

LIFE OF A SERVANT**What's Good about Good Friday? Mark 15**

“When the centurion, who stood there in front of Jesus, heard his cry and saw how he died, he said, ‘Surely this man was the Son of God!’ ” Mark 15:39

Day 1: Read Mark 15.

1. Read this chapter through from start to finish. In his narrative, what aspects of Christ’s passion does Mark emphasize? (Hint: Look for repeated words and phrases.)
2. Describe Pilate’s attitude toward Christ.
3. What most influences Pilate’s final decision about Jesus?
4. Describe a time when your own fear of other peoples’ opinions ruled you.

Day 2: Read Mark 15:6–32.

5. How is the prisoner exchange of Jesus for Barabbas a picture of the atonement? (Rom. 5:8; 1 Pet. 3:18a)
6. Describe the change in the crowd during the past few days (recall Mk. 11:8–10). What do you think causes this change?
7. Who is responsible for Jesus’ death? What does this tell us about ourselves?
8. Even people in rebellion against God bear witness to him. How is this fact demonstrated by the Roman soldiers in verses 18 and 19 and the onlookers in 29–32?

Day 3: Read Mark 15:21–37.

9. What mark of discipleship does the mention of Simon of Cyrene illustrate? (see Mk. 8:34)

10. This week, how has “following Jesus” been more than just a symbolic gesture for you?

11. Read Psalm 22. What echoes of this psalm do you see in Mark 15?

Day 4: Read Mark 15:33–39.

12. Jesus cries out asking God why he has forsaken him. In what way was Jesus forsaken by God?

13. There are times in our lives when, even though we are children of God, we will feel forsaken by him. How does Jesus’ experience of forsakenness help us when we feel forsaken by God? (Heb. 2:17–18; 4:15–16)

14. What is the very personal significance to us of the tearing of the temple curtain at Christ’s death? (see Heb. 9:1–8, 24–28; 10:19–22)

Day 5: Read Mark 15:39–47.

15. How does the response of the centurion differ from that of the other onlookers? What prompts his declaration? In view of the fact that, in Mark, up until now only God and demons have used this name for Jesus, why do you think this verse has been called the climax of this gospel?

16. a. What does Mark tell us about the women “watching from a distance”?

b. What specific details of Christ’s burial does Mark include?

c. What would be the effect of these historical details on Mark’s readers? (see Acts 26:26)

17. By recording the events of chapter 15, what response do you think Mark wishes to elicit from his readers? What is your response?