

# 12

MARK 15:24-39

## THE ULTIMATE SACRIFICE

### THIS WEEK'S **focus**

When a task is difficult, it can be hard to press on and finish. Sometimes we don't. The decision typically depends on the answer to several questions: What will it cost? What's the reward? Who is affected? Why did we start in the first place? When the cost isn't too high, the reward is big, other people are counting on us, and our motives are pure, we typically keep going even if we don't succeed. But sometimes it's still too much. Today, we'll watch Jesus take on a monumental task. The cost was higher than anything we've experienced, but He still followed through until the end. The reward was big: through His death, Jesus restored our relationship with God forever. We'll discover just how far Jesus will go for love.



### CENTRAL **truth**

Jesus's death paid for our sin, once and for all.



EXPLORE

# scripture

MARK 15:24-39

## MARK 15:24-27

**24** Then they crucified him and divided his clothes, casting lots for them to decide what each would get. **25** Now it was nine in the morning when they crucified him.

**26** The inscription of the charge written against him was: The King of the Jews.

**27** They crucified two criminals with him, one on his right and one on his left.

## MARK 15:29-35

**29** Those who passed by were yelling insults at him, shaking their heads, and saying, “Ha! The one who would destroy the temple and rebuild it in three days, **30** save yourself by coming down from the cross!” **31** In the same way, the chief priests with the scribes were mocking

him among themselves and saying, “He saved others, but he cannot save himself!

**32** Let the Messiah, the King of Israel, come down now from the cross, so that we may see and believe.” Even those who were crucified with him taunted him.

## MARK 15:33-39

**33** When it was noon, darkness came over the whole land until three in the afternoon. **34** And at three Jesus cried out with a loud voice, “*Eloi, Eloi, lemá ‘sabachtháni?’*” which is translated, “My God, my God, why have you abandoned me?” **35** When some of those standing there heard this, they said, “See, he’s calling for Elijah.” **36** Someone ran and filled a sponge with sour wine, fixed it on

a stick, offered him a drink, and said, “Let’s see if Elijah comes to take him down.”

**37** Jesus let out a loud cry and breathed his last. **38** Then the curtain of the temple was torn in two from top to bottom.

**39** When the centurion, who was standing opposite him, saw the way he breathed his last, he said, “Truly this man was the Son of God!”

# DAILY devotions

## MEMORIZE MARK 15:39

### 7 ARROWS FOR BIBLE READING



What does this passage say?



What does this passage tell us about God?



What did this passage mean to its original audience?



How does this passage change the way I relate to people?



What does this passage tell us about humans?



How does this passage prompt me to pray?



What does this passage demand of me?

day 1

# MARK 15:24-27

## DWELL

Mark is pretty matter-of-fact in the way he tells the story of Jesus's crucifixion. He tells us what happened and then leaves us to draw our own conclusions and have our own feelings, just as people who were present for Jesus's crucifixion had to decide for themselves what to make of Him and how to feel about what was happening. So what do you think? Was He the Messiah, the Son of God? If so, what are you going to do with that? The decision is yours alone.



The Savior of the world hung dying above the centurions while they gambled for His clothes. What does this tell you about human nature?



How can you be sure not to miss what God is doing around you?

## MEMORIZE

Write Mark 15:39 on a few sticky notes, and put the notes in places you will see them throughout the day. When you see one, stop and read it out loud.

## PRAY

Thank God for the opportunity to know the truth and respond to it. Ask God to show you everything the cross accomplished and where you would be without it.

day 2

# MARK 15:29-32

## DWELL

This may be one of the most ironic moments in all of history. The Messiah was dying for the sins of the world, and the very people who had supposedly been asking God to send Him were making fun of Him. They told Him to come down! It's a very good thing for them that He didn't. When we ask God to move, we have to be very careful to keep our eyes, ears, minds, and hearts open. We could miss the answer to our prayers simply because we expected something different.

↔ Which of the mockers in this passage surprised you most? Why?

➔ What personal warning do you take away from this passage?

## MEMORIZE

Write down Mark 15:39 in a journal or on a note card, and circle any words that feel important. Look at just those words for a few moments, then close your eyes and say them. When you can get them all right without looking, try doing the same thing with the whole verse.

## PRAY

Thank God for the Bible that tells you exactly who Jesus is and what He's done for you. Ask Him to give you patience with mockers who are blind to the truth. Promise to help them see it.

day 3

# MARK 15:33-36

## DWELL

God sent darkness in the middle of the day. Jesus cried out to God, basically telling the crowd why it was dark. They still missed it. They had to have noticed the signs. Perhaps they rationalized the experience in some way and attributed the change to something other than God. Then they kept on doing what they'd been doing: mocking Jesus. There's comfort in the familiar, yes, but dismissing something because it might challenge you and change things is dangerous. God's revelations bring freedom. Let Him speak.

↓ How should the people have responded to the darkness? Why didn't they respond this way?

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↻ What do these verses teach you about the importance to maintaining fellowship with God, no matter what?

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## MEMORIZE

See how much of Mark 15:39 you can remember by writing it down without looking. Check your work. Add or change as necessary and study it. Practice doing this throughout the week until you get it!

## PRAY

Thank God for speaking to us through His Word, other people, and circumstances. Ask Him to persist when you are slow to listen. Promise to tell people what you hear.

day 4

# MARK 15:37-39

## DWELL

When Jesus breathed His last breath, God tore the curtain in the temple from top to bottom. Early rabbinic writings said this curtain was 3–4 inches thick, but this may have been an exaggeration.<sup>1</sup> Either way, a human couldn't have torn it from the top down. God did this to show that people didn't have to go through the priests anymore to interact with Him. Through Jesus, we can go to God ourselves. Direct access to God is a profound privilege. We should use it.

← Why do you think the centurion—a Gentile—was able to recognize Jesus for who He was and the Jews weren't?

↻ Why wasn't God's first response after Jesus's death retribution, but instead an invitation to have a relationship with Him?

## MEMORIZE

Try singing Mark 15:39 to the tune of a song you know well. Practice singing the verse to yourself as best as you can throughout the week.

## PRAY

Thank God for making it possible for you to pray directly to Him without needing a mediator.

<sup>1</sup> Chuck Bumgardner, Orchard Keeper, "The Thickness of the Temple Veil," April 6, 2010, <https://cbumgardner.wordpress.com/2010/04/06/the-thickness-of-the-temple-veil/>

day 5

# MARK 15:40-41

## DWELL

The women in this passage weren't watching from a distance because they wanted to. They weren't able to come closer. This passage says they were used to taking care of Jesus. No doubt they were aching to do so in that moment, but couldn't. But they saw. They felt the weight of what was happening. We don't always get to participate the way we want to in what God is doing, but we can be an audience that sees, knows, and appreciates what God is doing. We can praise Him for it and spread the word when we get the chance.

↻ What does this passage say about the involvement of women in Jesus's ministry?

→ The disciples fled when Jesus was arrested, but these women were present at His crucifixion. What can you learn from their example?

## MEMORIZE

Try reciting Mark 15:39 from memory. Ask a friend or family member to help you by reminding you of any words you've forgotten.

## PRAY

Thank God for the opportunity to see, know, and appreciate what He's doing even when you can't participate in it directly. Thank Him for the privilege of watching Him work. Praise Him for the things you've watched Him do lately.