



Mark 15:1–20 Lesson 23

The Cross is the focal point of God's plan of salvation, but along side of it we see the wretchedness of humanity seeking to destroy the only ONE who can save us. As we move through this chapter, ask the Holy Spirit to unlock the majesty of this remarkable history-making event.

Scanning the Scene: Mark 15:1–20

1. Take a few minutes to settle your heart as you begin this forceful passage. Read the verses two or three times to absorb the scene.
 - a. Are there any phrases or words that help you internalize and digest this scene?
 - b. What is the most important lesson from these verses?

The Sentencing: Mark 15: 1–15

It is now Friday morning. The spurious trial of the Sanhedrin has taken place. But in order for the Jews to achieve a death sentence, they must bring Him before Pilate.

2. Compare the two trials of the Sanhedrin and Pilate. How were they similar?
 - a. What made them different?

- 3. Since Jesus is being charged with treason, what question does Pilate ask in verse 2?

- 4. What group of people was most responsible for what was going on that morning?
 - a. Think about this group of Jewish leaders. What was their main motivation in all of this? (Mark 15:10)

 - b. Why were they so emotional over Jesus and His ministry?

- 5. Either by the use of a dictionary or your own knowledge, define envy. We don't always think of the sin of envy as negatively as we should. But God understands the evil that can come from this emotion. From the following verses, summarize what God thinks about it and what we should do to avoid it entering our heart.

Job 5:2

Proverbs 14:30

Proverbs 23:17

Galatians 5:19–21

1 Peter 2:1

- 6. Read verses 6–15. This is mob mentality at its worst. Do you think everyone in this crowd had expected things to transpire this way when they gathered there that morning?
 - a. After the commotion of the day settled down, how do you think some of them may have felt about being caught up in such sentiments?

 - b. Have you ever found yourself in a similar situation? Perhaps you have never been part of a hateful mob, but maybe you have listened to an inspired speech or been in the crowd at a sporting event. Could you sense yourself being lifted in a wave of emotion? Is there a danger that this type of sentiment could enter the Church? Please explain. How can having a firm grasp of the Scriptures protect us from responding purely on an emotional level?

- 7. When Pilate asks about what Jesus had done, what does the crowd respond? (verse 14)
 - a. What made Pilate offer Barabbas' release?

- b. Who was Barrabas and what was his crime?

 - c. What was the irony in the people's choice of Barabbas rather than Jesus?
8. Seeking to pacify this crowd, what does Pilate do? (verse 15)
- a. Did Jesus receive a fair trial?

Bringing it into Focus:

Pilate permitted what was right to be overturned by the pressure of the crowd. Consider your own life. Have you ever compromised what was right to appease someone else's feelings or opinions? What was the result?

The Scorn: Mark 15:16–20

This passage reveals the total rejection of Jesus by all of humanity. The sentence has been issued and Jesus is now handed over to the Roman soldiers to begin the execution. But rather than going straight to the cross, there is more pain to undergo.

9. Once handed over to the soldiers, Jesus is led away to the Praetorium. Who else was brought into the inner courtyard? (verse 16)
10. Mark is one of the only gospels to record the details of this cruelty toward our Lord. Read verses 17–19 along with Matthew 27:27–31 and list the different forms of mockery and shame Jesus endured at the hands of the Romans.

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11. The prophet Isaiah records these details. What added insight do you gain from the following passages?

Isaiah 50:6
Isaiah 52:14
Isaiah 53:6b, 10a

12. Beloved, as you contemplate what Jesus Christ willingly endured for you, is there anything you would like to say to HIM? Use this space to express your heart:
