellowship with the Lord during Bible study.

Instructions

Read the introduction to the study of Mark.

Study the Mark chapter for this lesson, by reading the verses and studying the notes. Be sure to read any other Bible passages that are called out in the notes.

Before taking the Quiz, **Review** all of the notes in the Mark lesson.

Go to the Quiz page and follow the instructions to complete all the questions on the quiz. The quiz is "open book". You may refer to all the notes and to the Bible when you take the test. But you should not get help from another person.

When you have completed the Quiz, be sure to SAVE your file. If your quiz file is lost, and that can happen at Grace Notes as well, you will want to be able to reproduce your work.

To send the Quiz back to Grace Notes, follow the instructions on the Quiz page.

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Chapter 15

Lord Acton of England is credited with this statement, "Power corrupts; absolute power corrupts absolutely."

Thomas Jefferson said of power that he had never been able to conceive how any rational being could propose happiness for himself from the execution of power over others.

And Eric Fromm said: The lust for power is not rooted in strength but in weakness.

In the first part of chapter 15 we are going to be introduced to a man who wanted power, who sought power at any price, who abuse the power he had, and used his power to order the execution of the Lord Jesus Christ - Pontius Pilate.

When we put all four Gospels together we see that Jesus endured a night of six trials. Not one, but six! Each one was false in every way and nothing more than a facade of justice that had already decided that Jesus had to die.

The first trial was before Annas, the political boss of Jerusalem

The second was before Caiaphas, the High Priest.

The third trial was held at daybreak before the Sanhedrin once they realized a trial at night was invalid

The fourth trial was before Pilate and Pilate found no guilt in this man from Nazareth

The fifth trial was before the Jewish monarch Herod who demanded a miracle and when Jesus would not perform for him has him beat and sent Jesus back to Pilate

The sixth trial was before Pilate again in which he again found no fault in Him but put him before the people to be released, but the people chose Barabbas. But Pilate was pressured by the Jews to carry out the execution.

Mark's account selects only two of these six trials. The second trial; before Caiaphas the high priest which we examined in chapter fourteen, and now, in chapter fifteen, the fourth trial which was the first of the two trials before Pilate. The final trial in which Barabbas was set free and Jesus

condemned to the Cross is referred to in its results by Mark in Mark 15:6-15.

So here at the beginning of Mark 15 we have Jesus before the Roman authorities.

Mark 15:1

And early in the morning the chief priests with the elders and scribes, and the whole Council, immediately held a consultation; and binding Jesus, they led Him away, and delivered Him up to Pilate.

The Sanhedrin, realizing the trial recorded in Mark 14 was illegal because it was at night, quickly held a trial at daybreak to add some facade of legality to their plot to do away with Jesus.

Here we are introduced to Pilate, whose name is long remembered in history as the man who gave the order to send Jesus to His death. Along with Judas, the very hearing of the name of Pontius Pilate has brought reaction and revulsion to Christians through the centuries.

WHO IS PONTIUS PILATE?

1. Pilate, whose name is Latin for "one skilled with a javelin", was the Roman consul for Judea and Samarian for ten years, from AD 26 to AD 36. He was the fifth Roman counsel in this region.
2. He was born into the Roman middle class, the Equestrians, and apparently inherited some money that allowed him to qualify for his diplomatic position.
3. Little is known of him prior to coming to Jerusalem but much of his activities there and his subsequent career is recorded by Josephus, Philo of Alexandria, and later Eusebius.
4. The region which he controlled for Rome was considered the most difficult of postings, the combination religious and political differences between the Romans and the Jews made this a volatile region of the Roman Empire.

Under a previous consul, Roman troop marched into Jerusalem carrying the standard of the Emperor which the Jews saw as idolatrous. The riot that followed resulted in a rule that no Roman

Mark Lesson 15

emblems were to be worn or displayed in Jerusalem.

5. When Pilate governed Judea and Samaria he was a comparatively young man. Historians of the time gage him to be in his late twenties or early thirties.

6. Eusebius recorded that after Judea, Pilate was reduced in position and served in Gaul (France) where he committed suicide.

The Coptic Church saw that as a result of becoming a Christian and they celebrate June 25th as a day to honor Pilate as a Saint.

Many records do indicate that his wife became a Christian following the crucifixion.

As to his character: Here is where it gets interesting:

The Sanhedrin led Him away, and delivered Him up to Pilate. And Pilate questioned Him

Two men, two men of tremendous power, facing each other. One exercising a power of position, a power of self and the other, standing there in the power of God.

There is a great difference in the power held by Pilate and the power of the Lord Jesus Christ.

Pilate's power was a power that was achieved at any cost, that was so often abused. A power he had to struggle to keep and would eventually lose.

Jesus power, in His humanity, was a power that was dependant. That was not earned or deserved, that was given to Him as it is given to us by our heavenly Father.

Pilate could lose his power, as he did. The Lord Jesus could never lose the power given Him by God.

How Pilate gained power and used power

Remember the statement: Power tends to corrupts and absolute power corrupts absolutely.

That is very true of the power Pilate had. A power that was corrupt:

1. Shortly after Pilate took power in Judea, he ordered the Roman Emblem to again be displayed. The previous counsel had wisely taken it down. Pilate's order resulted in a

demonstration by the Jews at which time Pilate had the Roman troops kill a vast number of Jews. This resulted in a riot at which time Pilate gave in.

This incident reveals his poor judgment, stubbornness, and his weakness.

2. Then, Pilate took the CORBAN, the money given to the Temple treasury, and used it to build a 25 mile aqueduct because, it was reported, he did not like the taste of the water in Jerusalem.

3. Agrippa I said of Pilate and the Jews that the Jews exasperated Pilate to the greatest possible degree, as he feared they might go on an embassy to the Emperor, and might impeach him with respect to the particulars of his government--his corruptions, his acts of insolence, his habit of insulting people, his cruelty, and his continual murder of people untried and uncondemned, and his never ending most grievous inhumanity.

4. In his decisions regarding Jesus, we see his weakness, his fear, how unstable the power this very powerful man really was:

Mark 15:15 And wishing to satisfy the multitude, Pilate released Barabbas for them, and after having Jesus scourged, he delivered Him to be crucified.

In Mark 15:19-20 the soldiers, Pilate's soldiers, beat the Lord Jesus whereas one word from Pilate would have ended this unjust and uncalled for humiliation. They beat him after he was condemned to die. Which was also contrary to Roman customs,

In John 19:12-13 we see how Pilate feared the people: As a result of this Pilate made efforts to release Him, but the Jews cried out, saying, If you release this Man, you are no friend of Caesar - When Pilate therefore heard these words, he brought Jesus out, and sat down on the judgment seat.

And in Matthew 27:24 Pilate tried to disclaim any responsibility in the matter: And when Pilate saw that he was accomplishing nothing, but rather that a riot was starting, he took water and washed his hands in front of the multitude, saying, I am innocent of this Man's blood; see to that yourselves.

Mark Lesson 15

5. For all of his power, Pilate was a man who lived with anger and fear, who was cynical and skeptical, a Roman who really lacked the Roman virtues of honor, justice, and integrity.

The Romans had a saying about their law: *Fiat iustitiam ruat caelum* -- Let justice be done though the heavens fall.

Nothing was to come before justice in the Roman mind, but Pilate was thinking for himself, trying to secure the power he had, and giving in to the pressure of the people.

6. Pilate knew Jesus was innocent and sought to release him but only if it would have no adverse effect on him. And when that was not to be he sentenced the Son of God to die.

7. Pilate's desire and demand for power finally caught up with him when a large number of Samaritans gathered at Mt. Gerizim to search for the hidden golden objects of the Tabernacle. Some were armed and Pilate saw this as a threat and had his troops massacre many people.

A formal complaint of this incident was registered with Rome and Pilate was removed from office in disgrace.

Now it is with this understanding of Pilate that we can now examine our passage and see that the brevity of Pilate's questions are not for the sake of seeking justice, but are the questions of a man who is fearing his loss of power, fearing the situation, afraid of the people.

Mark 15:2

And Pilate questioned Him, Are You the King of the Jews? And answering He said to him, It is as you say.

Roman law was very specific regarding this type of trial. It was a referral trial from the local, indigenous rulers who were granted limited powers. This type of trial had to take place in the early part of the day so the Roman authorities could attend to matters of state in the afternoons.

The Sanhedrin would have bound Jesus and lead him to the palace of Herod, where Pilate resided and worked when in Jerusalem.

The trial would have begun with the verbal or written accusation against the accused. This resulted in an interrogation of the accused by the chief magistrate, in this case the only magistrate, Pilate. So he asks -

Are you the king of the Jews -

This rightly assumes that the Sanhedrin charged Jesus before Pilate with treason, claiming to be a king.

But look back to Mark 14:64. What is the charge there? Blasphemy. But the Romans could not have cared less about blasphemy.

So the Sanhedrin came up with a new indictment, treason. This Jesus is claiming to be king.

So Pilate begins with the question: Are you the king of the Jews?

Had Jesus given a direct affirmation of the question, and said YES, the proceedings would have ended, and Pilate would have had the legal right to sentence Him to die.

But Jesus did not really give an affirmative answer, He said - *It is, as you say.*

Now we might expand that to be: You are saying so, so it must be true, at least according to your frame of reference.

Pilate did not accept this as a YES answer, so the next step in the proceeding was to hear from the accusers, in this case the Sanhedrin.

Luke 23:2 and 5 record the accusations: And they began to accuse Him, saying, We found this man misleading our nation and forbidding to pay taxes to Caesar, and saying that He Himself is Christ, a King. But they kept on insisting, saying, He stirs up the people, teaching all over Judea, starting from Galilee, even as far as this place.

Mark tells us that the accusations were very harsh, but still Pilate was not convinced.

Mark 15:3-5

The chief priests began to accuse Him harshly. And Pilate was questioning Him again, saying, Do You make no answer? See how many charges they bring against You.

Mark Lesson 15

But Jesus made no further answer; so that Pilate was amazed.

Now at this point Pilate could have condemned him but the Romans were very sensitive about convicting a person who provided no defense.

On the occasions where this was done, if the condemned decided to speak at any time up to his execution, a mistrial was called and the original verdict set aside.

Well, the religious leaders, the unbeliever, did not want that and their boss, Satan.

And Pilate just wants to get out of this, he sees himself being forced into the middle of a power struggle. And his power could be eroded.

And Pilate does find a way out, at least temporarily:

Remember Luke's record of the accusations of the Sanhedrin, how they said Jesus was (Luke 23:5) stirring up the people, teaching all over Judea, starting from Galilee, even as far as this place.

Luke goes on to record:

Luke 23:6-7 That when Pilate heard it, he asked whether the man was a Galilean. And when he learned that He belonged to Herod's jurisdiction, he sent Him to Herod, who himself also was in Jerusalem at that time.

So Pilate was able to dismiss the matter and turn Jesus over for the fifth trial that was before Herod.

But Herod, even with the chief priests violently accusing Jesus, found no guilt in the man from Nazareth and he sent Jesus back to Pilate.

It is at that point that Mark picks up the story and tells us about Pilate's attempt to set Jesus free.

But before we get to that, I want you to see from John's Gospel, the final interrogation of Jesus by Pilate.

Read John 18:33-38

Pilate therefore entered again into the Praetorium, and summoned Jesus, and said to Him, Are You the King of the Jews?

34 Jesus answered, Are you saying this on your own initiative, or did others tell you about Me?

35 Pilate answered, I am not a Jew, am I? Your own nation and the chief priests delivered You up to me; what have You done?

36 Jesus answered, My kingdom is not of this world. If My kingdom were of this world, then My servants would be fighting, that I might not be delivered up to the Jews; but as it is, My kingdom is not of this realm.

37 Pilate therefore said to Him, So You are a king? Jesus answered, You say correctly that I am a king. For this I have been born, and for this I have come into the world, to bear witness to the truth. Everyone who is of the truth hears My voice.

38 Pilate said to Him, What is truth?

Here we see a man in a powerful position, a man of power, and yet a man whose power and position has been achieved through force, manipulation, and human means. A man who must continue to play people against his own agenda - and a man who cannot see truth when it is before his very eyes.

And then we see our Lord - Also a powerful man, but one in whom power resides by the will of God. A power that depends on no one else except His heavenly Father.

And then we see ourselves. Will we seek the power that Pilate had, a power that must be achieved, and then a power that must be secured in our own power - or the power that Jesus had, a power not earned or deserved, a power we can have because we have believed in Him and we have a heavenly Father who gives to us His strength, His power.

Lord Avery of England is credited with saying: *Blessed is he that expects nothing, for he shall never be disappointed.*

Lord Chesterfield heard that and responded: *Blessed in he who expects nothing, for he shall be gloriously surprised.*

Expectation is a very interesting thing. We all have it, we have certain expectations. If those expectations are unrealistic or contradict the truth, there will be disappointment, and even disaster. But if right, according to God's truth, the expectations we have, will be fulfilled by Christ.

Mark Lesson 15

And then our surprise is more than glorious, it is divine.

We are going to look at some people who are expectations, but they are wrong in what they are expecting.

The story we are going to examine this morning is very well known. Every movie that has been made about the death of Christ includes this episode. But too often the world's media depicts the event and over looks the reason God has revealed this to us.

In 1 Corinthians 2:10 tells us that God reveals His truth to us:

For to us God revealed them (that which we cannot know by human means of perception) through the Spirit; for the Spirit searches all things, even the depths of God.

We must recognize that every word of Scripture, every letter, every story, is given to us that we might learn about who our heavenly Father is, who we are, what God has for us, and what we face and what mankind faces as He attempts to see and know God.

It is in that light that we examine this well known story of the people shouting for the release of a criminal and demanding the death of Jesus the Savior.

Mark 15:6-13

Now at the feast he used to release for them any one prisoner whom they requested.

7 And the man named Barabbas had been imprisoned with the insurrectionists who had committed murder in the insurrection.

8 And the multitude went up and began asking him to do as he had been accustomed to do for them.

9 And Pilate answered them, saying, Do you want me to release for you the King of the Jews?

10 For he was aware that the chief priests had delivered Him up because of envy.

11 But the chief priests stirred up the multitude to ask him to release Barabbas for them instead.

12 And answering again, Pilate was saying to them, Then what shall I do with Him whom you call the King of the Jews?

13 And they shouted back, Crucify Him!

Our story has five players.

1. The Lord Jesus Christ: Who came to die on the Cross to give life and life more abundantly
2. Barabbas: A criminal, a zealot, a murderer
3. Pilate: Who is into the power game, seeking how he can manipulate this situation to his benefit
4. The Chief Priests: Who want to do away with this troublemaker, this Jesus who presents truth, grace, and love
5. The people: The crowd, the mob, who not only shouts for freedom for a murderer but for the death of the Savior

When we read that this mob called for the release of a criminal over the Christ we are horrified. We wonder how this could have occurred? How could anyone, looking at the Savior, seeing before them the Son of God, chose a criminal, a murderer, to be released?

In order to understand what happened that morning we have to understand something about this Barabbas:

1. Barabbas was a leader of a group of Jewish revolutionaries called Zealots. The Zealots fought against the Roman occupation of Israel. They were involved in insurrection, planning covert activities intended to drive the Romans out of Israel.
2. They were zealous in their resolve to eliminate, exterminate, and extricate the Romans. Hence, the name Zealots.
3. The Zealots used the Old Testament prophecies of the Messiah crushing the enemies of Israel, as a biblical basis for their rebellion.

Isaiah 13:3 and 9 I have commanded My consecrated ones, I have even called My mighty warriors, My proudly exulting ones, To execute My anger - Behold, the day of the Lord is coming, Cruel, with fury and burning anger, To make the land a desolation; And He will exterminate its sinners from it.

Mark Lesson 15

Jeremiah 6:4-5 Prepare war against her; Arise, and let us attack at noon. Woe to us, for the day declines, For the shadows of the evening lengthen! Arise, and let us attack by night And destroy her palaces!

4. But while they had biblical prophecy that they applied to their insurrection, they were mis-applying the verses.

They failed to see that the Messiah would come first as the lamb of God before coming as the Lion.

That He would at the first advent crush the enemy of sin and then at the Second Advent crush the political and military enemies of Israel.

The Zealots were sincere, were enthusiastic, were dedicated, and yet, were very wrong in what they were doing.

5. Throughout the Gospels we see the people, and even the disciples, wanting Christ to be the Messiah of the Second Advent and lead a rebellion against Roman occupation.

This was all wrapped up in the idea of a literal Kingdom and they wanted that Kingdom right now:

At the feeding of the Five Thousand the people thought they had a formidable force to march on Jerusalem and free it from the Romans. They wanted Jesus to lead them in rebellion. But He refused -

John 6:15 Jesus therefore perceiving that they were intending to come and take Him by force, to make Him king, withdrew again to the mountain by Himself alone.

Even the disciples sought the Kingdom that spelled freedom from Gentile occupation:

Acts 1:6 And so when they had come together, they were asking Him, saying, Lord, is it at this time You are restoring the kingdom to Israel?

6. When Jesus refused to lead a military rebellion, the people rejected Him.

They had decided what the Messiah was to be like, they selected the Old Testament prophecies they wanted fulfilled by the coming King. When Jesus did not conform to their desires, they rejected Him.

In doing so they ignored the prophecies of the Lamb of God who would destroy the enemy of sin:

Isaiah 53:2-3 and verse 7 For He grew up before Him like a tender shoot, And like a root out of parched ground; He has no stately form or majesty That we should look upon Him, Nor appearance that we should be attracted to Him. He was despised and forsaken of men, A man of sorrows, and acquainted with grief; And like one from whom men hide their face, He was despised, and we did not esteem Him - He was oppressed and He was afflicted, Yet He did not open His mouth; Like a lamb that is led to slaughter, And like a sheep that is silent before its shearers, So He did not open His mouth.

7. Barabbas was a revolutionary, he was what the people wanted, a military Savior. But he was also a criminal, a murderer, a violent man.

But he was what the people wanted, he fulfilled the expectations of the people, whereas Jesus did not. Barabbas was more of a Messiah, in the eyes of the people, than was Jesus.

So the people cried out for the release of the criminal they understood and rejected the Christ who has failed, in their eyes, to be the Savior, the Messiah, they expected.

Barabbas was more of a savior to the people, in their estimation, than was the Lord Jesus Christ -

So with that background we perhaps at least can see the distorted reasoning behind the choice that they made.

And then we add to that the influence of the Chief Priests who are working their evil scheme to get rid of Jesus:

Mark 15:11 But the chief priests stirred up the multitude to ask Pilate to release Barabbas for them instead.

So we have the wrong expectations of the people And the influence of the priests

Both working together and resulting in the release of Barabbas and the demand for the crucifixion of Christ.

Mark Lesson 15

And that tells us why that happened then, but would the same thing happen today - and I want you to know that it would, and it happens everyday.

Let me draw an analogy for you.

1. As the people were faced with a choice then, mankind is faced with a choice today. The Christ or some other savior, some religious leader or spiritual master who happens to be what they want?
2. Jesus was there to give life. Barabbas was one who had taken life. Jesus was there to save the crowd from the enemy of sin. Barabbas was there merely trying to save the people from the enemy of Rome.
3. The people were much like the world today. More concerned with what was seen than unseen. More concerned about what they wanted than what God wanted for them. More involved with their own limited expectations than the true, unlimited expectations of a God who loved them.
4. The Chief Priest with their hidden agenda represent then and now Satan. The Priests saw Jesus taking their control over the people away. They knew the Savior spoke the truth and that the truth would set the people free.
And they wanted to control the people just like Satan continues today to want to control mankind. He will work, he will influence mankind to chose the ones who take life rather than give life. To chose the one who false over the one who is true.
Satan is wise, he is ever working his hidden agenda behind the scenes of history.
5. Pilate, who was an apparently powerful man, was being used by the religious leaders. In our analogy, Pilate would parallel religion. Controlled by Satan, influenced by man. Always trying to protect its power rather than serve God. More concerned with doing what is expedient and expected than what is right, just, and fair.
Vacillating, giving in, going along with the crowd, ignoring the truth, and doing what is evil.
6. Mankind today is no different. If Christ and a popular criminal were put before the people, the people would chose the criminal.

All he would have to do is meet some of there preconceived expectations. To conform to their image of what a hero, what a Savior should be. They would reject the Christ.

And hundreds of thousands of people today are making that same wrong choice, they reject the true Savior and go for the religion and the religious leaders that fit what they want.

But it doesn't just end with rejection!

Mark 15:14,15

And answering again, Pilate was saying to them, Then what shall I do with Him whom you call the King of the Jews? And they shouted back, Crucify Him! But Pilate was saying to them, Why, what evil has He done? But they shouted all the more, Crucify Him! And wishing to satisfy the multitude, Pilate released Barabbas for them, and after having Jesus scourged, he delivered Him to be crucified.

Who is the victim in all this?

We might think it is Christ, the innocent Lamb of God, but His life is in the Father's care and the Father is in control.

Even Jesus had said earlier in Mark 14:49

But this has happened that the Scriptures might be fulfilled.

No, the victim is not Jesus, the victim is the people:

Influenced by Satan, manipulated by religion, seeking what they think is right - they not only reject the Savior but ask, demand that He is destroyed.

You see rejection never stops there, it quickly digresses to antagonism. As the heart is hardened, as scar tissue builds up, as reversionism becomes a part of the soul, hatred soon follows -

And that is where the world is today, digression into antagonism and hatred.

Accepting that which takes life, that which is evil, over the one who is true.

This may be a very well known story of something that happened a long time ago that shakes our

Mark Lesson 15

senses, but it is a story that has been happening over and over again, for 2,000 years, ever time mankind rejects the Savior, the Lord Jesus Christ.

MOTIVATED by their own expectations of what should be.

INFLUENCED by the hidden agenda of Satan to control.

EMPOWERED by the evil leadership of religion -
MAN MAKES HIS CHOICE to reject the Savior.

Most us know the children's story about the Emperor's new clothes. How the tailors convinced the king that they had woven a thread that only the purest of heart could see. The Emperor could not see but would not admit his inability. When the day came for the Emperor to display his new clothes he walked through the streets in his underwear. It was only when a small child, pure in heart, exclaimed that the Emperor wore no robes that he had been tricked and deceived - that he had also deceived himself.

In a very similar way today the world is putting on robes of royalty and power that are not there. Too often even the believer, who is to be pure in heart by way of the grace of God that has cleansed us from our sins, puts on these robes that are not there. God sees us as being nay-ke-d.

In Revelation 3:16-18 the Lord spoke to the Church of Laodicea and said:

You are lukewarm, and neither hot nor cold, I will spit you out of My mouth. Because you say, I am rich, and have become wealthy, and have need of nothing, and you do not know that you are wretched and miserable and poor and blind and naked, I advise you to buy from Me gold refined by fire, that you may become rich, and white garments, that you may clothe yourself, and that the shame of your nakedness may not be revealed -

Now, we will see the false robe of royalty the world tried to put upon our Lord Jesus Christ.

As Jesus walks the pathway that will lead to the Cross, we must see Him alone, the rejected Lamb of God who will take away the sins of the world.

His friends, the disciples, have fled. One who very close to him even denied knowing Him. The

religious leaders who were the custodians of faith and spiritual life for God's people turned against Him and wanted Him out of the way. The Romans who normally had such a love for justice allowed that justice to go forth perverted and bent to the will of the religious leaders. The crowd who has hailed Jesus as the Messiah less than a week earlier, chose a criminal to be released and cried out, demanding that Jesus was to be crucified.

As we consider our Savior and what was going on that terrible day, the day of the Cross, we have to see that He was very much alone.

The One who created the heavens and the earth, the One who created angels, Who formed man from the dust of the earth, who understood enough about the need for companionship to pull a rib out of Adam and make woman, a friend for man, a helpmate, the one who sat in the heavens and heard millions of prayers of the saints and prayed for those saints, was now alone -

And if being alone was not enough, Our Lord also became the object of senseless brutality.

Verses 16-20 tell us of this humiliation and brutality:

Mark 15:16-20

The soldiers took Him away into the palace (that is, the Praetorium), and they called together the whole Roman cohort.

17 They dressed Him up in purple, and after twisting a crown of thorns, they put it on Him;

18 and they began to acclaim Him, Hail, King of the Jews!

19 They kept beating His head with a reed, and spitting on Him, and kneeling and bowing before Him.

20 After they had mocked Him, they took the purple robe off Him and put His own garments on Him. And they led Him out to crucify Him.

We see that immediately after the release of Barabbas and the sentence of death given to Jesus, that Pilate had Him flogged. This was done in the

Mark Lesson 15

sight of the people who were calling for the crucifixion.

The whipping that was given to a condemned man was done before his accusers in the Roman Empire. On more than one occasion the accuser, seeing the accused so brutally beaten, would withdraw his accusation. Perhaps Pilate had hoped that the people might recant their desire to see this King of the Jews put to death, but that was not the case.

Jesus, by then battered and bleeding, was then turned over to the Roman soldiers and brought into the courtyard of the governor's residence. The soldiers called together the cohort, normally consisting of 600 men, or one-tenth of a legion, but perhaps an auxiliary unit of 200 to 300 men brought with Pilate from Caesarea.

It is here that we see what we might call senseless humiliation and brutality. The man was sentenced to die and it takes a very twisted and hardened person not to show some compassion on one that is ready to lose their life. But there was no compassion found in these soldiers that day:

And the soldiers took Him away into the palace (that is, the Praetorium), and they called together the whole Roman cohort. And they dressed Him up in purple, and after weaving a crown of thorns, they put it on Him; and they began to acclaim Him, Hail, King of the Jews! And they kept beating His head with a reed, and spitting at Him, and kneeling and bowing before Him. And after they had mocked Him, they took the purple off Him, and put His garments on Him. And they led Him out to crucify Him.

These soldiers did FIVE things:

1. Dressed Jesus in a purple robe
2. They put a crown of thorns on His head
3. They mocked Him and acclaimed Him as King of the Jews
4. They beat His head with a reed
5. They were spitting at Him

Much of what they did they did out of the evil, the anger, the darkness of their own souls. Senseless, without purpose or reason, just to taunt, to be mean.

But two of the five have a significance that was unknown to the soldiers. A significance that looks back to the fall and curse upon man and a significance that looks ahead to what we have as Christians because of all that Christ endured that day.

I. THE CROWN OF THORNS:

1. The Crown of Thorns was not removed from Jesus when He went to the Cross. It was there as He suffered and died for our sins.

2. The thrones that inhabit the earth, are a direct result of the curse on fallen man:

Genesis 3:17-18 God said to Adam: Cursed is the ground because of you; In toil you shall eat of it All the days of your life. Both thorns and thistles it shall grow for you -

3. Every time you get a thorn in your finger you should be reminded that we live in a world that is under a curse.

4. As Paul talks about the work of Christ on the Cross and the very present power of the Lord's victory in Romans 8, he also talks about this fallen world:

Romans 8:20-22 For the creation was subjected to futility, not of its own will, but because of Him who subjected it, in hope that the creation itself also will be set free from its slavery to corruption into the freedom of the glory of the children of God. For we know that the whole creation groans and suffers the pains of childbirth together until now.

5. These soldiers took a piece of this fallen world and put it on Jesus' head. Jesus took a piece of this fallen world with Him on the Cross.

And it was on the Cross that Jesus Christ provided not only for our salvation from sin, but also the salvation of the fallen world.

6. So without even knowing it these soldiers in their mocking and humiliation of Christ, went back to the fall of man and gave to Jesus that which would proclaim a victory and a future redemption of fallen earth.

Revelation 22:3 And there shall no longer be any curse; and the throne of God and of the

Mark Lesson 15

Lamb shall be in it, and His bond-servants shall serve Him.

II. THE PURPLE ROBE:

CHRIST'S CLOTHING:

1. The Roman soldiers put a tattered purple robe on Christ and mocked him, beat him, shoved a crown of thorns on his head, and bowed down to him.

This tattered robe was an old faded robe of the Roman military. These robes were red but after wear and washing they faded and took on a faded purple appearance.

2. But before he went to the Cross they took that purple robe off him and put on his own tunic or garments.

Mark 15:20

And after they had mocked Him, they took the purple off Him, and put His garments on Him. And they led Him out to crucify Him.

3. He went to the Cross, the greatest test of His humanity, clothed in his own clothes.

By way of analogy, these are the clothes of power that he had from His Father. They were his and he used them to endure the Cross.

4. When he was striped and nailed to the Cross, the soldiers could not divide his clothes among themselves. They were not theirs to have. Cast lots for them.

John 19:24 The soldiers said therefore to one another, Let us not tear it, but cast lots for it, to decide whose it shall be; that the Scripture (Psalm 22:18) might be fulfilled, They divided My outer garments among them, and for My clothing they cast lots.

NOTE: This garment was not a robe but a tunic. Forget the movie The Robe.

5. After the Resurrection, he promised his disciples that they would be clothed with divine power, just as he was so clothed when he walked the way of the Cross.

Luke 24:49 I send the promise of my Father upon you: but tarry ye in the city of Jerusalem, until ye be clothed with power from on high.

6. In Revelation 18:11-19 we are told that the world lusts after purple or scarlet robes of human power. But on Christ they were a target of mockery.

Revelation 18:16 and 19 The Merchants were: Saying, Woe, woe, the great city, she who was clothed in fine linen and purple and scarlet, and adorned with gold and precious stones and pearls - And they threw dust on their heads and were crying out, weeping and mourning, saying, 'Woe, woe, the great city, in which all who had ships at sea became rich by her wealth, for in one hour she has been laid waste!

But the believers have a different response:

Revelation 18:20 Rejoice over her, O heaven, and you saints and apostles and prophets, because God has pronounced judgment for you against her.

The world lusts after the tattered robes of human power. In the same way, if the world put on you these robes of human power, you look ridiculous. You will be mocked as Christ was mocked.

7. But if you put on you own clothing (cannot be someone else's clothing) that is from God, you can endure the greatest of tests with power from on high that is yours

Jesus Christ endured the greatest test of history, the Cross, wearing His own clothing, an inner reality that came from God.

8. And then, the Father called Christ to be seated at His right hand and clothed Him in an eternal royal robe:

Revelation 1:12-16 And I turned to see the voice that was speaking with me. And having turned I saw seven golden lampstands; and in the middle of the lampstands one like a son of man, clothed in a robe reaching to the feet, and girded across His breast with a golden girdle. And His head and His hair were white like white wool, like snow; and His eyes were like a flame of fire; and His feet were like burnished bronze, when it has been caused to glow in a furnace, and His voice was like the sound of many waters. And in His right hand He held seven stars; and out of His mouth

Mark Lesson 15

came a sharp two-edged sword; and His face was like the sun shining in its strength.

9. Colossians 3:10-14 describe the clothing Christ wore to the Cross: And this is the same clothing we can now put on.

And have put on the new self who is being renewed to a true knowledge according to the image of the One who created him --a renewal in which there is no distinction between Greek and Jew, circumcised and uncircumcised, barbarian, Scythian, slave and freeman, but Christ is all, and in all. And so, as those who have been chosen of God, holy and beloved, put on a heart of compassion, kindness, humility, gentleness and patience; bearing with one another, and forgiving each other, whoever has a complaint against anyone; just as the Lord forgave you, so also should you. And beyond all these things put on love, which is the perfect bond of unity.

And we can wear the same clothing he wore!

Prerequisites: Correct Motive, Influence and Power which is the same for us as it was for Christ.

Social Scientists describe three types of loneliness:

1. First there is the loneliness of isolation:

This is the loneliness of solitary confinement, being alone, separated from other human beings.

2. Secondly there is the loneliness of separation and rejection. This a loneliness that comes from the being separated from specific people who you care for or love. Knowing that there are others who were once close to you that by your choice or there's, are no longer there.

3. Third, there is an existential loneliness that can come deep from within man when he senses he is not in touch with God.

Now we are going to see Jesus alone. But not alone, separated or alienated from God. But alone, separated from friends and those he loved.

We have already noted in our study of Jesus' approach to the Cross that His friends have abandoned Him, that the ones He came to save have now turned against Him, that the legal system that was to support justice was unjust in

condemning Jesus, and that the Roman soldiers vented hostility and anger against Jesus.

We have noted that perhaps never before in the history of mankind had one who came to give so much was left so alone as our Lord when He was taken into the courtyard to face the anger of the soldiers.

He was alone - but the God of grace, love, and peace was with Him. He was abandoned by man, but not by His heavenly Father.

And all this happened for us:

Hebrews 12:3 For consider Him who has endured such hostility by sinners against Himself, so that you may not grow weary and lose heart.

By this promise, this challenge, we are told that Jesus, alone, humiliated, condemned, did not lose heart.

When Jesus would go to the cross a mere few hours from these events we are reading of, He would experience a unique loneliness as God the Father had to turn His back on His only begotten Son to judge Him for the sins of the Word.

That is a loneliness of divine proportions that could only be experienced by one who never, throughout all history, knew the loneliness of separation from God. And Jesus experienced that, went through the shame of the Cross for us -

But prior to the Cross there was a loneliness of human proportions. Jesus, alone and abandoned and in the courtyard with the anger of the adversaries.

How easy it would have been for the one who created heaven and earth to end everything right then and there. To call down the fire of judgment upon these persecutors, upon Pilate, upon the people, upon the priests. But the plan of God was more important, our salvation was more important.

We were His priority, He wanted to provide for us the salvation that could come only through the Cross and if that meant being alone, being abused, being alienated from friends and those He loved, then so be it -

And he did that for us -

Mark Lesson 15

Philippians 2:8 And being found in appearance as a man, He humbled Himself by becoming obedient to the point of death, even death on a cross.

But having endure the courtyard of the enemy, and having endured it alone, Jesus is now being brought to the pit of death where He will die for the sins of the human race.

On the Cross He will be separated from the Father. His loneliness will be one of divine proportions.

And perhaps because of that unique loneliness He is about to face, the Father provides for Him a few, a precious few, who will be there with Him - one such person was Simon.

Mark 15:21

And they pressed into service a passer-by coming from the country, Simon of Cyrene (the father of Alexander and Rufus), to bear His cross.

It was a common practice in Roman executions for the condemned to carry their cross to the place of death. These crosses were heavy and since the condemned had already experienced the brutal beatings, they would often buckle under the weight of the Cross.

Perhaps it was after Jesus had fallen a few times that the soldiers decided to quicken the pace by having someone else carry the Cross.

So they pressed into service a passer-by, Simon of Cyrene:

The story of Simon of Cyrene:

1. The crucifixion procession was led by a centurion, followed by two soldiers, then Christ then the others including the two thieves, then two more soldiers, and last the skilled executioners.
2. This procession was heading out of the city as Simon was coming into the city.
3. The soldiers compelled or pressed into service: the word is AGGAREVW , which was used for soldiers who were stationed a mile apart on major trade routes to press into service passersby who could carry official messages. Not a command but

a strong request. He could have said NO, but he did not.

He was pressed into service to carry the Cross which became God's official message of hope, glory, and eternal salvation.

4. In order that he might bear the cross.

This is a subjunctive verb, he had a choice. And this reminds us that everyone who meets Christ has a choice.

5. He was a Cyrenian, from an area outside of Alexandria, Egypt.

He had not been in Judea and had not heard what the religious leaders had said about Christ. Thus he was objective.

6. So here is a businessman, in town for the holidays, and all of a sudden he is being strongly asked to carry the cross of a convicted felon.

Why did he do it? Because he watched, he reasoned, he was objective, he chose, he believed.

7. The passage mentions his sons, Alexander and Rufus, because by the time Mark writes the Gospel they were well known Christians.

Romans 16:31 refers to Rufus and Simon's wives being in Rome and known to the Churches.

Here is an amazing man. He believed, he returned to North Africa, witnessed to his family who also believed.

WHY: Because he was objective.

I cannot read this passage without thinking of something Jesus said to His disciples while they were still in Galilee:

Mark 8:34 And He summoned the multitude with His disciples, and said to them, If anyone wishes to come after Me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross, and follow Me.

Principle: Jesus never calls us to do what He has not already done. He carried His Cross - but here is where we see the amazing grace of God.

He carried His Cross to a point, to a point when He could no longer bear up under the burden and then, at the precise right moment, God provided help in His time of need.

Mark Lesson 15

Principles:

1. Each one of us must carry our own cross. Sometimes we carry it in the company of many others, sometimes all alone.
2. When God calls us to go it alone, separated from friends, family, fellow believers, we must remember that God is always there - we may be alone in human terms but never in our relationship with God.
3. The test, the trials that God puts us through are designed to strengthen us, to bring us into closer friendship and fellowship with Him.
4. When Jesus carried His Cross it was to bring Him to a place where He could accomplish the goal the Father had for Him and bring Him to the place of victory, His death.
5. When we are under the burden of carrying our own Cross that is not the goal, the destiny the Father has for us but the means to get us to that goal, that victory we can have in Him.
6. Any burden we struggle under is designed by God and comes either directly from God or is indirectly allowed by God, for our benefit, our advance, to strengthen us, to get us to where He wants us to be for maximum blessing.

Isaiah 30:18 The Lord longs to be gracious to you, And therefore He waits on high to have compassion on you. For the Lord is a God of justice; How blessed are all those who long for Him.

EXPANDED: God is tapping his foot, waiting to pour grace out upon you.

7. And we can be assured that as with Jesus, when that burden brings us down, when we begin to break under the load, the Father will provide help in a time of need. A friend to help us shoulder the load, to get us to where God wants us to be.

The Apostle Paul gives us the mechanics of this:

Gal. 6:2, Bear one another's burdens, and thus fulfill the law of Christ.

Gal. 6:5, For each one shall bear his own load.

These two apparently contradictory statements tell us how we are to help one another.

1. In Gal. 6:22 the word BURDEN is BAROS _the weight that is ready to break us, to bring us down.
2. In Gal. 6:33 the word LOAD is FORTION and looks at the normal burdens of life that we bear with a result of productivity or beneficial results.
3. We must be there to help shoulder the load that is about to break a fellow believer. But we must let others carry their normal burdens in life so we do not take from them the blessing of carrying there own cross.

We see that God provided the humanity of Jesus with someone to help shoulder the load, to help Him get to the place of victory.

But in the courtyard our Lord was alone. The Father did not provide someone else to take the beating, to endure the mockery and humiliation. The Lord was very alone but He would not be alone for much longer.

Simon of Cyrene was already being prepared to meet the Lord on the way to the Golgotha, to be there at the precise right moment to help our Savior fulfill the destiny God had for Him.

Application:

There are times when we will be under the burdens of life alone. Times when it will seem that there is no one else around. But God is never far from us. He is always there. And in His grace and love for us He will provide help, encouragement, another to help us shoulder the load that is about to break us, at the precise right time.

There is a reminder for all of us in this story of Simon:

Nothing ever stays the same -

As I talk with believers under the burdens of life, believers who are carrying there own crosses to the place of destiny fulfilled, I remind them that nothing ever stays the same.

There can be no doubt that our Lord Jesus Christ did not deserve the suffering He endured on His way to the Cross - we did.

Mark Lesson 15

Mark 15:22

And they brought Him to the place Golgotha, which is translated, Place of a Skull.

The place that Jesus died shares three names, which each in their own language, mean the same thing, The Place of the Skull. Golgotha is the Greek transliteration of an Aramaic word. Calvary is from the Latin, calvaria, meaning skull. We would understand it as the place of the skull.

It was the British General Gordon who, in the 19th century, was sitting on the North wall of the old quarter of Jerusalem and looked out and saw a rock formation that resembled a skull.

Tradition of both hymns and paintings often depict the place of the crucifixion as on a hill top. But that would be contrary to Roman thinking. The Romans put temples, homes, places of honor on the tops of hills, not people condemned to die.

The place of the skull or Gordon's Calvary, is north of the city, but it is a pit surrounded on three sides by a natural rock wall and in the face of the north precipice is a rock formation that resembles a skull.

Most historians and archeologists now see this pit as the place where Jesus died for the sins of the human race.

Crucifixion:

There is perhaps no more excruciating death that death by crucifixion.

Josephus wrote as one who witness this form of capital punishment and said it was - the most wretched of all ways of dying.

Cicero, a Roman himself, calls crucifixion the grossest, cruelest, most hideous manner of execution.

William Lane in his commentary of Mark states: Death by crucifixion was one of the cruelest and most degrading forms of punishment ever conceived by human perversity, even in the eyes of the pagan world.

Now we will examine what crucifixion was like as we progress through this chapter but for today I want to concentrate on the person of Jesus Christ

and His attitude, His endurance, His courage at the Cross.

An a glimpse into that attitude is seen in the next verse.

Mark 15:23

Crucifixion was such a horrible manner of death that the Romans allowed the women of Jerusalem to administer a strong anesthetic prior to the execution. This was intended to dull the senses of the condemned so that the piercing of the wrists by the nails and the pain of cross bar upon which the condemned was nailed as it was hoisted to the up right would be bearable.

Matthew 27:34 gives us additional information:

They gave Him wine to drink mingled with gall; and after tasting it, He was unwilling to drink.

1. The anesthetic was a mixture of wine and gall or myrrh. Now both are capable of deadening pain.
2. Myrrh was a plant sap that was a very strong natural anesthetic that would have eliminated much of the pain.
3. The verse in Matthew focuses us upon the humanity of Jesus, He tasted the mixture, His throat was parched, He was thirsty.
4. But recognizing what it was He refused it. He would go to the Cross, endure the pain in what was provided by God and not by man.
5. His senses would be sharp, He would be able to think about the doctrine He had as He died for our sins.

Now when we consider the death of Christ we have to really look at the two deaths that our Lord suffered on our behalf.

The death for our sins was a spiritual death that satisfied the righteous demands of a Holy and Just God.

We have spiritual life because Jesus endured a spiritual death, a separation from the Father as the sins of the human race were poured out upon Christ.

Such passages as:

Mark Lesson 15

Galatians 1:4, The Lord Jesus Christ, who gave Himself for our sins, that He might deliver us out of this present evil age, according to the will of our God and Father.

1 John 4:10, In this is love, not that we loved God, but that He loved us and sent His Son to be the propitiation for our sins.

1 Corinthians 15:3, For I delivered to you as of first importance what I also received, that Christ died for our sins according to the Scriptures.

Look at this death that only Christ could die to bring us to God, insuring forgiveness and sanctification.

But there is also the physical death and the physical suffering that Jesus endured because of us, because of sin.

Hebrews 12:2,3, Fixing our eyes on Jesus, the author and perfecter of faith, who for the joy set before Him endured the cross, despising the shame, and has sat down at the right hand of the throne of God. For consider Him who has endured such hostility by sinners against Himself, so that you may not grow weary and lose heart.

We rejoice in that fact that Jesus died for our sins but we must never forget that Jesus also suffered greatly at the hand of men because of the sins of the human race.

The hostility of the Jewish religious leaders, the injustice of Rome, the vacillation of the people, the anger of the Roman guard, the cruelty of the executioners.

These all cause our Lord to endure the physical pain that was all a part of the death of the Cross.

In the Psalms David spoke of the death of the Messiah in both spiritual and physical terms:

Psalm 22

1 My God, my God, why hast Thou forsaken me? Far from my deliverance are the words of my groaning.

14 I am poured out like water, And all my bones are out of joint; My heart is like wax; It is melted within me.

15 My strength is dried up like a potsherd, And my tongue cleaves to my jaws; And Thou dost lay me in the dust of death.

16 For dogs have surrounded me; A band of evildoers has encompassed me; They pierced my hands and my feet.

17 I can count all my bones. They look, they stare at me;

18 They divide my garments among them, And for my clothing they cast lots.

When we put together the deaths Christ died, the entire picture of His suffering and shame, we have a principle:

Principle: Christ died spiritually on behalf of our sins and He suffered physically because of our sins.

God poured the sins of the human race upon Christ at the Cross - and prior to the Cross, man vented the darkness of sin against the Lord Jesus.

Isaiah 52:14 His appearance was marred more than any man, And His form more than the sons of men.

It is this physical suffering that I want to examine first. suffering that was so intense and yet a suffering Christ endured, refusing to drink the wine and myrrh to deaden the pain:

Four scars:

1. Jesus carried to the Cross the scars on His back from the beating he received after He was sentenced to die.

The English word scourging comes from a Latin compound of two words meaning to take off the skin.

Isaiah 50:6, I gave My back to those who strike Me, And My cheeks to those who pluck out the beard; I did not cover My face from humiliation and spitting.

Our souls are scared by sins, but Jesus' body was scared because of our sins.

Who can bear to watch an innocent man beaten, bloodied, the skin ripped off his back by the sin that lies in us, in the sin nature.

Mark Lesson 15

The English minister R. Moffat Gantrey said of this that only when man becomes callous and so accustomed to inhumanity and hardened to the pain of others will we no longer be awed by the pain and sorrow of the lamb of God.

He went on to say that at the scourging of the Lamb of God:

If angels had hearts to break they would have broken when they saw what man had done to God's well beloved son. If they had tears to shed they would have shed tears so great as the blood that dripped from the Savior's back. Angels would have hid their faces with their wings against the sight, unable to bear the tragic evidence of man's sin.

He turned His back to be scourged as a result of man's sin and then carried those scars to the Cross.

2. The second scars were the scars of the crown of thorns:

The thorns that were a curse upon the earth as a result of man's sin and disobedience now scars the head of Christ as the tormentors pushed the crown upon his head. These thorns were a reminder to man of his sin. A curse from God upon fallen man and fallen earth.

Yet man takes that curse and scars the head of Christ. The head that bore the glory of eternity was forced to wear a symbol of sin and shame.

When we think of the crown of thorns and the scars caused by it we are to be reminded of the nature of man. Thrusting, forcing upon God that which man alone cause.

The crown of thorns demonstrate the tendency in man to blame God, to want to pass the buck, to say it is all God's fault, and refuse the culpability of our crimes.

The thorns God gave to remind us of our sin became a reminder that we must never put upon God the blame for our own decisions to sin, to rebel, to disobey.

The crown of thorns remind us of our denial of our sin. That we deserve the thorns.

Jesus did not deserve the crown of thorns, we did. He was the innocent lamb of God - yet he chose to wear the crown of thorns to the Cross.

3. The third scars of the suffering of the Savior are the scars of the nails, made by the executioner as nailed to the Cross.

David observed in Psalm 22:16, They pierced my hands and feet.

Consider the hands of Jesus, that shaped the earth out of nothing, that formed man from the dust, that took from man's side a rib and built woman.

These hands did not deserve the scars of our sin.

Psalm 31:15, My times are in Thy hand; Deliver me from the hand of my enemies, and from those who persecute me.

1 Chronicles 21:13, And David said to Gad, I am in great distress; please let me fall into the hand of the Lord, for His mercies are very great. But do not let me fall into the hand of man.

Isaiah 59:1, Behold, the Lord's hand is not so short That it cannot save; Neither is His ear so dull That it cannot hear.

Ezra 8:31 The hand of our God was over us, and He delivered us from the hand of the enemy and the ambushes by the way.

The hands of Christ are the hands of assurance and security. In His hands we rest, we know safety and promise, it is in His hands we put our lives.

And those hands are forever scared by the nails of the Cross.

4. There is one last scar, the scar in His side that came after He gave up His spirit to the Father.

Crucifixion could take two to three days but the next day was the Passover and in respect to the Jews no condemned man would hang of the tree of death during that important holyday. To speed up the process the Roman soldiers would break the legs of the condemned and then, later, thrust the sword through the side and into the heart.

When they came to break Jesus legs, He had already expired, giving up His own spirit. To insure His death the soldier took a sword and

Mark Lesson 15

pierced His side, to the very heart. But He was already dead.

That scar that remains in the side of the Savior is testimony to His death and thus a testimony to His resurrection.

To Thomas who had such doubts, Jesus said:

John 20:27, Reach here your finger, and see My hands; and reach here your hand, and put it into My side; and be not unbelieving, but believing.

Four scars that remind us of the suffering of our Savior

1. The scared back: The callousness of sin, the indifference as insensitivity that is a part of everyone of us.
2. The scars of the crown of thorns: Our denial that we deserve our fallen state, that its God's fault, not ours.
3. The nail pierced hands: Reminding us that in these hands we can put our lives, our hopes and dreams, our future.
4. And the scared side: A reminder that death cannot end what we have in the one who died for us and is risen for us, as our Savior, our friend.

While Peter wrote about Christ taking away our sins I cannot help but think he also had in mind, as should we, what Jesus went through in His physical sufferings to get to the Cross -

1 Peter 2:21-24 For you have been called for this purpose, since Christ also suffered for you, leaving you an example for you to follow in His steps, who committed no sin, nor was any deceit found in His mouth; and while being reviled, He did not revile in return; while suffering, He uttered no threats, but kept entrusting Himself to Him who judges righteously; and He Himself bore our sins in His body on the cross, that we might die to sin and live to righteousness; for by His wounds you were made whole.

The story is told that Frederick the Great once rode through the streets of Berlin and noticed a crowd looking intently at a wall. On it was hanging a vile caricature of himself. Someone had put it up high so it wouldn't be torn down. The

citizens expected a terrific outburst of temper from their monarch. He looked at the picture for a moment, noted the scurrilous slander, and then quietly said to his servant, Place it lower so that all may read it. As he calmly rode away, he had won a victory over the evil intentions of his enemies, and the bystanders had gained a new admiration for their leader.

There is not one of us who has not in some measure been maligned, slandered, ridiculed, mocked, laughed at. When these things are directed at us we face a test, how will we react.

It has wisely been said that what happens to you in life does not matter nearly as much as how you respond to it.

We are going to see Jesus, on the Cross, enduring the shame of humiliation and ridicule and we are going to see how our Savior, our Lord, our hero and our friend, responded.

Mark 15:24

And they crucified Him, and divided up His garments among themselves, casting lots for them, to decide what each should take.

There is no act of inhumanity that man can inflict upon another member of the human race that Jesus Christ did not endure as He approached the hour when He would do what only He could do, pay the price, once and for all, for the sins of human race.

The very sin that was directed at Him as He approached the Cross and in the initial hours of the Cross were sins that Jesus took upon Himself and paid the highest price to satisfy the justice and righteous demands of the Father. LAST WEEK WE EXAMINED THE PHYSICAL pain, the scars that Jesus carried with Him to the Cross that remind us of why we so desperately need a Savior. We are, as Paul would later say, men most miserable (I Corinthians 15:19).

We are going to look at another kind of abuse, another type of pain inflicted upon Christ. The insults, the mockery, the verbal humiliation He endured. And this pain also carried with it scars. Physical pain wounds the body, this type of pain goes deeper and wounds the very soul.

Mark Lesson 15

In very simple and straight forward statement, Mark tells us that Jesus was crucified.

As he begins the progression of events of the Cross he starts out by telling us that Jesus went to the Cross with very little from this life and soon lost event that.

It was customary for the four man squad of soldiers who crucified condemned criminals to divide the possessions of the condemned between them.

Long before the Romans controlled Palestine, a 1000years before the crucifixion, David prophetic wrote of this occurrence.

Psalm 22:18 They divide my garments among them, And for my clothing they cast lots.

JESUS CHRIST WENT TO THE CROSS with nothing from this world. He would endure because of what He carried with Him in His soul. Doctrine, the power of the Spirit, the priority He had set from eternity past to die for our sins.

Mark 15:25,26

And it was the third hour (9:00 AM) when they crucified Him. And the inscription of the charge against Him read, THE KING OF THE JEWS.

It was customary to place a sign over the condemned man to indicate his crime. Each of the gospel writer record that the sign on the Cross of Jesus read: THE KING OF THE JEWS.

Matthew and John add His name, Jesus, and John adds that the sign stated that He was from Nazareth.

The statement of the crime was probably written in Latin (the legal language of Rome), Greek (the common language of Rome), and in Hebrew (the language of the people). The complete sign was intended as an indictment:

JESUS OF NAZARETH, THE KING OF THE JEWS

Each gospel writer includes part of the entire statement with John, the only disciple who was an eyewitness, giving the full version.

The Romans intended this to be an indictment, a humiliation, a statement of the crime for which

Jesus was being put to death - but it was true - This was the King of the Jews.

Rejected, scorned, condemned to die. The object of hatred and antagonism. But that is who He was and continues to be. The King of kings and Lord of lords.

We see in this passage every possible group attacking the Lord Jesus Christ.

That sign was the official verdict of Rome, a true statement and yet turned and twisted as a reason to put this innocent man to death.

Rome, who prided itself on having a fair and just legal system, condemned an innocent man to die.

We as American's also take pride in our fair and just legal system. But what happens when we see the legal system fail, when the ones who are to support the law of the land fail and that law is turned against us?

JESUS OF NAZARETH, KING OF THE JEWS could find no comfort or help in the legal system.

Mark 15:27,28

And they crucified two robbers with Him, one on His right and one on His left.

And the Scripture was fulfilled which says, And He was numbered with transgressors (Isaiah 53:12).

There is a false idea that there is some kind of honor among thieves. That is not case here nor has it ever been the case. There is no honor, camaraderie, or respect among those who live outside of the law.

Luke tells us the whole story about these two robbers. Matthew and later Mark both tell us that at the beginning, both mocked and ridiculed the Lord Jesus.

Look on to the last statement in verse 32:

And those who were crucified with Him were casting the same insult at Him.

But we also learn that as one continued to ridicule, the other recognized Jesus as the Messiah and that He was innocent and he was saved in those closing hours of his life.

Mark Lesson 15

The legal system was against Jesus and even those outside the legal system, the others condemned to die, held out no help for the Son of God. Both the law givers and the law breakers slandered the Lord Jesus Christ.

But in this the Old Testament prophecy of Isaiah is fulfilled:

Isaiah 53:12 Because He poured out Himself to death, And was numbered with the transgressors; Yet He Himself bore the sin of many, And interceded for the transgressors.

Mark 15:29,30

And those passing by were hurling abuse at Him, wagging their heads, and saying, Ha! You who are going to destroy the temple and rebuild it in three days, save Yourself, and come down from the cross!

This is the crowd, the mob, the mass of people who are passing by this place of death.

Some of those who that morning called to Pilate to crucify the Christ. Some of those who a few days earlier welcomed Jesus into the city, hailing Him as their king, as the Messiah.

The statement that they WAGED THEIR HEADS expresses a common form of derision in the Hebrew world. A physical sign of contempt.

Added to this is their statement of ridicule:

ABUSE is the imperfect of BLASFEIMEW,

And their insults were a blasphemy of the Lord who would die for their sins.

You who are going to destroy the temple and rebuild it in three days, save Yourself, and come down from the cross!

Principles:

1. Their insults included the statement Jesus made regarding the Temple which was the accusation made against Him during the second trial.
2. Now, as then, the statement was inaccurate. A misunderstanding of what Jesus had said regarding the Temple.

3. He had told His disciples that the Temple would be torn down and that He would rebuild it in three days.

4. John in John, chapter 2 provides a clear understanding of what Jesus said:

John 2:19-21 Jesus answered and said to them, Destroy this temple, and in three days I will raise it up. The Jews therefore said, It took forty-six years to build this temple, and will You raise it up in three days? But He was speaking of the temple of His body. 5. Those who now insulted Christ did so based upon misunderstanding and their refusal to listen to or know the truth.

6. They would rather stick with the lie than learn the truth because the lie gave them a basis for their insults.

7. PRINCIPLE: They justify themselves and they were saying by their own lack of understanding and refusal to learn the truth.

Peter would later write of such people and say that they are like:

2 Peter 2:12, Unreasoning animals, born as creatures of instinct to be captured and killed, reviling where they have no knowledge, will in the destruction of those creatures also be destroyed.

Application: Have you ever been misunderstood and then criticized based upon that misunderstanding. Say one thing and have it taken to mean something else?

That is what is happening here and that is part of the essence of the mob. They go with false information, misinformation, ignorance, to justify their actions.

The people who had hailed Christ as King, now turned on Him with insults. There was no comfort to be found with people.

Mark 15:31,32

In the same way the chief priests also, along with the scribes, were mocking Him among themselves and saying, He saved others; He cannot save Himself. Let this Christ, the King

Mark Lesson 15

of Israel, now come down from the cross, so that we may see and believe!

These religious leaders could not deny the fact that Jesus had saved others in His miracles of healing. That He had preformed great and compassionate deeds for others.

But now they use what He did for others as a form of mockery towards Him.

A number of things of evident in their slander.

1. They failed to see that to truly save others He could not save Himself.

2. To save Himself, which He could have done with a mere thought, would have eternally condemned the world and all that was in it to be lost, forever.

3. As with the mob, their ignorance became the basis for their insults.

This is a very stupid statement: He saved others yet He cannot save Himself

It was because He so much wanted to save others that He refused to save Himself.

But their ignorance closed their eyes and their minds to reason, truth, and grace.

4. They called Him the Christ, the Messiah, the King of Israel but do so as a form of insult. They had the information but refused the truth of the information at hand.

5. They established a precondition to their faith. If He comes down from the Cross, we will see, we will believe.

And that is exactly what He did. He died, and yet He lived. He went through the battlefield of the Cross and He lived - but they did not believe.

Principle:Ignorance and preconditions to faith will cancel out faith. Man will take one of those two paths, either remaining in ignorance or setting up some expectation he demands God to meet.

So the religious leaders, the custodians of the truth of God reject the truth and turned against Christ.

Jesus would find no comfort in religion -

Now how did Jesus respond to all this, how would you and I respond to the insults, the slander, the maligning?

It is Luke who records for us the response of the Savior:

Luke 23:34, But Jesus was saying, Father, forgive them; for they do not know what they are doing.

SAYING is the imperfect tense of LEGW " • He kept on saying this. As they insulted Him He prayed for them. Not merely requesting forgiveness but demanding it, imperfect tense, forgive them! Because of what He is about to do. He is about to die for this sin and all other sins of every member of the human race.

You see, the priority of our salvation was more important to the insults and the slander.

Jesus could have taught them, He could have said No you have it wrong, that is not what I said. He could have explained the error and enlightened the ignorance - But He had something more important to do.

He had to face the hours of darkness, the hours of separation from the Father and pay the price that only He could pay for the sins of the human race. He had to endure to when He could proclaim the victory - It is finished. THAT WAS HOW JESUS RESPONDED, how would we respond?

What would we do if all turned against us. The military, the legal system, the people who were once our friends, the social and religious leaders, even the criminal element of society? All turning against Christ. All turning against us.

Peter makes it very clear what we should do:

I Peter 3:9, Not returning evil for evil, or insult for insult, but giving a blessing instead; for you were called for the very purpose that you might inherit a blessing.

And how do we do that? The same way Jesus returned the blessing of forgiveness to those who insulted Him.

Four mechanics of proper response to insults and slander:

1. Realize that we have a more important task then to be distracted by the insults. When you set your priorities and the plan of God, His purpose

Mark Lesson 15

for you, you will not be distracted by what others say.

2. To realize that God is the one who will bless us regardless of what man does or says:

Matthew 5:11, Blessed are you when men cast insults at you, and persecute you, and say all kinds of evil against you falsely, on account of Me.

3. By realizing that there is little that can be done to correct the slander of the ignorant and the ill-informed:

Proverbs 9:7, He who corrects a scoffer gets dishonor for himself, And he who reproves a wicked man gets insults for himself.

That proverb is telling us not to sink to their level.

4. And then to realize that God will give us the strength to endure even the insults, even the wounds that go so deeply into the soul:

2 Corinthians 12:10, Therefore I am well content with weaknesses, with insults, with distresses, with persecutions, with difficulties, for Christ's sake; for when I am weak, then I am strong.

James talked about the tongue and what words can do in His epistle as a warning that we not fall into the sins of the tongue:

James 3:5-8 So also the tongue is a small part of the body, and yet it boasts of great things. Behold, how great a forest is set aflame by such a small fire! And the tongue is a fire, the very world of iniquity; the tongue is set among our members as that which defiles the entire body, and sets on fire the course of our life, and is set on fire by hell. For every species of beasts and birds, of reptiles and creatures of the sea, is tamed, and has been tamed by the human race. But no one can tame the tongue; it is restless evil and full of deadly poison.

And when you are the recipient of the fire, the iniquity, the defiling, the restless evil and deadly poison of the tongue - insulted, slandered, misunderstood, falsely accused, mocked, and humiliated -

Our attitude of grace and forgiveness is far more important than the insults of ignorance, the

slander of the stupid, the mockery of the mob, the accusations of the arrogant.

Our attitude can be the attitude of Christ Mark 15:33 In his letter to the Romans, the apostle Paul talked about our relationships with our enemies.

Romans 12:20-21, But if your enemy is hungry, feed him, and if he is thirsty, give him a drink; for in so doing you will heap burning coals upon his head. Do not be overcome by evil, but overcome evil with good.

Earlier, Paul identified those who were the enemies of Christ and the Cross -

Romans 5:10, For if while we were enemies, we were reconciled to God through the death of His Son, much more, having been reconciled, we shall be saved by His life.

Jesus Christ was not overcome by evil but overcame the evil of His enemies, you and me as unbelievers, by doing that which was the greatest good that anyone could ever do us, He died on the Cross for our sins.

Romans 5:6-8 For while we were still helpless, at the right time Christ died for the ungodly. For one will hardly die for a righteous man; though perhaps for the good man someone would dare even to die. But God demonstrates His own love toward us, in that while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us.

Mark 15:33

And when the sixth hour had come, darkness fell over the whole land until the ninth hour.

As a supernatural darkness fell over Golgotha, the suffering that Christ had to endure at the hands of men was fulfilled. Now and for the next three hours of the Cross, Jesus would suffer at the hands of a righteous God, His Father, who would make Him, the Son, to be sin for us.

In the hours prior to the beginning of the Spiritual death of Christ for sins, man brutalized, humiliated, mocked, and tormented Jesus Christ the innocent lamb of God.

We have seen in response to all this Jesus did not react with the same kind of evil. Instead, He required forgiveness for them of the Father.

Mark Lesson 15

Jesus' response to his tormentors can be summed up with one statement, He loved them:

He loved them even though His enemies:

1. Betrayed Him: Mark 14:44
2. Arrested Him: Mark 14:53
3. Lied against Him: Mark 14:56
4. Spit on Him: Mark 14:65 and Mark 15:19
5. Hit Him with their fists: Mark 14:65
6. Falsely accused Him before the law: Mark 15:1
7. Called for Him to die: Mark 15:13 and 14
8. Whipped Him: Mark 15:15
9. Pressed a crown of thorns on His head: Mark 15:17
10. Beat Him at the head with a stick: Mark 15:19
11. Took from Him everything He had: Mark 15:24
12. Insulted Him: Mark 15:29
13. Mocked Him and laughed at Him: Mark 15:32
14. And nailed Him to a Cross to die: Mark 15:24

And Jesus loved them -

Perhaps it was not so surprising to those who had walked with Jesus to see Him respond to hatred with such love and grace.

They had heard the Lord tell His disciples that they were to love their enemies.

In Luke 6:27 through 38 Jesus taught about unconditional love and the response we are to have to those who hate us.

Jesus Christ has presented the rule of righteousness that is so much a part of His character to His disciples during the sermon on the mount. He then turns to seven aspects of unconditional love:

Luke 6:27-30. But I say to you who hear, love your enemies, do good to those who hate you, bless those who curse you, pray for those who mistreat you. Whoever hits you on the cheek, offer him the other also; and whoever takes away your coat, do not withhold your shirt from him either. Give to everyone who asks of you, and whoever takes away what is yours, do not demand it back.

Seven aspects of unconditional love: These verses are filled with imperative mood verbs making these characteristics of unconditional love commands, and not mere suggestions:

1. Love your enemies: Unconditional love towards your enemies is built on the basis of an impersonal love for all mankind.

If you view mankind accurately, with Divine viewpoint, you will recognize that all are sinners, that all have a sin nature, that no one is perfect, and that there will be those who just do not like you.

A study recently showed that 20% of the people you meet will not like you. This dislike will be for no reason other than a conflict of appearance or personality. This statistic is true of those you know and who know you and those who have very little knowledge of you.

If you let your enemies throw you, if let them get you down, if you allow them to change your attitude and actions you will live a very miserable and uptight life.

Impersonal love, leading to unconditional love eliminates the power your enemies might have over you.

When someone doesn't like you, chalk it up to the 20% and love them.

2. Do good to those who hate you: Paul uses the comparative word for GOOD, KALOS, .

In comparison to what they may do to you, do good to them.

They may deprive you of food and drink, leaving you hunger and thirsty. Give them food, give them drink.

When they do that which is evil towards you, do good towards them.

3. Bless those who curse you: How easy it is to think that because someone has spoken ill of you that you have the right to speak ill of them.

The Lord says that must not be the case. Instead of cursing the ones who curse you, bless them.

The word BLESS is EULOGOS, as an imperative command. It means to speak good words. We get the English word EULOGY from this Greek word.

Mark Lesson 15

Others may say things against you, things true and things false, things real, and things imagined.

Do not use that as an excuse to curse them.

4. Pray about the ones insulting you: A woman in my first church, seventeen years ago, told me one that it is always better to talk to God about men than to talk to men about men.

No one likes to be insulted, degraded, maligned, but it will occur, you will be the object of the vilification of another.

When that happens pray ABOUT them. We have PERI, preposition that tells us we are to pray about them, not for them.

If they are to be quieted, it will be God who will quiet them, not you.

We can get very involved and very distracted doing anything other than praying about the enemies we may have and their verbal attacks and insults.

5. Whoever hits you on the cheek, offer him the other also: This is better known as turning the other cheek. And looks at the principle of not retaliating.

Retaliation is getting back, getting even, returning evil for evil.

Retaliation is "not" taking legitimate forms of recourse, turning away, defending yourself, protecting yourself.

Turning the other cheek puts you in the position of being helpless, but never hopeless. Your hope is in the Father.

Retaliation is reaction, lack of retaliation is response.

Even in professional contact sports it is the player who reacts by striking back who is penalized. A rough sport such as NFL football will see tempers flare and a player push, shove, even struck another. But if the other player retaliates and strikes back it is that player who is penalized or ejected from the field of play.

In turning the other cheek you recognize that your protection and dependence is upon God.

6. Give freely to others: And whoever takes away your coat, do not withhold your shirt from him either.

The word WITHHOLD is a neg + APAITEW, which is used only here and in Luke 12:20 and means to demand.

The situation sees someone demanding something from you and you demanding that they not have it.

Unconditional love says: Give it to them - if they demand this of you, what is more important, your mental attitude of love or the temporal demands for some temporal object?

7. The last characteristic of unconditional love is:

Luke 6:31 And just as you want people to treat you, treat them in the same way.

Often called the Golden Rule this principle gives us the Law of Volitional Responsibility or as Paul states in:

Galatians 6:7 Do not be deceived, God is not mocked; for whatever a man sows, this he will also reap.

If we sow anger, and return hate for hate, insult for insult, retaliate against others - what will we receive in return?

Anger, hate, insult, retaliating.

But if we love our enemies, do good even to those who hate us, bless the ones who curse us, pray concerning others, not retaliate, and freely give to others then it is that which will be returned to us -

Your enemies may continue to hate you, insult you, take from you but it is God who loves you, will bless you, will promote you, and will give you victory.

Our Lord Jesus Christ was not asking us to do anything He was not willing to do Himself.

As He taught about unconditional love in Luke 6 He demonstrates that unconditional love in Mark 14 and 15. It is in our recent study of the suffering and death of Christ that we have seen Jesus live what He had taught.

Turn back to Mark 14:

Examine with me these seven characteristics of unconditional love in light of the suffering of Christ:

1. Did He love His enemies? Enough to die for their sins.

Mark Lesson 15

2. Did He do good to those who hated Him? He took that very hate and paid the price for it.
3. Did He bless those who cursed Him? To the thief who curse Him and then believed in Him He promised eternal life.
4. Did He pray for the ones who insulted Him? Father forgive them for they know not what they do.
5. Did He retaliate? He could have thought a thought and destroyed them all, but he was silent as a lamb to the slaughter. Did he not turn the other cheek.
6. Did He give freely? They took his coat, and all He had at the Cross, and He gave more, His very life.
7. Did He treat others the way He would have wished to be treated and yet endured so much mistreatment at the hands of sinful man?

Though this all He demonstrated His love for His enemies. And He did this not out of His deity but out of His humanity that is motivated, influenced, and empowered by the same motive, influence, and power that is not given to us.

His motive was grace, His influence was the doctrine He taught in Luke 6:27-32, and the power by which this love was given was the power of the Holy Spirit.

An interesting and convicting thought struck me as I study this passage:

Jesus Christ treated His enemies better than most Christians treat their friends.

Do we treat those who are fellow member of the family God with the high standards of unconditional love both taught by Christ and demonstrated by Christ? Or do we treat our friends worse than Jesus treated His enemies, with less love, less prayer, less giving, less compassion?

In his book *The Great Boer War*, Sir Arthur Conan Doyle recounts the story of a small detachment of British troops who were surprised by an overwhelming enemy force. The British fell back under heavy fire. Their wounded lay in a perilous position where they faced certain death. One of them, a corporal in the Ceylon Mounted Infantry, later told that they all realized they had to come

immediately under the protection of a Red Cross flag if they wanted to survive. All they had was a piece of white cloth, but no red paint. So they used the blood from their wounds to make a large cross on that white cloth. Their attackers respected that grim flag as it was held aloft, and the British wounded were brought to safety. They were secure under the blood of the Cross.

Mark 15:33 (additional notes)

And when the sixth hour had come, darkness fell over the whole land until the ninth hour.

All the physical suffering, the pain, the insults the mockery that caused wounds on His body and deep to His soul were endured for the three hours on the Cross when Jesus would die for our sins.

We have already noted that He did this, that He suffered because He had a priority, and that priority was you and me.

Philippians 2:8, And being found in appearance as a man, He (our Lord Jesus) humbled Himself by becoming obedient to the point of death, even death on a cross.

Last week we also saw that these hours of hostility exhibited the perfect unconditional love that he had taught His disciples about. That here was one who not only taught what was right but lived it. In His humanity demonstration to us what it means to love your enemies.

And because He both taught and lived the righteousness of God in His humanity, we know we have a Savior who understands the hurt, the pain, the tests, the temptations we endure. And Has given us His power to go through our times struggle:

1 Corinthians 13:4, For indeed He was crucified because of weakness, yet He lives because of the power of God. For we also are weak in Him, yet we shall live with Him because of the power of God directed toward you.

Hebrews 4:15, For we do not have a high priest who cannot sympathize with our weaknesses, but One who has-been tempted in all things as we are, yet without sin.

Mark Lesson 15

Everything we have studied thus far makes it impossible for you as a Christian to ever say, "No one understands."

Regardless of what you may go through, regardless of what may be in you, what may be there in the soul from the past, regardless of what others may do to you or what you may face, there is One who understands perfectly, not as God but as Man, who is seated at the right hand of God.

Don't ever say No one understands, no one knows what I am facing, nobody knows the trouble I have seen -

He does, and He is your Savior and your friend.

But after three hours of suffering at the hands of men, Jesus is about to suffer in a way no one has ever suffered. He is going to suffer as the innocent lamb of God who will take away once and for all the sins of the human race.

Many have been crucified, many have died horrible painful deaths, many have been humiliated and degraded and then put to death in evil ways.

But no one except Christ died the death he died during the hours of darkness on the Cross.

What man had done to crucify Jesus was now to be taken out of the hands of man, and put into the hands of a righteous and just God.

Man had directed sin towards Christ --- now Christ would take that sin and pay the price - and to do that He would die, not in His physical death which would come after the work was completed, but by dying spiritually on the Cross.

The spiritual death of Christ:

The Spiritual Death of Christ began with a supernatural darkness falling over the whole land.

What had happened to this point was done by man but now God would judge His uniquely born Son.

The darkness that covered the land shows us that what Jesus did for us was something only He could do with no help from us.

The judgment was for us, on our behalf, but was private, before the justice of God.

Man's vision could not penetrate the darkness, and that was God's design to say to man you have no part in what my Son is doing for you - it is grace. THE BLOOD OF CHRIST sums up the dramatic deaths of Christ upon the Cross:

Col. R.B. Thieme states: Since the symbolism of the blood is death, two categories of death experienced by Christ on the cross will be examined in this doctrine. His somatic death refers to what happened to His literal blood; His spiritual death refers to what happened to His figurative blood. The somatic death of Christ looks forward to the resurrection, whereas the spiritual death of Christ looks back to our sins and spiritual death. It is His figurative blood that has to do with salvation.

Dr. D.A. Carson of Trinity Evangelical Seminary in speaking of the literal use of blood rather than its figurative use on the cross, states in his book, "Exegetical Fallacies", p.33-34: A third level of the same problem was painfully exemplified in three recent articles about the blood of Christ in "Christianity Today". The author did an admirable job of explaining the wonderful things that science has discovered that the blood can do. What a wonderful picture, we are told, of how the blood of Jesus purifies every sin. In fact, it is nothing of the kind! Worse, it is irresponsible, mystical, and theologically misleading. The phrase the blood of Jesus refers to our Lord's violent, sacrificial death. In general, the blessings that the Scripture shows to be accomplished or achieved by the blood of Jesus are equally said to be accomplished or achieved by the death on the cross.

Hence when we study the term Blood of Christ as it relates to the payment of sin, these hours of darkness on the Cross, we are examining the Spiritual death of our Lord Jesus Christ.

1. The term Blood of Christ, is used literally and figuratively in the Scriptures to describe the entire matter of the Death of Christ on the Cross.
2. The word blood is used as a METONYMY, a figure of speech in which a noun is used to describe a larger event or whole.
3. The use of the word blood then should remind the reader of the total violence of the Cross.

Mark Lesson 15

4. Jesus Christ died twice on the Cross. Spiritually when our sins separated Him from the Father and then physically when He dismissed His spirit into the hands of the father.

Isaiah 53:9, Intensive plural of Deaths.

His grave was assigned with wicked men, Yet He was with a rich man in His death(s), Because He had done no violence, Nor was there any deceit in His mouth.

5. His physical death was not at the hands of men but rather by his volition once His work was completed.

John 19:30, It is finished

Luke 23:46, Father, into thy hands I commend my spirit.

6. His Spiritual death occurred during a three hour period of darkness during which He cried out (Psalm 22:1, Matthew 27:46, Mark 15:34), My God, My God, why hast thou forsaken me.

The greatest sacrifice that could ever be offered was offered at that time, the spiritual separation of the Father and the Son who for all eternity did not know Spiritual death.

That was the price paid for our so great salvation.

7. His spiritual death means that we do not have to be spiritually dead. He died spiritually that we may forever have spiritual life.

Christ died twice that we might only die once. It is a true saying that if you are born once you die twice and if you are born twice you die only once. We never have to face the second death, eternal separation from God, because Christ was separated in Spiritual death on the Cross.

Revelation 20:14 And death and Hades were thrown into the lake of fire. This is the second death, the lake of fire.

8. His physical death was accomplished because His task was complete and to guarantee us what occurred to Him. The resurrection out from the dead.

He died physically, so shall we, he was raised from the dead, so shall we be so raise.

Summary: The term blood of Christ, looks at the entire grace work of Christ on our behalf at the Cross.

The Blood of Christ can be applied to the Life of the Believer in, ways:

1. The assurance of Salvation and confidence in service:

Hebrews 9:12-14, And not through the blood of goats and calves, but through His own blood, He entered the holy place once for all, having obtained eternal redemption. For if the blood of goats and bulls and the ashes of a heifer sprinkling those who have been defiled, sanctify for the cleansing of the flesh, how much more will the blood of Christ, who through the eternal Spirit offered Himself without blemish to God, cleanse your conscience from dead works to serve the living God?

Hebrews 10:19-21, Since therefore, brethren, we have confidence to enter the holy place by the blood of Jesus, Now the God of peace, who brought up from the dead the great Shepherd of the sheep through the blood of the eternal covenant, even Jesus our Lord, equip you in every good thing to do His will, working in us that which is pleasing in His sight, through Jesus Christ, to whom be the glory forever and ever.

Principle: The very fact of such a sacrifice by our Savior on our behalf was made gives us assurance and confidence as we look back to salvation and ahead to service.

2. The second application is to our sins. We continue to make decisions to sin after salvation and often those decisions will defeat us. That is when we must apply the principle of the blood of Christ:

1 John 1:6-9, If we say that we have fellowship with Him and yet walk in the darkness, we lie and do not practice the truth; but if we walk in the light as He Himself is in the light, we have fellowship with one another, and the blood of Jesus His Son cleanses us from all sin. If we say that we have no sin, we are deceiving ourselves, and the truth is not in us. If we confess our sins, He is faithful and righteous

Mark Lesson 15

to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.

3. A third application is to our fellowship with our Lord, our Friend Jesus Christ:

As we noted in I John 1:6-7 we cannot have fellowship with Christ and at the same time walk in darkness and that it is the blood of Christ that removes the darkness of sin when confession is made.

But we also see this application to fellowship in the Lord's Supper:

I Corinthians 11:25 In the same way He took the cup also, after supper, saying, This cup is the new covenant in My blood; do this, as often as you drink it, in remembrance of Me.

The cup represented the saving work of Christ on the cross. As used in the Passover, it contained unfermented grape juice. The cup represents the sins of the world. Jesus Christ drank the cup, as it were, on the cross. He received these sins and their judgment in our place. This is the saving work of Christ on the cross. Eating and drinking are both non-meritorious functions in life which all kinds of people can do. So eating the bread and drinking from the cup represent faith in Jesus Christ. Faith apart from works, apart from merit. Taking what He has provided.

The application to fellowship in the Lord's Supper is to remember Christ, to focus your attention on Him, to concentrate on His person and His work accomplished on your behalf.

Mark 15:34

And at the ninth hour Jesus cried out with a loud voice, Eloi, Eloi, lama sa-bach-thani? which is translated, My God, My God, why hast Thou forsaken Me?

Christ was forsaken by the Father so that the omnipotence of God could pour out the sins of the human race upon Him and so that the justice of God could judge Him, in Spiritual Death, for our sins.

Why was He forsaken of God - because of you, because of me, because of our sins, and for our salvation.

Mark 15:35,36

And when some of the bystanders heard it, they began saying, Behold, He is calling for Elijah. And someone ran and filled a sponge with sour wine, put it on a reed, and gave Him a drink, saying, Let us see whether Elijah will come to take Him down.

The death that Christ died on the Cross does not make God love us. Rather, it is the outcome and the measure of His love for us.

John 3:16, For God so loved the world, that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him should not perish, but have eternal life.

Romans 5:8, But God demonstrates His own love toward us, in that while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us.

Those who gathered around the Cross were witness to the greatest event that has ever occurred on the face the earth. The grace of God working salvation though the once and for all sacrifice of the uniquely born Son of God, the Messiah, the Lord Jesus Christ.

They were witnesses yet they did not understand. They heard the cries of the Savior as the Father turned His back upon the one, the only one who could die for the sins of the human race. They were there, yet they did not understand. And today their lack of understanding continues. Man is faced with the Cross, and yet he does not understand.

It has occasionally been said that: Ignorance is bliss - but ignorance of the Cross, the work of the Cross that Jesus accomplished on our behalf is not bliss, but eternal damnation and torment, separate from the love of God.

There was a barrier between man and God that only God could remove.

When Adam sinned he volitionally chose to disobey God. That decision put into motion a situation in which mankind, born in the image of Adam, was separated from God:

Genesis 5:1-3, This is the book of the generations of Adam. In the day when God created man, He made him in the likeness of

God. He created them male and female, and He blessed them and named them Man in the day when they were created. When Adam had lived one hundred and thirty years, he became the father of a son in his own likeness, according to his image, and named him Seth.

As the human race descended from Adam all the way down to us, here now in 1992, we are in Adam, we are in sin, we are separated from God. We are born physically alive and spiritually dead in rebellion against God:

While theologically we see this rebellion rooted in Adam at the fall, it is not difficult to imagine that we all rebel against God personally and individually. Our condemnation is found, however, in the father of our race.

Our spiritual separation from God and God's very character establish a barrier between God and man.

Man cannot bridge the gap and God cannot ignore his own essence and excuse man.

And that is the reason we need a Savior.

The study of this barrier between man and God and its removal is a study of Salvation, the doctrine of Soteriology.

This morning we are going to examine the barrier and the removal of the barrier by the work of Christ.

Man cannot remove the barrier, but Christ did through his work on the Cross. Thus, the only issue is "What think ye of Christ."

The barrier consist of six factors

1. Sin

Romans 3:10, As it is written (Psalm 14:1-3 and 53:1-4) There is none righteous, not even one.

Romans 3:23, For all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God.

Man is a sinner in three ways:

- a. Inherent Sin - The sin nature received from your father
- b. Imputed Sin - From Adam, we are born into sin
- c. Personal Acts of Sin - Volitional, include MAS, Sins of the Tongue and Overt sins.

2. The penalty of sin

Romans 6:23, For the wages of sin is death, but the free gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord.

The penalty for sin is death, spiritual death and eternal separation from God. Necessary because of God's Justice.

3. Physical birth

Ephesians 2:1, And you were dead in your trespasses and sins.

We are born physically alive but spiritually dead. At birth we are hit with the breath of lives but the presents of the sin nature cancels out spiritual life.

4. The righteous character of God

Leviticus 19:2, Speak to all the congregation of the sons of Israel and say to them, 'You shall be holy, for I the Lord your God am holy.

1 Samuel 2:2, There is no one holy like the Lord, Indeed, there is no one besides Thee, Nor is there any rock like our God.

Psalm 22:3, Yet Thou art holy, O Thou who art enthroned upon the praises of Israel.

We have studied how God is perfect Righteousness while the best man can come up with is relative righteousness.

5. The character of man is relative righteousness

Isaiah 64:6, For all of us have become like one who is unclean, And all our righteous deeds are like a filthy garment; And all of us wither like a leaf, And our iniquities, like the wind, take us away.

We can never achieve God's standard of perfect righteousness.

6. Position or life in Adam

1 Corinthians 15:22, For as in Adam all die, so also in Christ all shall be made alive.

We are part of Adam's family, and in that family all die. We must get into a new family by being born again.

Mark Lesson 15

How the Barrier is Removed

By redemption and unlimited atonement

1 Corinthians 1:29-30, That no man should boast before God. 1CO 1:30 But by His doing you are in Christ Jesus, who became to us wisdom from God, and righteousness and sanctification, and redemption.

Colossians 1:14, In whom we have redemption, the forgiveness of sins.

Redemption: Three Greek Words meaning to be redeemed or purchased out of the slave market of sin:

AGORAZO - To purchase a slave

EXAGORAZO - To purchase a slave and remove from the slave market

LUTROO - To purchase a slave, remove, and set free. The word used in Colossians 1:14 and Ephesians 1:7

Unlimited atonement: Christ died for the whole human race.

1 John 2:2, And He Himself is the propitiation for our sins; and not for ours only, but also for those of the whole world.

2 Peter 2:1, But false prophets also arose among the people, just as there will also be false teachers among you, who will secretly introduce destructive heresies, even denying the Master who bought them, bringing swift destruction upon themselves.

The penalty of sin is removed by expiation.

Definition: Expiation is Christ making the satisfaction for the offense of sin and thus canceling out the necessity for guilt and punishment.

Colossians 2:14, Having canceled out the certificate of debt consisting of decrees against us and which was hostile to us; and He has taken it out of the way, having nailed it to the cross.

The manward side of Propitiation. Expiation tells us right here, right now that there is no need for the guilt of sin. That guilt and the punishment for sins was nailed to the Cross.

Physical birth is taken care of by regeneration

We are born again spiritually.

John 3:3, Jesus answered and said to him, Truly, truly, I say to you, unless one is born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God.

Galatians 3:26, For you are all sons of God through faith in Christ Jesus.

God's righteousness was satisfied by Christ's work on the cross (Propitiation)

1 John 2:2, And He Himself is the propitiation for our sins; and not for ours only, but also for those of the whole world.

Man's relative righteousness was taken care of by the imputation of perfect righteousness.

Justification: Being declared righteous by God

Romans 3:24, Being justified as a gift by His grace through the redemption which is in Christ Jesus.

Imputation: We share in Christ's Righteousness

Romans 3:22, Even the righteousness of God through faith in Jesus Christ for all those who believe; for there is no distinction.

2 Corinthians 5:21, He made Him who knew no sin to be sin on our behalf, that we might become the righteousness of God in Him.

Our position in Adam is replaced by a new position in Christ (Positional Truth).

1 John 5:11-12, And the witness is this, that God has given us eternal life, and this life is in His Son. He who has the Son has the life; he who does not have the Son of God does not have the life.

Positional truth in three categories

Retroactive Positional Truth - We are in position with Christ in his death on the Cross.

We are dead to the sin nature.

We can confess and be forgiven of current sins

Current positional truth - We are currently in Christ, and thus share all he is and all that he possesses.

Mark Lesson 15

Experiential positional truth - As we live in fellowship and filling of the Holy Spirit. Requires Bible truth in the soul.

In going to the Cross and removing the barrier that stood between man and God, Jesus Christ did for man what man could not do for himself and He did that which only He, no one else, could do.

Romans 5:6-11

6 For while we were still helpless, at the right time Christ died for the ungodly.

7 For one will hardly die for a righteous man; though perhaps for the good man someone would dare even to die.

8 But God demonstrates His own love toward us, in that while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us.

9 Much more then, having now been justified by His blood, we shall be saved (delivered) from the wrath of God through Him.

10 For if while we were enemies, we were reconciled to God through the death of His Son, much more, having been reconciled, we shall be saved by His life.

11 And not only this, but we also exult in God through our Lord Jesus Christ, through whom we have now received the reconciliation.

Now here is the application to us today.

If God did the greatest thing for us when we were separated from Him, opposing Him, His enemies - How much more will He do for us now that we are His children, saved by faith in His Son, Jesus Christ. This is the doctrine of The Most, plus Much More Than the Most.

We have a wonderful Savior, we have a wonderful Father.

Mark Lesson 15 Quiz

Instructions

The following questions relate to your study of this lesson.

To answer a question, type your response in the space provided after the word "Answer:". A question may be True/False, multiple choice, fill in the blank, or short answer type.

The last question requires you to write one or two paragraphs in "essay" form. Use the space provided; it will expand to accommodate your response.

You have choices about sending the quiz back to Grace Notes.

- If you received an email file containing the quiz, you can use the REPLY feature of your e-mail application to open the quiz. Enter your answers in the reply message. Then SEND the message to Grace Notes.
- You can enter your answers on these pages, then send the whole file back to Grace Notes as a file attachment. This is handy, but these lessons will average 100K to 200K in size. As an alternative,
- After you answer the questions here, copy and paste the whole list of questions into a new MS Word document; then, send the new file to Grace Notes as an attachment. The new file will, of course, be much smaller than this main file.
- Finally, you can print the Quiz pages on your printer and send your response back to Grace Notes in the regular mail. If you do this, send the mail to:

Grace Notes

% Warren Doud

1705 Aggie Lane

Austin, Texas 78757 USA

Whichever transmission method you use, when Grace Notes receives your completed Quiz, the next lesson will be sent to you, by the same means you received this one. EXCEPT: when you have sent in the FINAL QUIZ, we will send your certificate to you, by regular mail.

Mark Lesson 15

Questions on Mark Lesson 15

1. How many judicial trials did Jesus endure? How many are discussed in the Gospel of Mark?

Answer:

2. Pilate, just like all the other leaders, found Jesus guilty of the crimes with which He was charged? [True/False]

Answer:

3. Pontius Pilate's citizenship was _____.

Answer:

4. When Pilate found out that Jesus was from Galilee, where did he send the Lord?

Answer:

5. How are spiritual things revealed to human beings?

Answer:

6. Who were the Zealots, of which Barabbas was a member?

Answer:

7. Who was it who stirred up the crowd of people at Jesus' trial to ask Pilate to release Barabbas to them instead?

Answer:

8. After Pilate had released Barabbas, where did the soldiers take Christ?

Answer:

9. How did the soldiers dress Jesus?

Answer:

10. The person the soldiers selected to carry Christ's cross was _____.

Answer:

11. Where is Cyrenia?

Answer:

12. What does the word "Golgotha" mean?

Answer:

13. In what Old Testament scripture are the words "My God, My God, why hast Thou forsaken me?"

Answer:

Mark Lesson 15

14. Why did the soldiers cast lots at the foot of the Cross?

Answer:

15. There is a Barrier between God and man. Of what six things does this Barrier consist?

Answer:

End of Quiz