



Mark 15

"The One Jesus Didn't Save"

(Mark 15:21-32)

Reading and Study Guide for the
week of July 30-Aug. 6, 2023

This week, read Mark 15. On Sunday, August 6: Zory Kirakossian of Adult/Teen Challenge will be preaching on the theme, **The One Jesus Didn't Save** [Mark 15:21-41]. As Jesus hung upon the sinner's cross, people ridiculed His inability to perform one more miracle and escape His death. The greatest miracle of Jesus' ministry was His commitment to forsake His immediate salvation from the cross so that we could experience salvation by the cross.

Some questions to answer and think about this week with your family or Community Group:

The Crucifixion: Mark 15:21-32

1. What do people mean when they say that someone "did not die in vain"?
2. Why did Jesus not carry the cross Himself? ([15:21](#))
3. How did the people insult Jesus when He was on the cross? ([15:29-30](#))
4. What challenge did Jesus ignore? ([15:31-32](#))
5. What kind of suffering did Jesus endure for us?
6. What did Jesus do for you with His death on the cross?
7. What is one way you can say thank you to Jesus for paying for your sins?

Life Application Bible Notes

[15:25](#) Crucifixion was a feared and shameful form of execution. The victim was forced to carry his cross along the longest possible route to the crucifixion site as a warning to bystanders. There were several shapes for crosses and several different methods of crucifixion. Jesus was nailed to the cross; condemned men were sometimes tied to their crosses with ropes. In either case, death came by suffocation as the person lost strength and the weight of the body made breathing more and more difficult.

[15:27](#) Luke records that one of these revolutionaries repented before his death, and Jesus promised that man that he would be with him in paradise ([Luke 23:39-43](#)).

[15:31](#) Jesus could have saved himself, but he endured this suffering because of his love for us. He could have chosen not to take the pain and humiliation; he could have killed those who mocked him. But he suffered through it all because he loved even his enemies. We had a significant part in the drama that dark afternoon because our sins were on the cross, too. Jesus died on that cross for us, and the penalty for our sins was paid by his death. The only adequate

response we can make is to confess our sins and gratefully accept the fact that Jesus paid for them so we wouldn't have to. Don't insult God with indifference toward the greatest act of genuine love in history.

[15:32](#) When James and John had asked Jesus for the places of honor next to him in his Kingdom, Jesus had told them that they didn't know what they were asking ([10:35-39](#)). Here, as Jesus was preparing to inaugurate his Kingdom through his death, the places on his right and on his left were taken by dying men—criminals. As Jesus explained to his two power-hungry disciples, a person who wants to be close to Jesus must be prepared to suffer and die as he himself was doing. The way to the Kingdom is the way of the cross. If we want the glory of the Kingdom, we must be willing to be united with the crucified Christ.

The Death of Jesus: Mark 15:33-41

1. At what time in your life have you felt most lonely?
2. What did Jesus say "at the ninth hour"? ([15:34](#))
3. What did Jesus mean when He said that God had "forsaken" Him? ([15:34](#))
4. How did the bystanders misunderstand what Jesus was going through? ([15:35](#))
5. What kind of isolation did Jesus experience in His death on the cross?
6. In what way can following Christ or doing what God wants be a lonely experience?
7. When might you have to face loneliness as a part of following Christ this week?

Life Application Bible Notes

[15:34](#) Jesus did not ask this question in surprise or despair. He was quoting the first line of [Psalm 22](#). The whole psalm is a prophecy expressing the deep agony of the Messiah's death for the world's sin. Jesus knew that he would be temporarily separated from God the moment he took upon himself the sins of the world. This separation was what he had dreaded as he prayed in Gethsemane. The physical agony was horrible, but the spiritual alienation from God was the ultimate torture.

[15:37](#) Jesus' loud cry may have been his last words, "It is finished" ([John 19:30](#)).

[15:38](#) A heavy curtain hung in front of the Temple room called the Most Holy Place, a place reserved by God for himself. Symbolically, the curtain separated the holy God from sinful people. The room was entered only once a year, on the Day of Atonement, by the high priest as he made a sacrifice to gain forgiveness for the sins of all the people. When Jesus died, the curtain was torn in two, showing that his death for our sins had opened up the way for us to approach our holy God. Read [Hebrews 9](#) for a more complete explanation.

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