

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

These questions are designed to help you talk about God's word and Pastor Brian's message with friends and family. You of course can use your own questions, but we'd like to give you this tool to encourage Biblical fellowship and discipleship in your circle of relationships. ***Enjoy discovering more about Him!***

"GAME OVER OR GAME CHANGER" | MARK 15: 33-47 | PASTOR BRIAN BELL

WARM-UP QUESTION:

Would you rather be stuck in darkness or stuck in an isolation cell?

"Darkness Fell- Conquest's Cry" Mark 15: 33-36

Darkness falls on the land as Jesus cries out, being shunned and separated from God for the world's sin. **What is the difference from being alone and being put into isolation? Why would being separated from God be so painful, especially for Jesus?**

"Curtain Torn- Confession Made" Mark 15: 37-39

Jesus dies and the curtain in the temple is torn. A soldier declares Jesus must've been the Son of God. **What do you see when you see Jesus on the cross? What does it mean for people that God removed the barrier between Him and them like the curtain?**

"Women Remained" Mark 15: 40-41

Women who had followed Jesus to serve Him stayed and watched. **What would have been difficult or dangerous about staying to watch the crucifixion? How is this an example of faithfulness?**

"Burial Secured" Mark 15: 42-47

A respected leader, Joseph, publicly asks for Jesus' body and wraps it and buries Him. **How hard is it for you to risk your reputation or face criticism? What are risky yet compassionate ways to show faith today?**

REFLECTION QUESTIONS:

When Jesus died on the cross, He faced the ultimate pain of being cut off from God, yet that sacrifice removed the barrier between God and people. This act led both Romans and Jews, men and women, to declare Jesus Son of God. **Have you been living like you're far from God or like you have direct access to your Heavenly Father? What are ways you can declare and show your faith this week? Thank Jesus for His sacrifice and ask for courage to follow Him no matter where it leads.**

Mark 15:33-47

10-19-25

Game Over or Game Changer?

I. Announce:

- A. Slide1-4 Lar: Single Moms. Harvest Festival. Pantry. Choir.
- B. Slide5 Missions Prayer: Next Sun 1:30pm in the Agape Room.
- C. Nepal Update: Mayor, INHURED, Sociologist, man who led 1 Ro to Christ?
- D. Prayer: Once again we hear: our sins are great, but our Savior is greater. There's more mercy in Christ, than sin in us. TY

II. Slide6 Intro: Game Over or Game Changer?

- A. Here we highlight both the theological depth and the human emotion of the moment of Jesus' death.
- B. Illust: Ice-Cream Illustration.

III. Slide7a 1) DARKNESS FELL - CONQUEST'S CRY (33-36) READ *judgment of our sin*

A. DARKNESS FELL

- B. (33) Darkness came over the whole land – symbolic of divine judgment and cosmic sorrow throughout OT.
 1. Light/Darkness Contrasted: At Jesus' birth and death there were 2 profound cosmic disruptions.
 2. He lives and there is light; He died and there is darkness.
 - a) At His birth, occurred a singular phenomenon in the sky, His star, a new light.
 - b) At His crucifixion, there occurred a striking disjunction of the heavens - darkness in the midst of the day.
 3. Like an eclipse signaling something cosmic, the darkness testifies that **creation itself mourns** the Creator's suffering.

C. **Remember it was Passover.** Passover required them to *remember back* to the 1st Passover. (Passover had to do w/the 10 plagues in Egypt)

1. Do you remember the 9th plague? **Darkness**, that was even felt. *For 3 days.*
2. Do you remember the 10th plague? **Death of 1st born.**
 - a) **The shed Lamb's blood** meant the **saving of life for some**, and the surety of **death for others.**

D. **Now, this Passover:**

1. Here we have **darkness for 3 hours.** The death of a 1st born (God's own). His blood shed, saving some and damning others.
 - a) **Story:** I remember 3 these hours well as a 5 yr old: As a 5 yr old **Catholic** back in 1966 we weren't supposed to talk from noon to 3pm (known as: 3 Hours of Agony - good practice, but tough at age 5). Mom said it was a time to be somber/mournful. I remember my neighbor *Marilynn Lacy* asking me to play. With teeth clenched I said, *I can't talk. Why not? I can't tell you right now.*

E. **CONQUEST'S CRY**

F. (34) 1st a Cry of Abandonment - *My God, My God, why have You forsaken Me?* (Ps.22:1)

1. Ever feel alone in this lonely world? Jesus died alone, so that we will never be alone.
2. The sinless Son experiences the **full weight of sin's curse.**
3. **Heaven** is silent; the **Father** turns His face away.

G. (37) 2nd a Cry of Victory/Conquest not a cry of despair - *Jesus uttered a loud cry.*
[Father into your hands, I commit my spirit. Lk.23:46]

H. **My Summation: Divine-Darkness.** Celestial-Judgment. Cosmic-Sorrow. **Christ's-Cry.** Fully-Forsaken. Full-Weight. Heaven's-Silent. Face-Turned. Sins-Procured.

IV. Slide8 2) **CURTAIN TORN - CONFESSION MADE (37-39) READ** *access to our God*

A. Access to God opened and hearts awakened.

B. (37) **Jesus breathes His last** - a voluntary, victorious surrender.

1. **Not** a cry of relief (that it was over), **but a Cry of Triumph**.

C. **CURTAIN TORN**

D. **Curtain** - most scholars conclude ... **Height**: About 60 feet. **Width**: About 30 feet.

Thickness: Jewish tradition says it was about a handbreadth thick about 4".

Weight: estimates say it took 300 priests to handle it when wet or to hang it.

E. (38) **The temple veil torn in two from top to bottom** - **God Himself** removes the **barrier** between **Himself** and **man**. [*note: He didn't tear it half-way]

F. **CONFESSION MADE**

G. (39) The Roman centurion declares, *Truly this man was the Son of God*.

1. **The first human confession of Jesus' divine sonship at the Cross**, from a Gentile soldier!
 - a) He sees something diff than the rest of the soldiers. He sees *compassion*. mom/thief
 - b) What do you see when you see *the cross*? Game Over or Game Changer?
 - c) Believe in Him - that He is *the Son of God*, and you will have **life**.

H. **Illustration**: The tearing of the veil = the tearing open of heaven's access.

1. Religion **says stay out**, the Cross **says come in**.

I. Simultaneous with Jesus' death, the **curtain** (veil) of the temple was torn in two, from top to bottom. Bible Knowledge Commentary

1. The *passive verb*/torn and the *direction* of the tear indicate/top down, **shows that ... This-Was-God's-Action!**
2. It was no doubt **observed** and **reported** by the priests (Acts 6:7 *So God's message continued to spread. The number of believers greatly increased in Jerusalem, and many of the Jewish priests were converted, too*) who at that moment were conducting the Jewish evening sacrifice.
 - a) **Most likely this was the inner curtain** that was torn, for it was a sign that Jesus' death ended the need for *repeated sacrifices* for sins, and opened a new and living way of **free and direct access to God**.

b) That's why it was so significant: **God Himself** *tore open the barrier* between **Himself** and humanity.

J. **My Summation:** Breath-Expelled. Veil-Torn. Barrier-Removed. Hearts-Awakened. Access-Open. First-Confession. Centurion's-Declaration. Truly-God.

V. Slide9 3) **WOMEN REMAINED (40-41)** **READ** *faithfulness in love*

A. Love remains when all else flees. The story of the faithful women who stayed.

1. While the male disciples have scattered, the women stay and watch.
2. Jesus appears to the same eyewitnesses. The women saw him **on the cross**, going into the **tomb**, and **resurrected**.

B. **Mary Magdalene**, and **Mary** the mother of James, Joses, and Salome (Jesus' mom).

1. They had followed and served Jesus **in Galilee ... now** they follow Him even to **the grave**.

C. **Application:** True devotion doesn't run from suffering; it stays *near the Savior* no matter the cost.

D. **My Summation:** Men-Scattered. Women-Stay. Galilee to Grave.

VI. Slide10 4) **BURIAL SECURED (42-47)** **READ** *promise of resurrection*

A. Even in death, Jesus fulfills Scripture and draws followers from *unlikely places*.

B. **Apostles Creed:** *He suffered under Pontius Pilate, was crucified, died, and was buried.* [why was the **burial** so important to add?]

C. **Joseph of Arimathea**, a respected council member *courageously* requests Jesus' body.

1. He risks **reputation** and **defilement** to **honor the Crucified One**.
2. Joe asked for the dead body. Pilot wanted to make sure He was dead. *Since He's dead, yes.*
3. **When did He go from Humiliation to Exultation?** - Most would say at the **Resurrection** (that was it's zenith) **but** actually His exaltation started at his **burial**. Isaiah 53:9 *And they made his grave with the wicked* (prepared for criminals in valley of Henna/Gehenna) *and with a rich man in his death.*

4. The **Acts 2:27,30** (from Ps.16) **27 NLT** *For you will not leave my soul among the dead or allow your Holy One to rot in the grave ...*
30 *Brothers, I may say to you with confidence about the patriarch David that he both died and was buried, and his tomb is with us to this day.*

5. Jesus' body wasn't thrown on the trash heap (gehenna), wasn't allowed to decay, but instead received **a sacred burial**.

D. The spices and wrapping the body were not an act of *embalming*, but an act of *love*.

1. **Preparing a body** (dirty, bloody, stinky, unpleasant) was done by women or slaves - not by respectable men.
2. **Courage & Tenderness. Steel & Velvet.** It's the most masculine and most feminine thing these guys have ever done.
 - a) As Timothy Keller said, *"Only the gospel produces courageous feminine people, and tender masculine people."*
 - b) The gospel changes your **attitudes** about **everything**. They're not standing on their dignity or male ego, not focusing on what's beneath them.

E. (47) **The women saw where He is laid** - preparing for resurrection witness.

F. **Illustration:** What looked like a **sealed tomb** was really a **womb** - life was about to break forth!

G. **My Summation:** Unlikely-Follower. Sanhedrin-Member. Courageous-Request. Risks-Reputation. Risks-Defilement. Honors-Christ. **Death -Confirmed.** Joseph-Wraps. Jesus-Laid. **Women-See.** Resurrection-Ready!

H. The **Trinity** had planned it. The **Son** endured it. The **Spirit** enabled Him.

The **Father** rejected the Son whom he loved. **Jesus**, the God-man from Nazareth, perished. The **Father** accepted his sacrifice for sin and was satisfied. The **Rescue** was accomplished.

I. **Living** He loved me, **dying** He saved me, **buried** He carried my sins far away, **rising** He justified, freely forever, and one day He's **coming**, *Oh glorious day!*

J. **Who** did Jesus die for? Our story, tells the story.

1. Centurion - was a racial outsider, a religious outsider, a moral outsider. Yet the only one who sees and testifies, *this was the Son of God*.
2. Next we have gender outsiders in the 1st cent. (many women).
3. And then Joe & Nic (prepares body) total insiders. Both influential men, both part of the Sanhedrin. So male not female, wealthy not poor, bible believing religious not immoral.
 - a) And they're all together. They're all responding to Christ. All showing faith!
 - b) It's all by grace. The pagan soldiers, the Jewish men, and the present women.
4. Which group are you in? (male/female, Jew/gentile, rich/poor, influential/not, insignificant, religious/non religious, moral/immoral)
 - a) Jesus died for **you**, respond to Him today.

K. Keywords: darkness, curtain, buried.