

## Connection Group Discussion Questions

For the week of April 2, 2017

Mark 15:15b-23

*These questions are to be used as a spring board for discussion.*

*Answers may or may not be found in the sermons.*

### **New Revised Standard Version (NRSV)**

<sup>15b</sup> and after flogging Jesus, he handed him over to be crucified.

<sup>16</sup> Then the soldiers led him into the courtyard of the palace (that is, the governor's headquarters); and they called together the whole cohort. <sup>17</sup> And they clothed him in a purple cloak; and after twisting some thorns into a crown, they put it on him. <sup>18</sup> And they began saluting him, "Hail, King of the Jews!" <sup>19</sup> They struck his head with a reed, spat upon him, and knelt down in homage to him. <sup>20</sup> After mocking him, they stripped him of the purple cloak and put his own clothes on him. Then they led him out to crucify him.

<sup>21</sup> They compelled a passer-by, who was coming in from the country, to carry his cross; it was Simon of Cyrene, the father of Alexander and Rufus. <sup>22</sup> Then they brought Jesus to the place called Golgotha (which means the place of a skull). <sup>23</sup> And they offered him wine mixed with myrrh; but he did not take it.

### **New living Translation (NLT)**

<sup>15b</sup> *He ordered Jesus flogged with a lead-tipped whip, then turned him over to the Roman soldiers to be crucified.*

<sup>16</sup> *The soldiers took Jesus into the courtyard of the governor's headquarters (called the Praetorium) and called out the entire regiment. <sup>17</sup> They dressed him in a purple robe, and they wove thorn branches into a crown and put it on his head. <sup>18</sup> Then they saluted him and taunted, "Hail! King of the Jews!" <sup>19</sup> And they struck him on the head with a reed stick, spit on him, and dropped to their knees in mock worship. <sup>20</sup> When they were finally tired of mocking him, they took off the purple robe and put his own clothes on him again. Then they led him away to be crucified.*

<sup>21</sup> *A passerby named Simon, who was from Cyrene, was coming in from the countryside just then, and the soldiers forced him to carry Jesus' cross. (Simon was the father of Alexander and Rufus.) <sup>22</sup> And they brought Jesus to a place called Golgotha (which means "Place of the Skull"). <sup>23</sup> They offered him wine drugged with myrrh, but he refused it.*

**Connection Questions:**

1. Discuss why you think Pilate used torture tactics on Jesus before he was sentenced.
2. Jews as well as Romans used flogging as a form of punishment for crimes. Even today, some cultures use such tactics as a form of punishment. Discuss why such tactics were and are still used. Why don't western cultures practice such tactics today?
3. Paul says we all sin and fall short of the glory of God. Does this mean we all as humans are just resigned to sinning? Why or why not?
4. Why did Jesus remain silent during all the torment he faced?
5. How do the torture and humiliation Jesus faced express God's relentless effort in trying to save humanity for its sins?

6. *The Shack* written by William Young was a best seller. If you have read the book or seen the movie, in what ways is God's relentless love expressed in this story?
  
7. What does God's activity mean in terms of our salvation? Are all people saved of their sins? How does this impact God's final judgement or does it?
  
8. Tammy Duckworth was a reservist in the military. She was severely injured in the war in Iraq but was rescued by fellow soldiers. She says, "You have to get up every day and seek to live in such a way as to be worthy of that kind of effort and sacrifice." How can we relate her words to God's activity in Christ on the cross?
  
9. Love isn't love unless we give it away. How does this statement relate to God's relentless love for us? Share your stories about experiencing unconditional love in your personal life and how you responded to it.