



*Pointers and questions on the Gospel of*

# MARK

## Session 10

15:1 – 16:20

### Summary

- 15:1-20** Jesus is tried before Pontius Pilate.  
**15:21-47** The crucifixion, death and burial of Jesus.  
**16:1-20** The resurrection of Jesus and his appearances to his friends.

### Questions to get you thinking

1. Read 15:1-15. What evidence can you find that Pilate was a weak character, lacking integrity and personal convictions? Before jumping to condemn him, however, ask yourself if you yourself are ever influenced by the crowd in the way that he clearly was.
2. Jesus the innocent was crucified while Barabbas the guilty went free. Was Barabbas the only guilty one to go free? (See also 10:45.)
3. Six times in 15:1-32 Jesus is called 'king' in a mocking way. The fact is, he both was and still is King. But in what sense? And in what sense did the Roman authorities use that term? What other terms do we Christians commonly use that are alternative titles for 'king'?
4. Talk about the way people with power are prone to use gratuitous violence on the innocent, as illustrated in 15:16-20.
5. Discuss the taunts of those who watched the crucifixion, as described in 15:29-32. Was there any truth in any of them? *Could* Jesus have come down from the cross if he had chosen to?
6. Look at 15:34. Had God indeed forsaken Jesus as he hung on the cross?
7. The crucifixion took place *outside* the walls of ancient Jerusalem, but 15:38 describes an incident that took place *inside* the walls at the moment Jesus died. What was the connection between the two events? What exactly was 'the curtain' in question?
8. Read 15:42-47. All Jesus' disciples had long since fled and it was left to Joseph of Arimathea to arrange his burial in the tomb—an unlikely person, as he was a member of the Sanhedrin ('the Council', v43) that, in its official capacity, had handed Jesus over to the Roman authorities. Talk about the fact that, even today, Jesus has supporters and sympathisers in the most unusual quarters who sometimes turn out to be of more service to him than mainstream Christians.
9. Imagine yourself to have been with the women who went to the tomb (16:1-8) to embalm the body, and try to describe your reactions to what you saw on arrival there.
10. What do you think is the significance of the angel's words to the women about the risen Lord Jesus: 'Go, tell his disciples *and Peter*'?
11. Throughout his Gospel, Mark has highlighted the disciples' lack of faith and slowness to believe who Jesus was and what he said about his death and resurrection. As you read 16:9-14, how far have things changed?
12. Talk about the signs in 16:17. Should we be into all of them all the time?
13. Having now worked through Mark's Gospel, what is the main impression it has left on your mind and heart? What adjustments to your beliefs, attitudes and practices are you having to make as a result?

