

# Mark 15:22-47

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[ 0 : 00 ] The fittedness of the message, if that is a word that I can use, and you'll see it as we get into it. I know with us is Mother's Day, and I'm so thankful for you mothers. I'm thankful for your commitment, thankful for your time, and I'm thankful for your attention.

Thank you for being here and celebrating with your mothers. But we know all of that celebration is because of what we will read here in the 15th chapter of Mark, starting in verse 22.

We have made our way up to this point. We have seen Christ bearing the burden in the Garden of Gethsemane. We've seen him praying to the Father that the cup may be removed from him, and it was not.

We have seen him submitting himself to being led away by the host of the armies and the captains and the men who carried him. We have seen him remain silent during the multitude of accusations which have come against him in no less than six differing trials.

Three before the Jewish authorities, three before the Roman. We've seen the accusation being placed upon him. We've seen that while no guilt nor shame nor vile was found within him, he was declared to be worthy of death simply because he is a king.

[ 1 : 10 ] We have seen discouraging which was placed upon him by the entirety of the Roman cohort. We have seen the crown of thorns being pressed into his brow. We've seen Simon of Cyrene toting the cross.

And if you remember, it is the guilty man who bears the cross. And indeed, it is Simon who is guilty for there is no guilt in Christ. The cross was supposed to be Simon's cross.

It's my cross. It is your cross. Yet by the time we get to the 22nd verse, Simon is off of the scene.

He is not the one who will be laid upon that cross beam, but rather it is the Lord Jesus Christ.

And we've come to the place now where we look at the crucifixion of Christ found in the gospel according to Mark. The temptation is, it's a look across the spectrum of the gospels.

To look at all four gospel accounts and see all that transpired upon that cross. And while there is a time and a space to do that, I have tried to limit myself in looking at exactly what Mark recorded for us.

[ 2 : 14 ] What Mark wanted his intended audience to see. What it is that he wanted to get across as he is writing, being moved by the spirit of God. Being the man of God to write the word of God.

And he is the first author of the gospels. He is writing a very brief account by all different sources. But rather when it comes to the crucifixion, he slows down for just a moment.

His gospel will indeed end rather abruptly. We will see that if the Lord allows us to next week. But he takes his time here. He takes his time on the mount called Golgotha.

We refer to it as Calvary. And he slows down for just a moment and wants us to see what transpires there. If you are physically able and desire to do so, would you join with me this morning as we stand together and we read the word of God.

Found in Mark 15, starting in verse 22. We will read to the end of the chapter, which gets us down to verse 47. It says, Then they brought him to the place Golgotha, which is translated place of a skull.

[ 3 : 19 ] They tried to give him wine mixed with myrrh, but he did not take it. And they crucified him and divided up his garments among themselves, casting lots for them to decide what each man should take.

It was the third hour when they crucified him. And the inscription of the charge against him read, The King of the Jews. 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. 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. 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 of Israel, come down from the cross so that we may see and believe.

Those who were crucified with him were also insulting him. When the sixth hour came, darkness fell over the whole land until the ninth hour. And at the ninth hour, Jesus cried out with a loud voice, Eloi, Eloi, lama sabachthani?

[ 4 : 30 ] Which is translated, My God, my God, why have you forsaken me? When some of the bystanders heard it, they began saying, Behold, he is calling for Elijah. 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.

And Jesus uttered a loud cry and breathed his last. And the veil of the temple was torn in two from top to bottom. When the centurion, who was standing right in front of him, saw the way he breathed his last, he said, Truly, this man was the Son of God.

There were also some women looking on from a distance. Among them were Mary Magdalene and Mary, the mother of James the Less, and Joseph and Salome. And when he was in Galilee, they used to follow him and minister to him.

And there were many other women who came up with him to Jerusalem. When evening had already come, because it was the preparation day, that is, the day before the Sabbath, Joseph of Arimathea came, a prominent member of the council, who himself was waiting for the kingdom of God.

And he gathered up courage and went in before Pilate and asked for the body of Jesus. Pilate wondered if he was dead by this time. And summoning the centurion, he questioned him as to whether he was already dead.

[ 5 : 45 ] And ascertaining this from the centurion, he granted the body to Joseph. Joseph brought a linen cloth, took him down, and wrapped him in the linen cloth, and laid him in a tomb which had been hewn out in the rock.

And he rolled a stone against the entrance of the tomb. And Mary Magdalene and Mary, the mother of Joseph, were looking on to see where he was laid. Let's pray.

Father, we thank you for this day. We thank you for the opportunity we have of gathering. We thank you for the celebration we've been able to enjoy and the songs we've been able to sing.

But Father, thank you for your word. And now as your people stand before you, and we say, Lord, speak. May our hearts and minds be attentive to your word. May we understand it.

And Lord, may we have a desire to apply it to our lives for your glory and your glory alone. And we ask it all in Jesus' name. Amen. You may be seated. Amen. We have come to the place in the Gospel of Mark where we see the Lamb slain.

[ 6 : 49 ] Mark introduces his Gospel in the first chapter in just a few short verses with a reference to the reality that Jesus is the Son of God. Here we see the bookend of that mentioning where the centurion who is standing before the cross sees the manner in which Jesus dies and says, Surely this is the Son of God.

Everything that takes place between those two bookends not only affirms but clearly displays the reality that he is indeed more than just a man.

He is fully man, but he is fully God. He is the Son of God. We have seen now him willingly taking our shame, bearing our scourging and our stripes.

And now we see the fulfillment of the prophecy given by John the Baptist that he is the Lamb slain before the foundation of the world to take away the sin of man.

How deep the Father's love for us. Deep enough that before the foundation of the world was slain, he had appointed a Lamb that would be slain to take away our sin. We have said it before and it is a true statement that bears repeating for it is something I believe that we get so wrong so often.

[ 7 : 58 ] He does not come to take away the misdeeds nor misbehavior nor the actions that we do, but rather he comes to take away the nature that we possess. He is not one who has come and died so that he can remove our sins, that is, our mistakes, our failings, our mess-ups.

For if that is the case, then when we get Paul in Romans chapter 7 wrestling with the reality that though he knows Jesus Christ, he finds within himself this battle going on, that which he does not want to do he finds himself doing and that which he wants to do he finds himself not doing and there

is this reality that in the flesh we still wage war.

But that is in the flesh because of the core of our being, those who know Jesus Christ as our Lord and Savior have been eternally and redemptively changed. The sin nature that we have inherited from Adam and Eve has been changed.

The heart of stone has been removed and a heart of flesh is there so that we do indeed cry out, why am I doing what I do? The sinner never questions why he or she does what she does for they know that it is instinctively the nature of their being.

I'll tell parents all the time and we understand this reality. You do not have to teach children to do wrong. The bulk of your effort is to teach children to do right. For each of us are born with a selfish nature.

[9:17] These are all those sweet babies up there. They're not selfish. Oh, yes, they are. Take something away from them and they're going to want it back. Even my precious grandchildren, they can be selfish and they can push them down.

They want what is theirs and we labor to teach them to share and we labor to teach them their love and we labor to teach them to care. That's not nice to push them down. You don't bite them in the back when they do something wrong.

You don't act like that. Why? Because it is natural. You and I did the same thing. It is not just because society is better if we don't. It's because we know that we have to change the nature of who we are.

And that is what the lamb came to do, to change the nature of mankind. But there is no change without the shedding of blood. And here we see in Mark's account the lamb that is slain.

The cross has been born. The accusation has been made. The ridicule has been hurled. And now it is time for the lamb to be slain. There he goes. He's on his way up Golgotha, up Calvary's Hill.

[10:19] There he will find himself in the company of a multitude of people. There he will find himself surrounded by those who hate him, those who really have no opinion whatsoever about him, those who love him, and those who have the same fate as him.

He will find himself numbered with the transgressors. And he will find himself very soon dying.

Dying so soon on the cross as a result of his surrendering himself, that Pilate was even amazed at the reality that he was already dead.

Don't miss that irony. That Pilate was astounded that he was already dead. Because normally it would take days, if not just hours, for an individual to die upon the cross.

And yet Christ is dead. Why? Because he had to die on that day. For it is the day of preparation. The day where the lamb for the Passover had to be slain. All things are within his power, and all things are within his control.

All things are being fulfilled in this moment. Do not lose sight of it. For it is here that we see the suffering which he endured. It is the suffering that he took upon himself.

[11:27] Up to this point, there has been chastisement. There has been scourging. There has been pain. But now here is suffering. This is the cup of suffering which he was praying about in the Garden of Gethsemane.

Saying, Father, if there be any other way, let this cup pass from me. Nevertheless, not my will, but your will be done. This is the cup that he knew awaited him. A cup where the Father will forsake him.

Where the sin of humanity will be laid upon him. It is not every bad deed you have done that is laid upon his shoulders. But it is the bad people that we are. It is being born by him. He is the Lamb who was the King of kings and Lord of lords.

He spoke it all into existence. The very tree on which he hangs is a tree of his own creation. The very people who are driving the nails are people he knit together in their mother's womb.

Yet here he is the Lamb that will be slain. And he endures the suffering. It says, and they led him out to a place. We are tempted to read through that so quickly.

[12:26] But notice the wording. They led him out to a place. For the suffering of the Lamb is very unique. You know this. During the Passover season.

When the Lamb that would be slain for the Passover celebration would be brought where? Into the city. Into the temple. It was brought to the priest so that it may be slain at the temple.

And at the temple you would get that back. That blood that would be there for you. You would take that Lamb that was slain in the city. But this Lamb is unique. This Passover Lamb is so different.

Because his death is not in the city. They took him out of the city. And oh that is so important. It is so important because it tells us in the book of Hebrews. Hebrews chapter 13.

That he went outside of the city. So that we may go to him to pay the redemption of mankind. That he suffered outside of the gates. And the reason he had to suffer outside of the gates.

[ 13 : 24 ] You find in the book of Numbers. And some of you are reading through that yearly reading plan. Robert Murray's reading plan. And you read it today or you will read it today. And you find it in the book of Numbers. About this obscure law that has to take place.

This thing of the red heifer. And we're like what in the world is going on with this red heifer? And why you have to take this red cow outside of the city. And you give this red cow. And you crucify this cow.

Or you sacrifice this cow. And then you burn this cow to ashes. And then you take the ashes and you leave it outside the city. That's good news. You want me to tell you why? It's because if you were unclean you couldn't go into the city.

If you were unclean you couldn't make your way to the priest. If you were unclean you couldn't find atonement. But there was a place outside the city where there was a pile of ashes. That you could go to the ashes and the ashes could make you clean.

In your uncleanness he met you where you could be. And that was outside the city. For if you were unclean you could not go to the priest. But you could go to the ash heap. And if you went to the ash heap you could find cleanliness there.

[ 14 : 23 ] So that you may be restored to fellowship with man and with God. Friend listen to me. The lamb was slain outside the city for that's where the sinner is. It is there that we can meet him.

It is there that we can find him. In our sinful condition we cannot go into the realm of his courts. But he came outside of the city gates so that we could find him. It is provision made in the place that is opportunistic for us.

But when they brought him to that place they offered him wine mixed with myrrh. It has been said historically this is the strong drink of the soldiers. It is a cheaper wine mixed with myrrh in order to kind of soften its taste just a little bit.

It was cheap wine given to those criminals that are about to be crucified. It is cheap wine given to those that are about to die. And it is there to numb the senses. To numb the pain.

So that one that is about to bear the weight and misery of having nails driven through their wrists. And driven through their ankle bones. That is about to die of death of suffocation. They would not have to fill it all.

[ 15 : 27 ] It tells us in the word of God in the book of Proverbs to give strong drink to a man that is dying. Right? Give strong drink to a man that is dying. I remember one time in particular that I had an individual.

I was in a discussion and I am not here to get this doctrinal statement with you. So don't think that I am. But you got to be careful when you have arguments like this. Okay? Let me just give you this one. There was a teenager one time wanting to justify his desire for alcohol.

And he says well the word of God says to give strong drink. I said but give me the verse. He said give strong drink that is dying. I said are you dying? He said no. I said then you don't need it. If you are going to use that verse be careful how you use that verse.

Now if you are dying by all means let me alleviate the pain a little bit. But if you are not dying my friend then why take it? But the word of God is commanded to do that here. And now Christ is offered.

But what does it say? But he refused it. Why? For he wanted to feel the weight of suffering. The suffering that we deserve.

[ 16 : 26 ] It is a suffering he chose. It is our pain. He did not numb the pain. He did not dull the senses. He did not use anything to give it away.

He said wait a minute pastor later on they give it to him. I will get to that in just a moment. He wanted to feel the weight of that suffering. For this is the cup.

This is the will of the father. And this is what is required for you and I. Notice the suffering he chose. And what suffering it is that it should be for you and I.

But yet it tells us in the word of God he refused it. And this suffering. The suffering was so painful. And it was more than painful because of the choice he had to make.

It tells us that when he's on the cross. He was faced with a choice. Now we know he's faced with his choice because of the crowd that's around him. It says that those around him were hurling abuses at him and ridiculing him and bringing him shame.

[ 17 : 31 ] But notice one particular phrase. It says ha! You who say you could rebuild the temple and could save others. Why don't you save yourself and come down from the cross?

That's a moment of choice. Because my friend, listen to me. Know beyond a shadow of a doubt that Christ had the ability and even the opportunity to come down if he wanted to.

He said, oh, no one came down from the Roman cross. Right? But no one took Jesus' life either. It tells us in the word and the other gospel accounts that he gave up his spirit.

He gave it up. He tells us that he could call 12 legions of angels to come and deliver him from the captives. He told Pilate that Pilate would have no authority over him had his father not given it to him.

He told Pilate that if he wanted to, that his angels would rise up and fight. That if he longed to, he had the ability. He had the ability to come down from that cross. But if he had come down from the cross, he might have saved himself.

[ 18 : 36 ] But salvation for us would have been non-existent. And the choice he made was not to save himself, but rather to die to save others.

I began reading a book recently about the recipients of the Medal of Honor. And the Medal of Honor, the highest reward given from any military branch.

It is only given to those who go above and beyond the call of duty. Do you know that you can't get a Medal of Honor for following orders? No matter how dangerous, no matter how hard the orders may be, if you're given a direct order, you can never be the recipient of a Medal of Honor, for you're just following orders.

Only those who go above and beyond the call of duty are the recipients of the Medal of Honor.

Those who willingly, knowingly put themselves in harm for the sake of others.

Of the thousands of people that have received it, only hundreds of them received it while still alive.

For the majority, the overwhelming majority of the Medal of Honor recipients were those who gave their lives in order to save the life of others.

[ 19 : 52 ] At their own expense, at their own time, they made a choice. One of the recipients of the Medal of Honor that was still alive, his first name was Red.

There's a great book called Beyond Valor. It was on a bombing plane during World War II, and they were the lead plane that was releasing the phosphorus bombs that were just shining, glowing bombs.

They weren't really explosive bombs to mark the other planes behind them where to drop the bombs. And on one bombing run, the phosphorus bomb got stuck, and it came into the cargo of the plane. And he knew that if he did not get it out of there, burning it like 1,500 degrees, that it would cause everyone on his crew to die.

So he scooped it up in his arms. Think about this. 1,500 degrees. And he walked forward, and he walked up into the cockpit, and he said, Excuse me, sir, could you open the window? 1,500 degrees embracing this phosphorus bomb.

And asked the pilot, with all due orders and respect, to move so he could throw it out the window and threw it out of the plane before he passed out. He ended up living through all that ordeal.

[ 21 : 04 ] Beyond valor. But I'll tell you, someone who went even further, that is Christ, when he could have come off that cross, but he didn't because he wanted to stay there.

He made a choice for you and I. He had asked his father if there was another way that salvation could come to us, and the father had said no, so he said, Okay, I'll do it.

And who for the joy set before him endured the cross. The cross was felt. He endured it. The Word of God says he endured the cross. You don't endure something you don't feel, but the joy set before him was the reality of the reward he would have.

Go read the book of Isaiah, and the suffering servant. It says that he will have a bountiful reward, and the bountiful reward is you and I, the salvation of man, that he would call the many, the multitude, to himself, the choice he made, this lamb that is slain.

What an astounding choice. Could have come down, but he didn't. And in that choice, there's a way that he opened up. Do you notice it? He opened up a whole new way.

[ 22 : 12 ] He opened up a whole new way. This centurion before him in the manner in which Christ died. Now let me get to the rod of hyssop that's lifted up with a sponge. It has the wine on it, because I know you're wondering why he took it later.

He took it later. This is one of my most astounding points on all of the cross. There's the seven sayings of Jesus on the cross. I believe it was Arthur Pink who preached that first message and wrote the book over it.

And this is my favorite one. It says, And the reason that's astounding is because, get the picture of Christ, the very word of God become flesh, hanging on the cross.

And he's there. And going through his mind, he's saying, Now what have I said about this moment up until this time? For he is the word of God. What have I said? And he said, Oh, there's a passage in the book of Psalms. And in Psalms it says that he will cry out and thirst in the moment of his anguish.

And the last thing that he said before he gave up his spirit, he says, I thirst. And he took the drink to fulfill that obscure passage in the book of Psalms. And then he said, Father, into your hands I commit my spirits.

[ 23 : 17 ] That's why he was given the rod with the hyssop sponge on the end. But in that moment, when the centurion saw all of this, the fact that he was in complete control, said, Surely this is the Son of God.

And he begins to open the eyes of the reality. But he's doing more than opening eyes because he's opening away. It tells us in the word that the veil in the temple was torn in two from top to bottom. And that is now access to the Father has been opened for all to come in. And that heavy veil that is hung there reminding man that you are not permitted beyond this point.

It tells us that through the veil of his flesh that was torn in two, we now have access to the throne room of heaven. That sinful man can go into the presence of holy God. What a way that he is open. And he is a love. What it tells us in Hebrews, the forerunner or the trailblazer of the firstborn. He's the one who goes before us. And we can go boldly before the throne of God.

[ 24 : 22 ] Not on our own, but because he's opened the way. And when you're following Christ, you have boldness to enter in where no man could ever go before. We have a way that's been opened to us because of the lamb that was slain.

But all of this would matter little. If we don't know about it. So we notice around this cross, the people he uses.

In his darkest moment, they all forsook him. All the disciples, they left him. They all fled. We even saw the random account from the gospel of Mark of the young man that had nothing but a linen sheet wrapped around him.

And they grabbed the sheet and he fled naked. Everyone left. All shame. Everyone left. But in this moment, there are people there.

Friend, listen to me. God always has his people. Always. And the first group of people we notice, when there are Romans that are crucifying, Pharisees and scribes and religious leaders that are mocking, there are thieves that are hanging with him.

[ 25 : 35 ] One's ridiculing. There both are. And then one repents. But in the background, there are some in the background. There are the women. The women that are waiting. The women that scripture tells us had been with him and traveled with him.

They were not public figures. As a matter of fact, some of them, we only know them by whose mother they are. Does that sound familiar? Oh, you know her, the mother of Joseph. And their whole identity was wrapped up in their families.

Or maybe their past. Some of them, you know, because of what they used to be. Some of them, you know, because of who they were the mother of. But they're there. And they're watching.

From a distance, but they're watching. And they're seeing all of this unfold. They see his death. Quietly watching. They see the spirit go into his side in the water and blood come out.

They see them take him down. They see him hastily wrap him in cloth. They see him being laid in a borrowed tomb. They watch all of this. And this is important. For these are the people that God will use to testify of the gospel message.

[ 26 : 42 ] For if the women had not been present, then the women would not have the confidence to know after the Sabbath, to go to the right place and look. We would have thought them crazy if they had said, well, he is not there.

They said, well, you don't even know where you're looking. They said, we were there. The rest of you were scared and ran off. We were there. At a distance, but we were there. We watched. We beheld. We saw. Praise God for the reality that he had the women there so that he could use them later to testify of the reality that his grave was empty.

Then we have Joseph of Arimathea introduced for us here. And also Nicodemus. Two men. I'm just going to be honest with you. I used to pick on them a lot because they're secret disciples.

Right? They're the secret believers. They haven't went public with their faith. Joseph of Arimathea, a prominent member of the council. He was probably not present when the Sanhedrin voted because the council is the Sanhedrin.

When the Sanhedrin voted to accuse Christ, Nicodemus is also in the Sanhedrin. We know probably most assuredly he was not there for he'd already had his run in with the Sanhedrin at the end of John chapter 3 and into John chapter 4.

[ 27 : 54 ] He'd already been ridiculed. These two men that we wish that they had to come out by now and declared their faith in Christ, but God had reserved them for this moment.

Reserved them for this moment where Joseph of Arimathea, a prominent member of the council, probably the only one that could have walked into the courtroom of Pilate and asked for the body of Christ. Nicodemus would have been present watching the body being taken down because if it had not been, it would have just been thrown in an unmarked mass grave.

And so then where would the ladies have went on that first day of the week? But God had two men there. Most Bible scholars, and I tend to be in agreement with them, believe that Joseph of Arimathea was not only the constructor of the tomb, but the financier of the tomb, that he had the means and the resources to build this tomb, and that probably they were waiting in the tomb until he was dead for this tomb was cut into the rock for the body of Christ.

Because he's not even from Jerusalem, he's from Arimathea. His tomb would not be there. These two people that had been in the background, silence.

But for that moment, they were there. Because friend, listen, it is not always the public ministry that God uses, though he wants us to be bold in their faith.

[ 29 : 24 ] Sometimes he has us sitting in the shadows until the moment when it's time to be utilized by him for his glory. Sometimes he has us in a holding pattern, and we say, I just want to be used by him.

Maybe we're off on the distance, or maybe we're just cutting a tomb into the rocky hillside. Maybe we're doing something that doesn't seem important at all, but there will come a moment when that day is important.

Maybe it looks like pouring into the life of your children or your grandchildren in your own home, around your own table. Never discount the hours spent around the table with your kids.

So you could be doing so many other things right, but you get to change generations moving forward by pouring into the lives of your children and grandchildren. Nobody else may know about it, and they don't have to.

But it is the reality that we're called to at times to be those who are reserved for a moment. I'm so thankful that God uses people like that.

[ 30 : 30 ] He uses people in various means and in various ways, all for one purpose, and that is to bring glory to the Lamb that is slain. Would you pray with me?

Father, we thank you for this day. We thank you for the opportunity to gather together, and we cannot praise you enough for the love you have for us.

For if the Lamb had not been slain, we would have no access into your presence. Lord Jesus, help us to draw closer to you each and every day, and we ask it all in your name.

Amen.