

Sunday Sermon Questions • 1/11/2026

Mark 15:16–47

Carrying the Cross — Literally & Spiritually

Simon of Cyrene was pulled into Jesus' suffering by force, yet his experience led his family to saving faith. What does Simon's story teach us about how God draws people to Himself, and how does it inform Jesus' call for us to "take up our cross and follow Him"?

Forsaken for Us

When Jesus cried, "My God, My God, why have You forsaken Me?" He was enduring the Father's wrath on sin. How does understanding the gravity of the atonement deepen our appreciation for grace, and in what ways does it reshape our view of sin and holiness?

The Curtain Torn — Access Granted

The temple curtain being torn from top to bottom symbolized the removal of the barrier between God and humanity. What are the practical implications of this for us as believers today? How should our prayer, worship, and daily walk look different in light of direct access to God?

A Pagan's Confession

The first human in Mark's Gospel to confess Jesus as the Son of God was a Roman centurion who witnessed the crucifixion. What does this reveal about who the gospel is for, and how should this shape the way we think about evangelism, mission, and who we assume is "far from God"?

Suffering Without Retaliation

Jesus endured unimaginable suffering without defending Himself or retaliating. What does His restraint teach us about the nature of true strength, and how does that reshape our instincts when we feel wronged or misunderstood?

Responding to the Cross

Everyone at the crucifixion responded to Jesus in some way—mocking, pity, indifference, or belief. In what subtle ways do people today still respond to Jesus with those same postures, and what does a response of genuine belief and gratitude look like in daily life?

When the Innocent Dies for the Guilty

Pilate declared Jesus innocent, yet He was condemned to die for the guilty. What does this exchange reveal about the gospel, justice, and substitution, and how does understanding this personally affect our relationship with God?

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Prayer Prompt:

Father, we come before You humbled by the weight of what Jesus endured on our behalf. As we consider the mockery, the suffering, and the cross, we thank You that He endured it without retaliation and with full obedience to Your redemptive plan, taking the place of the guilty so we might be called sons and daughters. Thank You for tearing the veil and giving us access to Your presence through His blood. Help us respond rightly to the cross — not with indifference or selfishness, but with gratitude, worship, and surrendered lives. Teach us to take up our cross daily and follow You, drawing our hearts closer to You and drawing others to faith through what they see in us. May the sacrifice of Jesus shape the way we see sin, love others, and live in this world, and may our confession echo the centurion's: surely Jesus is the Son of God. In His name we pray, Amen.