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Crucify Him! (Mark 15)

Stirred up by the chief priests, the mob yelled out to Pilate: “Crucify Him! Crucify Him!” They wanted Christ put to death and Barabbas set free. Not able to withstand the pressure, Pilate acceded. Their wish was granted, and Christ was condemned to death. Let’s follow along in Mark and find out what happened next. The verses we are about to read are important, and are filled with personal application. They concern God’s plan to redeem sinful man through the sacrifice of Jesus Christ. The crucifixion is the heart of the gospel, and is recorded with varying detail in all four of the gospel accounts. It is referred to in almost every book in the New Testament.

POINTS TO PONDER:

A. THE TRIAL OF JESUS BEFORE PILATE (V1-19)

- Because Israel was under the authority of Rome, the Jewish leaders brought Jesus before the Roman governor to be tried. His name was Pontius Pilate (v1).
- The religious leaders not only falsely accused Jesus before Pilate, they also stirred up the people against Christ.
- Pilate knew Jesus was innocent, but gave in to the will of the crowd (v15). Like many politicians today he lacked the will to stand by His convictions.

B. THE CRUCIFIXION OF JESUS (V20-41)

- A man named Simon helped Christ to bear His cross. Simon was from Cyrene, a city in North Africa. His experience may have led to his salvation.
- Jesus was crucified outside the city of Jerusalem at a place called Golgotha. (See Hebrews 13:11-12 for the spiritual significance of this fact).
- Jesus hung on the cross for six hours. The darkened sky (v33) and the tearing of the veil in the temple (v38) both bear witness to the importance of Christ’s death in redeeming the world.

C. THE BURIAL OF JESUS (V42-47)

- In order to fulfill an important Old Testament prophecy (Isaiah 53:9), God touched the heart of an unlikely person – Joseph of Arimathea. He was a member of the very council that condemned Jesus to death! (v43).

CHALLENGE TO CHANGE:

Both Joseph of Arimathea and the Centurion were moved by the crucifixion of Christ. Both acted courageously. Joseph dared to approach Pilate to request the body of Jesus, and the Centurion dared to speak up, declaring Christ to be the Son of God. What great examples to us! How often we lack courage in our Christian lives! In prayer, ask God through His Spirit to give you greater boldness, both in your words and your works.