

# CORE STUDY #10

## JESUS - THE SUFFERING SERVANT

**PASSAGE:** Mark 15: 16-39

### LEADER PREPARATION

Read the passage over at least three times, noting what you feel might be the main points of the passage. Using your **Summit Training Guide** (section 2 “Engaging the Word” and section 3 “Responding to the Word”), ask observation and interpretation questions of the passage.

You will also find it very helpful to read the parallel passages in the other 3 gospels. By reading all three gospels you will have a fuller picture of what happened and what was said.

- Mt. 27:27-54

- Luke 23:26-49

### INTRODUCTORY QUESTION

“True greatness is found in being a servant.” What does this mean to you?

### FOUNDATIONS STUDY

#### DISCUSSION QUESTIONS (selection to choose from)

**1. What ironies are present in the charges and jeers directed toward Jesus on the cross? Why didn't Jesus save himself?**

*Note especially “he saved others,...but he can't save himself.” Be sure the group sees that it is precisely because he did not save himself that he is able to save others. There are several other ironies in the passage. In verse 32, the cross is a stumbling block to them believing in Jesus, when in fact it is what we are to believe in. Looking to the cross is the focus of what we are to believe, not that he would come down off of the cross at that moment (cf. 1 Corinthians 1:18-25). Later Jesus does come off the cross and rises from the dead, yet they don't believe.*

**2. After seeing the horrific way that Jesus was treated and was killed, one needs to ask the question - Why was it necessary? Why is there such depth and significance to see Jesus as the Suffering Servant.**

- 1. We now have a Savior and God who understands suffering, who did not turn away from it, but accepted and bore it for us.*
- 2. The cross reveals the truth about humankind but also about God's incredible power. God's power absorbs the toxin of human sin and hatred and turns it into salvation for all who put their trust in a God who loves this much and who works in this way.*
- 3. The cross reveals God's incredible love as well as the pain of the human situation. The Son of God took on our humanity and absorbed all the bitter suffering and anguish of the world.*
- 4. The cross reveals a new way of life. Those who taunted Jesus assumed that anyone with power would use it to extricate himself from a personal life-threatening situation. The disciples heeded the call to save themselves when they fled into the night. Jesus lives out his teaching. The one who tries to save his life will lose it. The one who gives up his or her life will gain it and will give life to others.*

**3. In what ways is the centurions's confession a climax to the whole of Mark's gospel?**

*The point of the crucifixion is to bring people to a confession of faith. It's not sufficient to understand the history and be moved and feel pity for Jesus. He wants us to come to faith.*

**RESPONSE QUESTION**

**How can seeing Jesus in his suffering help us through our trials and pain? How does it affect your life?**

**GOING DEEPER STUDY****DISCUSSION QUESTIONS (selection to choose from)**

**1. Just before Jesus' death, he cries out, "My God, my God, why have you forsaken me?" Did God abandon Jesus? If so, why?**

*In those awful moments, Jesus was expressing His feelings of abandonment as God placed the sins of the world on Him – and because of that had to "turn away" from Jesus. As Jesus was feeling that weight of sin, He was experiencing separation from God for the only time in all of eternity. It was at this time that 2 Corinthians 5:21 occurred, "God made Him who had no sin to be sin for us, so that in Him we might become the righteousness of God." Jesus became sin for us, so He felt the loneliness and abandonment that sin always produces, except that in His case, it was not His sin – it was ours.*

**2. What is the significance of the temple curtain being torn in two?**

*During the lifetime of Jesus, the holy temple in Jerusalem was the center of Jewish religious life. The temple was the place where animal sacrifices were carried out and worship according to the Law of Moses was followed faithfully. Hebrews 9:1-9 tells us that in the temple a veil separated the Holy of Holies—the earthly dwelling place of God's presence—from the rest of the temple where men dwelt. This signified that man was separated from God by sin (Isaiah 59:1-2). Only the high priest was permitted to pass beyond this veil once each year (Exodus 30:10; Hebrews 9:7) to enter into God's presence for all of Israel and make atonement for their sins (Leviticus 16).*

*The tearing of the veil at the moment of Jesus' death dramatically symbolized that His sacrifice, the shedding of His own blood, was a sufficient atonement for sins. It signified that now the way into the Holy of Holies was open for all people, for all time, both Jew and Gentile.*