

RIVERSIDE ANGLICAN CHURCHES
QUESTIONS FOR DISCUSSION OR REFLECTION

Jesus death and resurrection – Mark 15-16

1. Read Mark 14:12; 15:1 and 15:25. How long does it take Jesus enemies' to arrest, charge, convict and execute him? Who are the opponents of Jesus in v1? See also Acts 4:23-28.
2. It has been said that Jesus saving work and particularly his death on the cross represents a 'great exchange'. How does the story of Barrabas 15:7-15 contribute to this idea? What does Barrabas get from Jesus? What does Jesus give to Barrabas?
3. How does this help us to understand Jesus words in Mark 10:45? If exchange is the essence of a ransom – how does Jesus give his life in exchange?
4. We have seen Jesus friends and disciples fail him. How does Pilate fail?
5. Irony has the power for bringing a situation into sharp focus – sometimes it's the irony that helps us to see what is really going on. What is the terrible irony of the soldiers' mockery in v16-19?
6. Similarly, what is the irony of the chief priests and scribes in 31-32? In what sense have they got it precisely right? What have they completely failed to understand about the Christ in v32? (Think back to Mark 8:29-31; 9:31 & 10:33-34. Precisely because he is the Christ – what will Jesus do?)
7. Read Psalm 22. What do you think is happening in Mark 15:33-34? Why was Jesus forsaken? Jesus death is a place taking death – he is my substitute - he dies in my place (this is central to the notion of ransom, to the lamb who dies for the Passover meal and the incident with Barrabas). Why is it important that Jesus was forsaken? See also 2 Cor 5:21
8. Read v39. What does the Centurion grasp that so many have failed to see? Why? Why do you think the two key questions of Mark's gospel; 'Who is Jesus?' and 'what has he come to do?' intersect at this moment?
9. Read 15:44 – 47. What detail about Jesus death is underlined here? If you have time, read similar passages in the other gospels – they all stress the same thing! That which was empty on Easter Sunday was full on Friday.
10. Read Mark 16:1-3. In the first century world, the testimony of women was not given the same legal credence as the testimony of men! Why would Mark record that women were the first to find the tomb empty when this would simply play into the hands of sceptics?
11. Read v6-7. What is the message for the disciples? Why is Peter singled out?
12. Read v8? Where does it leave you? How have you responded to the risen Jesus?

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TALK OUTLINE – 18 March 2012

Resurrection - Mark 16

The top 20 rock songs if Jesus were alive today...

Alternative explanations for the empty tomb

- Perhaps Jesus didn't really die
- Perhaps they went to the wrong tomb on Sunday morning
- Perhaps the disciples stole the body
- Perhaps Jesus disciples were already inclined towards believing a resurrection

Believing the Resurrection

- If you don't believe in God
- If you believe there is a God....

But what difference does it make anyway?

- Hope
- Forgiveness