

Connection Group Discussion Questions

For the week of April 9, 2017

Mark 15:25-39

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)

²⁵ It was nine o'clock in the morning when they crucified him. ²⁶ The inscription of the charge against him read, "The King of the Jews." ²⁷ And with him they crucified two bandits, one on his right and one on his left. ²⁹ Those who passed by derided him, shaking their heads and saying, "Aha! You who would destroy the temple and build it in three days, ³⁰ save yourself, and come down from the cross!" ³¹ In the same way the chief priests, along with the scribes, were also mocking him among themselves and saying, "He saved others; he cannot save himself. ³² Let the Messiah, the King of Israel, come down from the cross now, so that we may see and believe." Those who were crucified with him also taunted him.

³³ When it was noon, darkness came over the whole land until three in the afternoon. ³⁴ At three o'clock Jesus cried out with a loud voice, "Eloi, Eloi, lema sabachthani?" which means, "My God, my God, why have you forsaken me?" ³⁵ When some of the bystanders heard it, they said, "Listen, he is calling for Elijah." ³⁶ And someone ran, filled a sponge with sour wine, put it on a stick, and gave it to him to drink, saying, "Wait, let us see whether Elijah will come to take him down." ³⁷ Then Jesus gave a loud cry and breathed his last. ³⁸ And the curtain of the temple was torn in two, from top to bottom. ³⁹ Now when the centurion, who stood facing him, saw that in this way he breathed his last, he said, "Truly this man was God's Son!"

Connection Questions:

1. Read Mark 11:1-11. What does the gesture of laying robes and palm branches seem to indicate?

2. Read John 12:12-19. What did the people expect from and for Jesus? What did the Pharisees discern about the entry of Jesus into Jerusalem?

3. Many of us are familiar with the biblical account of the crucifixion. On the one hand, we want to avoid a morbid preoccupation with the gore of the cross. But how do we avoid the opposite problem of becoming desensitized to it all?

4. While the Gospel writers tell us of the events surrounding the cross, it is left to the apostles in the letters of the New Testament to explain what Jesus' death accomplished. Take a moment to read and reflect on these two passages: 2 Corinthians 5:20-21 and Galatians 2:20.

5. Adam Hamilton says that the cross is a reminder that 1) we need saving, 2) God experiences suffering because of our brokenness, 3) God has chosen to be merciful and forgiving toward us, and 4) God loves us. How do you respond to these points?

