



JUST JESUS: A Journey Through Mark

PART 69 - 15:29 - 32

When the World Sneers at Jesus

READ: Mark 15:29–30 and Psalm 22:6–8

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS:

- 1) The people passing Golgotha see Jesus apparently helpless on a cross and conclude that His suffering proves His claims were false. Why would a crucified Messiah have been so difficult for people in that culture to understand or accept?
- 2) Psalm 22 describes people sneering, wagging their heads, and mocking the righteous sufferer centuries before the crucifixion. What do you think Mark wants us to recognize when he deliberately draws our attention to those same actions happening around Jesus?
- 3) Pastor G said, “The head may not always physically wag, but the sneer is still there.” What forms does that “sneer” at Jesus or Christian faith take in our culture today? Have you personally experienced it? How do you tend to respond?
- 4) The people at Golgotha interpreted Jesus’ apparent weakness as evidence against Him. When have you been tempted to interpret God’s silence or failure to act as you expected as evidence that He wasn’t working? What helped, or could help, you trust Him when you “can’t see Sunday from here” as Pastor G described those doubting Jesus on Friday?

“Come Down and Prove It!”

READ: Mark 15:30–32a and Matthew 4:1–7

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS:

- 1) Compare Satan’s wilderness challenge, “If You are the Son of God...”, with the challenges Jesus hears at the cross. What similarities do you see? What would Jesus have abandoned if He had accepted their challenge and come down, saving Himself?
- 2) The religious leaders say they will believe if Jesus comes down from the cross. What is the difference between honestly asking God questions and demanding that God meet our conditions before we will trust Him?
- 3) Pastor G said, “Jesus is not on this cross because He CANNOT come down! Jesus is on that cross because He WILL NOT come down!” How does that change the way you see what appears, from the outside, to be Jesus’ helplessness?
- 4) Complete this sentence as honestly as you can: “God, I would find it easier to trust You if You would just _____.” What might it look like to trust God even if He doesn’t respond on our terms?

“He Saved Others”

READ: Mark 15:31–32a and Mark 10:42–45

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS:

- 1) The chief priests mock Jesus with the words, “He saved others; He cannot save Himself.” Why are those words so deeply ironic in light of what Jesus is actually accomplishing on the cross?
- 2) Throughout Mark, people have run to Jesus when they needed to be rescued, healed, restored, or saved. What does that pattern teach us about who Jesus is and what kind of people He welcomes?
- 3) Pastor G said, “He did not save Himself because He was saving us!” Why couldn’t Jesus simply demonstrate His power, come down from the cross, and still accomplish the mission He described in Mark 10:45?
- 4) We often think strength means protecting ourselves, winning, escaping suffering, or defeating our enemies. At the cross, Jesus reveals power through sacrificial love and obedience. How should that reshape the way followers of Jesus understand strength?

The Man in the Middle

READ: Mark 15:32b and Luke 23:39–43

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS:

- 1) Both criminals begin by insulting Jesus, but eventually one changes. What do you notice about the things he comes to recognize about himself and about Jesus in Luke 23:40–42?
- 2) The repentant criminal cannot undo his past, earn God's favor, or demonstrate years of changed behavior. He can only turn toward Jesus and ask for mercy. What does Jesus' response teach us about grace, repentance, and salvation?
- 3) Pastor G said, "Three crosses. Two responses. One Savior." In other words, both men encounter the same Jesus from essentially the same place. What ultimately separates their responses to Him? Where do you see those same two responses to Jesus today?
- 4) Now make it personal. Pastor G asked, "What will YOU do with the One hanging in the middle?" Beyond simply agreeing with facts about Jesus, what does turning your eyes toward Him, trusting Him, and following Him look like in your life right now?