# Gospel of Mark Weekly Talk Ideas | Sean McGever

## Mark Chapter 15

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| Scripture suggestion, basic overview, and background:If you are doing the “cross talk” you likely have heard one before. I encourage you to put those memories on pause and to re-read Mark 15 with fresh eyes. Do your best to let the text of Mark 15 teach you how Mark explains the cross. If you do that, I think you will notice a few new things that God wants to say to students through you that you might not otherwise. The content of a cross talk covers a lot of verses – too many to read them all to students in a short club talk. So, we have to know the passage really well so that we can summarize part of it while drawing attention to specific words and sentences to read verbatim out of the Bible. Here is a summary of Mark’s account1. **Jesus with the Roman Governor Pilate (1-5)**: Questions and Barabbas
2. **Sentencing & Suffering (6-20)**: Whipped, crown of thorns, mocked, hit, spit on, stripped
3. **Death (21-41)**: Cry of abandonment, death, temple curtain, centurion’s response
4. **Tomb (42-47)**: stone rolled against a cave

I would be sure to read verses 33-39 out of the Bible while summarizing most of the other parts of the chapter. For a summary of the details from all of the gospel accounts of the cross, click [HERE](https://www.dropbox.com/s/k6ajdlfhttwomzb/A%20Harmony%20of%20the%20Cross%20Story.pdf?dl=0). Mark gives no graphic description of Jesus’ agony on the cross. If you want to emphasize the painful torture of Jesus, just hit play on the movie “The Passion of the Christ.” Mark doesn’t do this, and I don’t recommend you do either. Mark’s emphasis is on Barabbas, the crowd, mockery of Jesus, the thieves on their crosses, and Jesus last moments. In short, Mark’s account explains the “why” far beyond the “how” of the cross. I encourage our cross talks to do the same. *Here are a couple verses you might want to consider for your talk:**Rom. 3:23–24* for all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God, and are justified by his grace as a gift, through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus*Rom. 5:8* but God shows his love for us in that while we were still sinners, Christ died for us.*Rom. 6:23* For the wages of sin is death, but the free gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord.*John 3:16* For God so loved the world, that he gave his only Son, that whoever believes in him should not perish but have eternal life. |
| Possible main point(s):* What is your response to Jesus’ death on a cross for our sin?
* Many of us are like Pilate: we can call Jesus the “king of the Jews” (15:2, 9, 12) but we do not call Jesus the “king of my life.” Can we respond the way the Roman centurion did and say: “Truly this man was the Son of God”? (15:39)
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| What this shows us about Jesus:* Jesus suffered death but also incredible pain, loneliness, heartbreak, and abandonment.
* This man [Jesus] was the Son of God (v.39)
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| What this has to do with our life:* Why does this matter to me? Few of us young people urgently care about our eternal destiny, but many of us urgently care about our present suffering. Our present suffering is due to our sins and the sins of others.
* You are never alone in your difficult circumstances. You are not abandoned by God – Jesus joins you in your pain and suffering. Our present sufferings are foretastes, appetizers, of eternal suffering awaiting our sin.
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| Relevant technical details:* *Pilate* (v.1) = The Roman governor of Judea (Lk. 3:1), of which Jerusalem was within. Only Pilate had the authority to put Jesus to death.
* *Barabbas* (v.7) = Jewish rebel who committed murder in a plot to overthrow the Roman government.
* *Crucify* (v.13ff) = Crucifixion was almost always inflicted only on the lower class of society. The upper class had more “humane” punishment such as beheading. Jesus died alongside, among, and with the overlooked and poor.
* *Scourged* (v.15) = To punish a person with a whip made of leather. The maximum punishment was 40x (Deut. 25:3, 2 Cor. 11:24). Roman citizens were never scourged, similar to crucifixion – scourging was intended for foreigners.
* *With him they crucified*… (v.27) = The cross Jesus died on was almost certainly prepared in advance for Barabbas. Jesus died on a cross prepared for a guilty man who was set free.
* *Robbers* (v.27) = The two robbers were likely involved with Barabbas, see John 18:40.
* *Why have you forsaken (or abandoned) me*? (v.34) = This is a quote from Psalm 22 but expresses a concept that is beyond words to describe. Simply put (as best as I can…): Jesus felt and was (mysteriously) forsaken / abandoned by God in order to take upon himself the weight, experience, and consequences of our sin. See Isa. 59:2.
* *Curtain of the Temple torn in two* (v.38) = In the most important place of worship for all Jews (the Temple), there was a curtain that kept people from “the most holy place.” This curtain symbolized the separateness and remoteness of God. The tearing of the curtain is symbolic of the way Jesus’ death made the way for everyone (despite our sin) to experience the presence of God. See Hebrews 9:3, 8, 14, 10:19ff; also Exodus 26:33.
* *Truly this man was the Son of God* (v.39) = A battle-hardened Roman soldier (centurion) became the first sane human in Mark’s gospel to call Jesus God’s son and mean it.
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| Possible illustrations:* *Curtain to tear in two*: Have a curtain hanging (perhaps even during the entire club, but maybe just for the talk… up to you). At the end of your talk use it as an illustration about how we were separated from a direct relationship with God, but that because of Jesus’ death, we have direct access to a relationship with God. Cut the curtain/cloth to illustrate this point.
* *Cross*: Have a cross for part of your talk. Many options exist, here are some 1) Before club you could have the two pieces of wood separate (not joined together) and ask kids to write their names on the wood with a sharpie. When you do your talk take the pieces and put them together to form the cross. 2) You can use a hammer to drive the nails into the wood to help bring the story to life. 3) You can give every kid a sticky note, have them write their name on it, and then put their note on the cross at the end of club (alternatively you could have them nail their note on the cross). 4) You could also have kids write a short letter (give them 3-4 minutes at the end of club) and have them nail it to the cross at the end of club. 5) Take Polaroid pictures of each kid at the beginning of club and put them on the cross as you do your talk.
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*For more details, see ylhelp.com*

Mark 15 (ESV)

**Jesus Delivered to Pilate**

**15**And as soon as it was morning, the chief priests held a consultation with the elders and scribes and the whole council. And they bound Jesus and led him away and delivered him over to Pilate. **2**And Pilate asked him, “Are you the King of the Jews?” And he answered him, “You have said so.” **3**And the chief priests accused him of many things. **4**And Pilate again asked him, “Have you no answer to make? See how many charges they bring against you.” **5**But Jesus made no further answer, so that Pilate was amazed.

**Pilate Delivers Jesus to Be Crucified**

**6**Now at the feast he used to release for them one prisoner for whom they asked. **7**And among the rebels in prison, who had committed murder in the insurrection, there was a man called Barabbas. **8**And the crowd came up and began to ask Pilate to do as he usually did for them. **9**And he answered them, saying, “Do you want me to release for you the King of the Jews?” **10**For he perceived that it was out of envy that the chief priests had delivered him up. **11**But the chief priests stirred up the crowd to have him release for them Barabbas instead. **12**And Pilate again said to them, “Then what shall I do with the man you call the King of the Jews?” **13**And they cried out again, “Crucify him.” **14**And Pilate said to them, “Why? What evil has he done?” But they shouted all the more, “Crucify him.” **15**So Pilate, wishing to satisfy the crowd, released for them Barabbas, and having scourged Jesus, he delivered him to be crucified.

**Jesus Is Mocked**

**16**And the soldiers led him away inside the palace (that is, the governor’s headquarters), and they called together the whole battalion. **17**And they clothed him in a purple cloak, and twisting together a crown of thorns, they put it on him. **18**And they began to salute him, “Hail, King of the Jews!” **19**And they were striking his head with a reed and spitting on him and kneeling down in homage to him. **20**And when they had mocked him, they stripped him of the purple cloak and put his own clothes on him. And they led him out to crucify him.

**The Crucifixion**

**21**And they compelled a passerby, Simon of Cyrene, who was coming in from the country, the father of Alexander and Rufus, to carry his cross. **22**And they brought him to the place called Golgotha (which means Place of a Skull). **23**And they offered him wine mixed with myrrh, but he did not take it. **24**And they crucified him and divided his garments among them, casting lots for them, to decide what each should take. **25**And it was the third hour when they crucified him. **26**And the inscription of the charge against him read, “The King of the Jews.” **27**And with him they crucified two robbers, one on his right and one on his left. **29**And those who passed by derided him, wagging their heads and saying, “Aha! You who would destroy the temple and rebuild it in three days, **30**save yourself, and come down from the cross!” **31**So also the chief priests with the scribes mocked him to one another, saying, “He saved others; he cannot save himself. **32**Let the Christ, the King of Israel, come down now from the cross that we may see and believe.” Those who were crucified with him also reviled him.

**The Death of Jesus**

**33**And when the sixth hour had come, there was darkness over the whole land until the ninth hour. **34**And at the ninth hour Jesus cried with a loud voice, “Eloi, Eloi, lema sabachthani?” which means, “My God, my God, why have you forsaken me?” **35**And some of the bystanders hearing it said, “Behold, he is calling Elijah.” **36**And someone ran and filled a sponge with sour wine, put it on a reed and gave it to him to drink, saying, “Wait, let us see whether Elijah will come to take him down.” **37**And Jesus uttered a loud cry and breathed his last. **38**And the curtain of the temple was torn in two, from top to bottom. **39**And when the centurion, who stood facing him, saw that in this way he breathed his last, he said, “Truly this man was the Son of God!”

**40**There were also women looking on from a distance, among whom were Mary Magdalene, and Mary the mother of James the younger and of Joses, and Salome. **41**When he was in Galilee, they followed him and ministered to him, and there were also many other women who came up with him to Jerusalem.

**Jesus Is Buried**

**42**And when evening had come, since it was the day of Preparation, that is, the day before the Sabbath, **43**Joseph of Arimathea, a respected member of the council, who was also himself looking for the kingdom of God, took courage and went to Pilate and asked for the body of Jesus. **44**Pilate was surprised to hear that he should have already died. And summoning the centurion, he asked him whether he was already dead. **45**And when he learned from the centurion that he was dead, he granted the corpse to Joseph. **46**And Joseph bought a linen shroud, and taking him down, wrapped him in the linen shroud and laid him in a tomb that had been cut out of the rock. And he rolled a stone against the entrance of the tomb. **47**Mary Magdalene and Mary the mother of Joses saw where he was laid.