

Adult Sunday Bible Study Lesson

The Gospel According to Mark

Jesus Saves

April 21, 2019

Situational Context: Mark 15:1 (NIV2011) ¹ Very early in the morning, the chief priests, with the elders, the teachers of the law and the whole Sanhedrin, made their plans. So they bound Jesus, led him away and handed him over to Pilate.

Mark 16:6-7 (NIV2011) ⁶ “Don’t be alarmed,” he said. “You are looking for Jesus the Nazarene, Who was crucified. He has risen! He is not here. See the place where they laid Him. ⁷ But go, tell His disciples and Peter, ‘He is going ahead of you into Galilee. There you will see Him, just as He told you.’ ”

Lesson Theme: The unapproachable God was now approachable through the body of His Son. The boundary between heaven and earth was now irrevocably rent. Jesus, the Last Adam, has now appeared before the Father in the true tabernacle in Heaven to offer His blood as an atoning sacrifice for the sins of God’s chosen people. Access to God is now open by faith through God’s Grace. The New Creation embodied in Jesus’ Resurrection has now broken into this present evil age which is now passing away, the new has come!

Mark 15:37-39 (NIV2011) ³⁷ With a loud cry, Jesus breathed His last. ³⁸ The curtain of the temple was torn in two from top to bottom. ³⁹ And when the centurion, who stood there in front of Jesus, saw how he died, he said, “Surely this man was the Son of God!”

1. Wrath Experienced: Mark 15:27-28 (NIV2011) ²⁷ They crucified two rebels with him, one on his right and one on his left. ²⁸ So the Scripture was fulfilled which says, “And He was numbered with the transgressors.”

Interpretation: Though the Greek word often means "robber," it can also mean "insurrectionist" or more generally "criminal." Since robbery was not punishable by crucifixion, one of the latter two meanings is more probable here. By placing Jesus between two common criminals Pilate was saying that the Jewish Messiah was nothing more than a common criminal.

Mark 15:28. This verse is lacking in the most ancient manuscripts, although it is present in the vast majority of existing manuscripts. It is possible that early copyists inserted the citation of Isa 53:12, relying on the parallel passage of Lk 22:37.

Supporting Texts:

Isaiah 53:12 (NIV2011) ¹² Therefore, I will give Him a portion among the great, and He will divide the spoils with the strong, because He poured out His life unto death, and was numbered with the transgressors. For He bore the sin of many, and made intercession for the transgressors.

Luke 22:37 (NIV2011) ³⁷ It is written: ‘And He was numbered with the transgressors’; and I tell you that this must be fulfilled in me. Yes, what is written about me is reaching its fulfillment.”

John 18:40 (NIV2011) ⁴⁰ They shouted back, “No, not Him! Give us Barabbas!” Now Barabbas had taken part in an uprising.

Matthew 26:42 (NIV2011) ⁴² He went away a second time and prayed, “My Father, if it is not possible for this cup to be taken away unless I drink it, may Your will be done.”

Discussion Starters:

Why would Pilate want to make this statement about Jesus?

What is important about this prophecy, “numbered with the transgressors”?

Who was Barabbas? Who took his place?

What is the cup?

2. A Final Temptation: Mark 15:29-32 (NIV2011) ²⁹ Those who passed by hurled insults at Him, shaking their heads and saying, “So! You who are going to destroy the temple and build it in three days, ³⁰ come down from the cross and save Yourself!” ³¹ In the same way the chief priests and the teachers of the law mocked Him among themselves. “He saved others,” they said, “but He can’t save himself! ³² Let this Messiah, this King of Israel, come down now from the cross, that we may see and believe.” Those crucified with Him also heaped insults on Him.

Interpretation: This is both an insult and a diabolical temptation similar to those proposed to Jesus at the beginning of His ministry. The devil is still seeking to subvert the work of redemption at the very moment of its accomplishment, when Jesus is at His greatest physical weakness.

Supporting Texts:

Matthew 4:8-9 (NIV2011) ⁸ Again, the devil took Him to a very high mountain and showed Him all the kingdoms of the world and their splendor. ⁹ “All this I will give you,” he said, “if you will bow down and worship me.”

Matthew 26:38 (NIV2011) ³⁸ Then He said to them, “My soul is overwhelmed with sorrow to the point of death. Stay here and keep watch with Me.”

Luke 23:40-43 (NIV2011) ⁴⁰ But the other criminal rebuked Him. “Don’t you fear God,” he said, “since you are under the same sentence? ⁴¹ We are punished justly, for we are getting what our deeds deserve. But this Man has done nothing wrong.” ⁴² Then he said, “Jesus, remember me when You come into Your Kingdom.” ⁴³ Jesus answered him, “Truly I tell you, today you will be with Me in paradise.”

Discussion Starters:

What did Jesus mean by His promise to destroy the temple?

Whose words are verse 30 and 32?

In what ways do we insult the Savior?

3. The Light Darkened: Mark 15:33-36 (NIV2011) ³³ At noon, darkness came over the whole land until three in the afternoon. ³⁴ And at three in the afternoon Jesus cried out in a loud voice, “*Eloi, Eloi, lema sabachthani?*” (which means “My God, my God, why have you forsaken Me?”). ³⁵ When some of those standing near heard this, they said, “Listen, He’s calling Elijah.” ³⁶ Someone ran, filled a sponge with wine vinegar, put it on a staff, and offered it to Jesus to drink. “Now leave Him alone. Let’s see if Elijah comes to take Him down,” he said.

Interpretation: This recalls the darkness in Egypt, which lasted three days before the death of the firstborn sons. See also the prophecy of Amos 8:9, Am 8:10 where the Lord promises to “darken the earth in broad daylight,” in a time “like the mourning for an only son.” This is the first verse of Ps 22 in Aramaic. Even in the jaws of death, Jesus’ life is determined by what is written in Scripture.

Some mistook the word Eloi for “Elijah,” perhaps because in some circles it was believed that Elijah would return (Mk 6:15; Mk 8:28).

A cheap wine that has almost become vinegar. Unlike the offer of wine and myrrh, there is no humanitarian desire to relieve the suffering here, but rather a cruel intention to prolong it by reviving Jesus, in order to see if “Elijah” would come at His call.

Supporting Texts:

Amos 8:9-10 (NIV2011) ⁹ “In that day,” declares the Sovereign LORD, “I will make the sun go down at noon and darken the earth in broad daylight. ¹⁰ I will turn your religious festivals into mourning and all your singing into weeping. I will make all of you wear sackcloth and shave your heads. I will make that time like mourning for an only son and the end of it like a bitter day.

Psalm 22:1 (NIV2011) ¹ My God, my God, why have you forsaken Me? Why are you so far from saving Me, so far from My cries of anguish?

Discussion Starters:

Why was Jesus quoting Psalm 22?

Look at the statement in Amos 9:10, is the Father mourning?

4. It is Finished: Mark 15:37-39 (NIV2011) ³⁷ With a loud cry, Jesus breathed His last. ³⁸ The curtain of the temple was torn in two from top to bottom. ³⁹ And when the centurion, who stood there in front of Jesus, saw how He died, he said, “Surely this Man was the Son of God!”

Interpretation: Jesus had been hanging on the cross for six hours. Crucifixion could last two or three days. The death of Jesus is the final and definitive sacrifice for sin. The old dispensation of the covenant of Grace is brought to a decisive end. No longer would the high priest need to enter into the Most Holy Place behind the veil to atone for the sins of the people. Jesus is the new and eternal High Priest, and also the perfect sacrificial victim who obtains for His people "eternal redemption".

Supporting Texts:

Hebrews 7:27 (NIV2011) ²⁷ Unlike the other high priests, He does not need to offer sacrifices day after day, first for His own sins, and then for the sins of the people. He sacrificed for their sins once for all when He offered himself.

Hebrews 8:1 (NIV2011) ¹ Now the main point of what we are saying is this: We do have such a High Priest, who sat down at the right hand of the throne of the Majesty in Heaven,

Hebrews 9:12-14 (NIV2011) ¹² He did not enter by means of the blood of goats and calves; but He entered the Most Holy Place once for all by His own blood, thus obtaining eternal redemption. ¹³ The blood of goats and bulls and the ashes of a heifer sprinkled on those who are ceremonially unclean sanctify them so that they are outwardly clean. ¹⁴ How much more, then, will the blood of Christ, who through the eternal Spirit offered Himself

unblemished to God, cleanse our consciences from acts that lead to death, so that we may serve the living God!

Discussion Starters:

How does Jesus' death and resurrection save us?