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Talk together about the glory of God's kingdom. –Psalm 145:11
Love the Lord your God and **walk** in all his ways. –Joshua 22:5

Questions for Reflection or Discussion

- 1 What from Sunday's message interested you? ...made sense to you? ...confused you?
...intrigued you? ...upset you? ...encouraged you? ...and **why**?

Observation—*What do I see?*

- 2 Pastor Doug noted Acts 2:23 reveals multiple "layers of causation" in the death of Christ. Who predetermined and planned Jesus' death? (This speaks of "ultimate" causation.) Who put Jesus to death? (This can be called "immediate" causation.) Whose hands actually drove the nails? (This illustrates "instrumental" causation.)
- 3 Isaiah was written 700 years before Christ was born, and although Jesus' name does not appear, even a cursory reading of Isaiah 53:3–12 reveals that it is predictive prophecy about Jesus' suffering! Which verses reveal that Jesus' sufferings were due to no sin on **his** part?
- 4 How do v. 4, 5, 6 and 8b reveal that Jesus' sufferings were for **our** sakes?
- 5 How do v. 11b & 12b summarize Jesus' role as our substitute?
- 6 Although Jesus clearly died because of our sins, how do v. 6 & 10 reveal God to be the ultimate cause?

Interpretation—*What does it mean?*

- 7 Although God was the ultimate cause of Jesus' death, Isaiah 53:12 reveals that it was totally voluntary. Reflect on this principle in light of John 3:16, 8:28–29 and 10:17–18.

Application—*What do I do with this?*

- 8 Pastor Doug also noted that Jesus suffered **silently** (Mark 15:3–5; cf. Isaiah 53:7). According to 1 Peter 2:21–24, what relevance is this to have to our life?
- 9 Now read 1 Peter 2:17–20 (the **context** for the command of v. 21!). **Ouch!**
What's a situation in your life where you must "bear up under sorrows when suffering unrighteously"?
Jesus' silent suffering redeemed us. How might your silent suffering be redemptive (on a smaller scale)?

Sermon Summary Mark 15:1-20

We are almost done working our way through Mark's Gospel. Last week we studied Jesus' arrest by the Jewish authorities in the Garden of Gethsemane. The high priest asked him, "Are you the Christ?" and he replied, "I am". The High Priest tore his clothes in protest, and declared Jesus guilty of blasphemy, because he was making himself equal with God. Jesus' claim to be the divine Son of Man wasn't blasphemous—it was true! Jesus' only guilt was for being himself. Under Roman rule the Jews had no authority to execute, so early the next morning they took Jesus to the Roman governor, Pontius Pilate. Their goal was to convince him that Jesus deserved the death penalty. They knew that he would not care about blasphemy, so they concocted civil charges. The entire Jewish religious leadership structure colluded to condemn their long-awaited, heaven-sent Messiah (15:1)!

A Roman trial had three stages: (1) the arraignment, where charges were made, (2) the interrogation of the accused and the calling of witnesses, and (3) the verdict and sentencing. The chief charge against Jesus was that he was the king of the Jews (v. 2). But Pilate found no guilt in that charge (John 18:34-38)—and that really ticked-off the religious leaders (v. 3). Luke's account reveals one additional charge: they claimed that Jesus promoted tax evasion (Luke 23:2). Governments don't like that! What do we make of this tax evasion accusation? Any substance to it? Just the opposite; Jesus famously said, "Render to Caesar the things that are Caesar's" (Luke 20:25). The charges they brought against Jesus amounted to one lie after another, but he chose to remain silent (v. 3-5), in fulfillment of Isaiah 53:7). His silence is stunning; his very life is at stake—surely you'd expect him to defend himself against slander and lies.

But he didn't. Jesus wanted to go to the cross, for our benefit! That's where an innocent man would pay the penalty for the guilty! Having false charges leveled against you brings its own form of suffering, but what happens next initiates still more suffering: Pilate tried to release Jesus (all of the charges were bogus—and his wife even warned him against condemning Jesus—see Matthew 27:19), but Jesus was rejected in favor of a guilty criminal, Barabbas (v. 6-8). Jesus was handed over because of envy (v. 10). The chief priests and the Jewish people joined to call for the crucifixion of their King (v. 12-14). Wishing to satisfy the crowd, Pilate disobeyed his conscience, he ignored his wife, and handed Jesus over to be scourged and crucified. Jesus, the innocent, was declared guilty. The guilty were treated as though innocent. Jesus died in our place so that we might become God's sons and daughters. It was all God's plan (Acts 2:23).

Heaven must have looked on in disbelief! Perhaps the angels wept. The Father sent His beloved Son to rescue and redeem our rebel race. We must never forget what they did to Jesus—and we must always remember what he willingly has done for us! In today's text we see the interplay between God's sovereignty and man's choices. Jesus was delivered over by the predetermined plan and foreknowledge of God, yet nailed to a cross by the hands of godless men who acted freely according to their desires. In a very real sense, all of us are responsible for Jesus' crucifixion. Our sins put him there. We must also ponder Jesus' silence before his accusers (1 Peter 2:21–25). Jesus lived a sinless life, and all those false accusations couldn't change that. In the end, people are going to believe what they want to believe, and Jesus knows that. Jesus willingly died as a substitutionary atonement for us. On the cross an innocent man was crucified in the place of the guilty. The interplay between Jesus and Barabbas illustrates the gospel message that an innocent man died for the guilty. Jesus bore the guilt we should have borne. The shepherd was struck that his sheep might be spared. The great King was tortured and killed that his people might live. Never grow weary of pondering this great truth.

Digging Deeper in Your Daily Quiet Time

Once Jesus has become our Savior, he then becomes our model for righteous living. Let's use the "Five Question Bible Study" method to learn how we can suffer well...

Monday— Study 1 Peter 2:19-25.

Tuesday— Study 1 Peter 3:13–18.

Wednesday— Study 1 Peter 4:1–5.

Thursday— Study 1 Peter 4:12–19.

Friday— Study Acts 5:25–29, 33-34 & 40-42.

Saturday— Study 2 Timothy 3:1–12.

Bible Text: _____

Date: _____



What idea particularly strikes me from this text? [Note in which verse(s) it is found.]



What question does this text raise in my mind—and how would **this text** answer it?



What about Jesus Christ—his character and/or his redemption—relates to this text?



What action must I take as a result of this text? Be concrete and specific.



With whom will I share what I learned from this text? [and what was their response?]