



The Scrolls

Helping **CENTRAL BIBLE CHURCH** Families Belong, Become and Go Beyond V23 N31 August 1, 2021

KING JESUS

“Crucial Evidence of Christ’s Death”

Mark 15:42-47

THIS WEEK’S CORE COMPETENCY

Hope

I have a growing anticipation of God’s promises and my secure eternity with him.

“In his great mercy he has given us new birth into a living hope through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead, and into an inheritance that can never perish, spoil or fade.”

1 Peter 1:3-4



Why is the burial of Jesus important?

A cursory reading of the Gospel accounts of Jesus’ passion leaves one with the impression that the crucifixion of Jesus *inexplicably* blindsided his disciples. They didn’t see it coming, but they should have. Mark records that Jesus predicted his suffering and death three times. In chapter 8, Mark tells his readers, “He began to teach them that the Son of Man must suffer many things and be rejected by the elders, the chief priests and the teachers of the law, and that he must be killed and after three days rise again” (v. 31), then at once Mark adds, “He spoke plainly about this” (v. 32a), leaving no room for confusion. In the following chapter, Mark records these words of Jesus: “The Son of Man is going to be delivered into the hands of men. They will kill him, and after three days he will rise” (9:31). Then looking back, he adds the somewhat surprising comment, “But they did not understand what he meant and were afraid to ask him about it” (v. 32). Surely, they understood the plain meaning of his words, even if they didn’t understand how they would be fulfilled. Finally, in chapter 10, Mark reports that Jesus added critical details to his previous bare-bones predictions of what would happen to him. Jesus tells his disciples, “We are going up to Jerusalem, and the Son of Man will be delivered over to the chief priests and the teachers of the law. They will condemn him to death and will hand him over to the Gentiles, who will mock him and spit on him, flog him and kill him. Three days later he will rise” (vv. 33-34). Clearly, the Twelve do not prepare spiritually for what Jesus revealed would happen. In fact, they miss their final opportunity to do so when instead of watching and praying with Jesus in the Garden they fall asleep (15:32-42). Mark goes on to describe how everything Jesus predicted comes to pass exactly as he said (see 14:43-15:41).

The same reading leaves one with the impression that the resurrection of Jesus likewise *inexplicably* blindsided his disciples. They didn’t see it coming, but they should have. After all, each of Jesus’ three predictions of his death includes a prediction of his resurrection. Mark 8:31 includes these words, “and after three days rise again.” Mark 9:31 includes these, “and after three days he will rise” and 10:34 these, “Three days later he

will rise.” What’s more, after seeing Jesus’ detailed prediction of his death fulfilled to a T, shouldn’t his disciples have put two and two together to conclude that Jesus’ prediction of his resurrection would likewise be fulfilled to a T? However, they didn’t. Not to mention the fact that all of them had fallen away just as Jesus had predicted—their emphatic protests notwithstanding. Shouldn’t Peter at least have done the math to realize that since he himself had fallen away as Jesus predicted, Jesus himself would rise again also as he predicted? And yet, Mark gives no indication in his account of the burial of Jesus (15:42-47) that anyone involved has hope—no indication that Joseph of Arimathea, Nicodemus (cf., Jn 19:39), Mary Magdalene, or Mary the mother of Joseph expect Jesus to rise again. In fact, when Sabbath is over, Mary Magdalene, Mary the mother of James, and Salome bring spices to the tomb so that they might anoint Jesus’ body. They expect to find him dead in the tomb. It’s only when they see “a young man dressed in a white robe” (16:5) that they learn otherwise. And his words to them, “Don’t be alarmed. You are looking for Jesus the Nazarene, who was crucified. He has risen! He is not here” (v. 6), spark hope.

Regarding that hope, the Apostle Peter writes that we, who have been born again, have a “living hope through the resurrection of Jesus Christ” (1Pe 1:3). Our hope is “living” because it is “given through the Resurrection of Jesus from the dead, and bound up with His eternal life” (Charles Bigg, *The Epistles of St. Peter and St. Jude*, ICC, 100). We hope to—better yet, *expect to*—overcome death and live eternally because Jesus has overcome death and lives eternally. Our hope is also *embodied* because it is “given through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead.” Because Jesus lives eternally in an immortal resurrection body, we too will live eternally in bodies like his—not as disembodied souls. The Apostle Paul writes: “Listen, I tell you a mystery: We will not all sleep, but we will all be changed—in a flash, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trumpet. For the trumpet will sound, the dead will be raised imperishable, and we will be changed. For the perishable must clothe itself with the imperishable, and the mortal with immortality” (1Co 15:51-53). That is our hope.

1

EXAMINE GOD'S WORD

42 It was Preparation Day (that is, the day before the Sabbath). So as evening approached, 43 Joseph of Arimathea, a prominent member of the Council, who was himself waiting for the kingdom of God, went boldly to Pilate and asked for Jesus' body. 44 Pilate was surprised to hear that he was already dead. Summoning the centurion, he asked him if Jesus had already died. 45 When he learned from the centurion that it was so, he gave the body to Joseph. 46 So Joseph bought some linen cloth, took down the body, wrapped it in the linen, and placed it in a tomb cut out of rock. Then he rolled a stone against the entrance of the tomb. 47 Mary Magdalene and Mary the mother of Joseph saw where he was laid.

After reading the text, practice your Observation skills by noting the following:

- Circle "Preparation Day" in v. 42.
- Underline "Joseph of Arimathea" in v. 43.
- Circle "Council" in v. 43.
- Bracket "waiting for the kingdom of God" in v. 43.
- Circle "body" in vv. 43, 45, 46.
- Circle "already dead" in v. 44.
- Circle "the centurion" in vv. 44, 45.
- Circle "tomb" in v. 46.
- Underline "Mary Magdalene and Mary the mother of Joseph" in v. 47.

What one word would you use to describe the TONE of this passage? (i.e., stern, joyful, cautious, etc.)

What word or idea stands out to you in this passage?

What one thing do you not understand in this passage?

Try to summarize the THEME of this passage in one word. If you were going to describe these verses, you might say, "This text is about _____."



DIG DEEPER

Answer the questions to help you apply the passage and prepare for discussion

1. “It was Preparation Day (that is, the day before the Sabbath)” (v. 42). What day of the week was that?
2. Joseph went boldly to Pilate “as evening approached” (v. 42) on Preparation Day. What time of day was that?
3. Mark tells his readers three things about Joseph (v. 43). List them.
4. Going to Pilate to request the body of Jesus took *boldness* (v. 43). How so?
5. Explain why Pilate was surprised to hear that Jesus was “*already* dead” (v. 44).
6. Pilate granted Joseph’s request and gave him Jesus’ corpse. What makes this quite unusual?
7. What would preparing Jesus’ body for burial involve?
8. And how could Joseph do it by himself?
9. Why would Mark bother to mention that two women saw where Jesus was buried?
10. **Discussion:** Talk about two important *emphases* in Mark’s description of Jesus’ burial.

Commentary On The Text

Mark ends his account of Jesus' passion with a one-paragraph description of the Lord's burial in 15:42-47. After hanging on a cruel cross for six hours (Mk 15:25, 33-34) "he gave up his spirit" (Mt 27:50), saying, "Father, into your hands I commit my spirit" (Lk 23:46). It was Friday, April 3, A.D. 33 (Harold W. Hoehner, *Chronological Aspects of the Life of Christ*, 114), namely, "Preparation Day (that is, the day before the Sabbath)," which began that same day later in the evening. One commentator writes: "Jesus' death is as extraordinary as his life—preceded by three hours of unnatural darkness, accompanied by his shout that asserts God's absence while clinging to his commitment to 'his' God, followed by the splitting of the curtain in the temple and by the declaration of a Roman officer who acknowledges Jesus to be the Son of God" (Eckhard J. Schnabel, *Mark*, TNTC, 431). Mark leaves no doubt that Jesus died; he was buried. Although simply described by Mark, the burial of Jesus was a profoundly important part of the preaching of the early church because it links Jesus' death to his resurrection, proving the reality of his death. Paul writes to Corinthian Christians: "For what I received I passed on to you as of first importance: that Christ died for our sins according to the Scriptures, that he was buried, that he was raised on the third day according to the Scriptures, and that he appeared to Cephas and then to the Twelve" (cf. 1Co 15:3-5).

Shortly after Jesus dies, Joseph of Arimathea, himself a member of the Sanhedrin, who unlike the majority has responded to Jesus' message regarding the kingdom of God (cf., 1:15), goes to Pilate to ask for the body of Jesus (v. 43). He would want to give Jesus a proper burial for at least two reasons: 1) to comply with the law pertaining to the burial of anyone guilty of a capital offense (Dt 21:22-23); and 2) to rightly honor the one he believes is the Messiah and the Son of God (Mk 1:1). It's a risky move on his part, seeing he's not a relative of Jesus, and showing concern for a man convicted of a capital crime to the very politician who convicted him of that crime would naturally invite suspicion. Moreover, should they hear of it, the Sanhedrin would not be happy to learn that one of its prominent members is paying his respects to a blasphemer. Nevertheless, Joseph goes "boldly" to Pilate.

Pilate cannot believe his ears. Jesus is already dead after hanging on the cross barely six hours; most victims survive for days before dying. So need-

ing to confirm that Jesus is truly dead, he calls "the centurion," whom Mark implies heard Jesus' final loud cry from the cross (15:37, 39). Upon hearing that Jesus is dead *from an eyewitness*, Pilate releases the corpse to Joseph sometime between 4:00 and 5:00 P.M., which gives him scarcely enough time to prepare it for burial. Mark emphasizes that Jesus is dead. Josephus, the Jewish historian tells of three friends taken down from crosses while still alive, one of whom survived the ordeal (Life 75 §421). Mark wants to assure his readers that Jesus did not survive his ordeal.

In this instance, the hasty burial preparations involve taking the body down from the cross and washing it. One commentator writes, "Washing the body of a deceased person was an important part of Jewish burial ritual; it was even permitted on the Sabbath (*m. Shab. 23:5*)" (Schnabel, 429). Preparations also involve purchasing a linen cloth (*sindona*) for a shroud, wrapping Jesus in the shroud, and laying him inside the tomb. By himself, Joseph is not able to remove the body from the cross, let alone do all of the other things involved in a short time. However, he is a wealthy man (Mt 27:57)—no doubt with servants to do what is needed. Finally, he hurriedly winds the fine linen shroud around Jesus' body, lays it in his nearby tomb, and rolls a large stone across its opening to secure it. Others are present and participate in securing the tomb, as well as in making the other preparations—his servants and two named women.

Mary Magdalene and Mary the mother of Joseph see where Jesus is laid (v.47). Mark emphasizes that Jesus' tomb is known, which is important. One commentator writes: "The principal point of the story of the burial of Jesus is simply that he was buried in a tomb (with a modicum of dignity) and that two women knew where it was. The point of the story may be simple, but it is profoundly important, for the women must know where the tomb is if they are to visit it early Sunday morning and find it empty (16:1-8)" (Craig A. Evans, *Word Biblical Commentary*, vol. 34B, *Mark 8:27-16:20*, 521). There was no question that they went to the right tomb on Sunday morning, since they had been there Friday afternoon. Mark guarded against any wrong conclusion that the disciples were mistaken about Jesus' resurrection.

Word Studies/Notes

v. 42 *Preparation Day* “Since no work was allowed on the Jewish Sabbath, Friday was used to prepare for it” (John D. Grassmick, “Mark,” in *The Bible Knowledge Commentary: New Testament*, 191). “The characterization the day before the Sabbath (prosabbaton) indicates that the day in question was the day that had begun on Thursday evening and that would end on Friday evening at sundown (the Sabbath began at sundown Friday evening) . . . The phrase as evening approached refers to the time between Jesus’ death shortly after 3 pm and sundown around 7.20 pm. According to Deuteronomy 21:23, an executed criminal had to be buried before nightfall in order to avoid defilement of the land, and the Sabbath regulations wouldn’t allow the work involved in burying a person after sunset” (Eckhard J. Schnabel, *Mark*, TNTC, 427). “Probably the activities of 15:43-46 took place between 4 and 6 p.m.” (Robert H. Stein, *Mark*, BECNT, 723).

v. 43 *Joseph of Arimathea* Cf., Mt 27:57; Lk 23:50-51; Jn 19:38-39. “Though Joseph probably lived in Jerusalem he was originally from Arimathea, a village 20 miles northwest of the city. He was a wealthy (Matt. 27:57), reputable **member of the Council** (*bouleutēs*), a non-Jewish designation for the Sanhedrin. He had not approved of the Sanhedrin’s decision to kill Jesus (Luke 23:51). He was personally **waiting for the kingdom of God** (cf. Mark 1:15) which suggests he was a devout Pharisee. He regarded Jesus as the Messiah though so far he was a secret disciple (John 19:38)” (Grassmick, 191).

v. 43 *Council* I.e., the Sanhedrin. “This indicates that some individuals among the leaders did respond to Jesus” (*The NET Bible*, 68tn on Mk 15:43), e.g., Nicodemus (cf., Jn 3:1).

v. 43 *waiting for the kingdom* “Mark’s statement that he was ‘eagerly awaiting the kingdom of God’ (15:43) suggests that he should be listed among those who had responded to Jesus’ pronouncement in 1:15. Furthermore, his lack of concern for the other victims crucified that day and the burial of Jesus in an expensive rock tomb that Matt. 27:60 says was Joseph’s own tomb indicate that he was not motivated merely by a desire to bury the dead and protect Israel for violating God’s command in Deut. 21:22-23” (Stein, 724).

vv. 43, 45 *body* Two different Gk. words, *sōma* and *ptōma*, are both translated

“body” in vv. 43, 45 respectively. The second refers more specifically to a dead body and is translated “corpse” in many English translations (e.g., CSB, ESV, HCSB, ISV, et al.). “When Pilate learns from the centurion, very probably the same centurion who had witnessed Jesus’ dramatic death (in 15:37-39), that Jesus is *indeed dead*, he releases the *corpse* [to *ptōma*] into Joseph’s charge” (Craig A. Evans, *Word Biblical Commentary*, vol. 34B, *Mark 8:27-16:20*, 520, italics added).

v. 44 *already dead* Cf., Jn 19:31-34. Jesus died after hanging on the cross from 9 am to 3 pm, about six hours. “Pilate’s surprise at the news of the death was genuine; men might, and often did, linger for days under the torture of crucifixion, before dying of exposure and thirst under the pitiless sun, or of asphyxiation from the strained hanging position” (R. Alan Cole, *Mark*, TNTC, 327-28). “Pilate was surprised that Jesus had died so quickly because most crucifixion victims survived and suffered for two or three days, sometimes even longer before succumbing (cf. Seneca, *Dial.* 3.2.2: ‘long-drawn-out-agony’; Juvenal, *Sat.* 14.77-78; Isidore of Seville, *Etymologia* 5.27.34; Hengel, *Crucifixion*, 29-31; and *Comment on 15:15*)” (Evans, 520).

vv. 44, 45 *the centurion* Cf., v. 39. “To confirm that Jesus had already died, Pilate called ‘the centurion (probably the one in charge of the crucifixion; 15:39), for he would be the most reliable witness as to whether Jesus had died” (Stein, 724-25).

v. 46 *tomb* “A typical Jewish tomb (*mnēmeion*) in Roman Palestine consisted of a short entranceway leading into one or more burial chambers. Tombs cut into the rock had two forms: *kokhim* (Lat. *loculi*), long narrow niches cut back into the rock into which the wrapped body was slid; or *archosolia*, shallow, transverse, bench-shaped tombs cut into the rock with an arch extending over the resting place which allowed the entire body to be visible. The description of John bending down, looking into the tomb and seeing the linen lying there, with the headpiece lying separately (John 20:5-8), indicates that the niche within the tomb was an *archosolium*” (Schnabel, 429). “The famous Garden Tomb, a favorite with tourists, is probably not the tomb of Jesus” (Evans, 521; cf., Cole, 328-29).

4

APPLY THE TEXT

CENTRAL MESSAGE OF THE TEXT

Christians have no reason to doubt that Jesus died on the cross or that he was resurrected three days later.

CENTRAL MESSAGE FOR YOUR LIFE

(Rewrite the Central Message above to personally apply to your own life)



3 LIVING QUESTIONS

The “Living Questions” are simple questions we may ask of any text in order to apply the Bible to our life. Answer the questions below as personally as you can.

1. What does this passage teach me about God?

2. What does this passage teach me about myself?

3. What does this passage lead me to do?



FAMILY TALK

I'm a voracious reader and love all kinds of books in every genre from wizards and wands to Biblical parenting. My favorite authors are those that carefully build their sentences so that each word is important and valuable. I feel like that is Mark's style of writing - no wasted words. Though our passage today is just a few sentences, each one explodes with meaning and gives credibility to the death, burial and resurrection of our Savior. There is no denying that Jesus died on the cross and after three days rose. So, why are our kids confronted with so many doubters? The evidence is there; it's *the* truth, not *a* truth according to interpretation. Our kids are being bombarded with distorted and dangerous messages about truth and the bottom line is that today's culture allows room for each person to create their own truth. In fact, denying someone else's truth puts you in a category of intolerance. Parents, the Bible is not too hard for your kids to understand. Walk through why Preparation Day, the quickness of Jesus' death and Pilate's verification with the centurion are all important confirmations of Christ's death. Talk about how the spices and tomb are symbolic of royalty. Walk through why it was important for Mary Magdalene and Joseph's mother Mary to see where Christ was buried. God's Word has been preserved for over 2,000 years. Help your child read and understand the Gospel truth as it is - the truth of the good news of Jesus Christ. We are praying for all of you this week!

What Does The Bible Say?

Read Mark 15:42-47.

1. What was Joseph of Arimathea waiting for?
2. Why was it bold for Joseph to ask for Jesus' body?
3. Who was watching the burial procedures?

What Do You Think?

How does this passage prove that Jesus Christ is Messiah?

What Do You Do?

Learn a magic trick this week and perform it for your family. Talk about how sometimes things appear to be truth but they are not. Talk about what makes something true.

CORE COMPETENCY: Hope

I cope with the problems of life and death with the help of Jesus.

MEMORY VERSE: 2 Corinthians 5:21

"God made Him who had no sin to be sin for us, so that in Him we might become the righteousness of God."

KidPIX COUPON

Earn 1 KidPIX Token by completing the CENTRALKids Bible Study on this page and another token by memorizing and reciting the memory verse for this week.

Questions: kids@wearecentral.org

- _____ I completed my Bible Study
 _____ I memorized this week's verse
 _____ I brought my Bible to church
 _____ I brought a friend



CHILD'S NAME

GRADE PARENT SIGNATURE

OUR CORE COMPETENCIES

CENTRAL BELIEFS

Authority of the Bible (2 Timothy 3:16-17)
I believe the Bible is the Word of God and has the right to command my belief and action.

Church (Ephesians 4:15-16)

I believe the church is God's primary way to accomplish His purposes on earth today.

Eternity (John 14:1-4)

I believe there is a heaven and a hell and that Jesus Christ is returning to judge the earth and to establish His eternal kingdom.

The Holy Spirit (Romans 8:9)

I believe the Holy Spirit convicts, calls, converts and changes me as a child of God.

Humanity (John 3:16)

I believe all people are loved by God and need Jesus Christ as their Savior.

Identity in Christ (John 1:12)

I believe I am significant because of my position as a child of God.

Jesus Christ (Hebrews 1:1-4)

I believe Jesus Christ is the Son of God who became man, died for sinners and rose from the dead.

Life Purpose (Acts 20:24)

I believe I am a steward of God's resources and have been redeemed to participate in His Kingdom purposes for His glory.

Personal God (Psalm 121:1-2)

I believe God is involved in and cares about my daily life.

Salvation by Grace (Ephesians 2:8-9)

I believe a person comes into a right relationship with God by His grace, through faith in Jesus Christ.



CENTRAL VIRTUES

Love (1 John 4:10-12)

I sacrificially and unconditionally love and forgive others.

Joy (John 15:11)

I have inner contentment and purpose in spite of my circumstances.

Peace (Philippians 4:6-7)

I am free from anxiety because things are right between God, myself and others.

Patience (Proverbs 14:29)

I take a long time to overheat and endure patiently under the unavoidable pressures of life.

Kindness/Goodness (1 Thessalonians 5:15)

I choose to do the right things in my relationships with others

Faithfulness (Proverbs 3:3-4)

I have established a good name with God and with others based on my long-term loyalty to those relationships.

Gentleness (Philippians 4:5)

I am thoughtful, considerate and calm in dealing with others.

Self-Control (Titus 2:11-13)

I have the power, through Christ, to control myself.

Grace (Colossians 3:13)

I demonstrate forgiveness, mercy and generosity to others, even when they have offended me.

Hope (1 Peter 1:3-5)

I have a growing anticipation of God's promises and my secure eternity with Him.

Humility (Philippians 2:3-4)

I choose to esteem others above myself.



CENTRAL PRACTICES

Bible Study (Hebrews 4:12)

I study the Bible to know God, the truth, and to find direction for my daily life.

Biblical Community (Acts 2:44-47)

I fellowship with other Christians to accomplish God's purposes in my life, others' lives, and in the world.

Compassion (Psalm 82:3-4)

I seek to serve the last, the least and the lost in my community.

Disciple-Making (2 Timothy 2:2)

I multiply godly beliefs, virtues and practices in others to encourage their spiritual growth in Christ.

Evangelism (Acts 1:8)

I share Jesus with others through personal proclamation and demonstration of the gospel.

Generosity (2 Corinthians 9:6-11)

I gladly give my resources to fulfill God's purposes.

Prayer (Psalm 66:16-20)

I pray to God to know Him, to lay my request before Him and to find direction for my daily life.

Single-Mindedness (Matthew 6:33)

I focus on God and His priorities for my life.

Spiritual Gifts (Romans 12:4-6)

I know and use my spiritual gifts to accomplish God's purposes.

Worship (Psalm 95:1-7)

I worship God for who He is and what He has done for me.

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Stephanie Thomas (B.B.A University of Texas at Arlington). Stephanie is married to James and they have four children: Elijah, Levi, Ella and Simon. Stephanie has attended Central Bible Church for more than 20 years, has been on staff since 2014, and now serves as Children's Minister.

The Scrolls Bible Study is a spiritual growth resource of Central Bible Church, Fort Worth, Texas.

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