

Theme: Believers can be encouraged to be faithful, enduring even through suffering, by remembering the faithfulness of God.

I. The Scorn of the Mob

- A. In recent years we have seen the rage of online mobs
- B. Mob turns on someone they idolized before! Not new!
- C. Rebecca Nurse - Salem witch trials; very respected woman; initially acquitted but mobs cried out for her death; she was executed on July 19, 1692
- D. Her accusers later admitted Nurse was innocent!
- E. We see something similar with Jesus in today's text

II. The Scourge

- A. Pilate has Jesus scourged

Wanting to satisfy the crowd, Pilate released Barabbas to them. He had Jesus flogged, and handed him over to be crucified. Mark 15:15

 - 1. Jesus is flogged/scourged before the crucifixion
 - 2. Often done on the way to the crucifixion site
 - 3. Here it is done before the journey to Golgotha
- B. The Roman practice of flogging/scourging
 - 1. Mark gives few details on scourging or crucifixion
 - a. The grotesque details were well-known back then
 - b. The focus is not on physical pain and suffering but rather on Jesus' atoning work of bearing our sin.
 - 2. Romans scourging was brutal
 - a. Suetonius said that Roman scourging was so brutal that the cruel emperor Domitian was appalled by it.
 - b. Prisoner stripped, tied to a pole and scourged

- c. Whip woven with bits of bone and metal to rip the skin into shreds, with massive blood loss.
 - d. The scourge was known as "the scorpion"
 - e. No maximum number of lashes - up to the soldiers
 - f. Many of the condemned people died from the scourging before they were even crucified.
 - g. This explains why collapsed on the way and they had to force Simon to carry the cross.
- 3. The scourging is the beginning of the active suffering of Jesus as He bears our sins so that His stripes and death might heal us.

III. The Scorn

- A. The soldiers heap scorn and abuse on Jesus

They put a purple robe on him, then twisted together a crown of thorns and set it on him. ¹⁸ And they began to call out to him, "Hail, king of the Jews!" ¹⁹ Again and again they struck him on the head with a staff and spit on him. Falling on their knees, they paid homage to him. ²⁰ And when they had mocked him, they took off the purple robe and put his own clothes on him. Then they led him out to crucify him. Mark 15:17-20

 - 1. As Jesus stands there virtually naked, scourged almost to death, the soldiers mock and scorn Him.
 - 2. The purple robe, the crown, and the "Hail" all mock the claim that Jesus is the King of the Jews.
 - 3. They also take a reed staff and beat him on the head, spit on him - and then give him mocking worship and homage.
 - 4. Mark notes that all of this is mocking, derisive scorn for Jesus.

B. The scorn of the cross

And they crucified him. Dividing up his clothes, they cast lots to see what each would get. Mark 15:24

1. People being crucified were normally naked.
2. Perhaps Jews were allowed to wear a loin cloth.
3. The soldiers would split up the condemned's clothes
4. The point was to humiliate the person being crucified - another instance of scorn.

C. The scorn of the priests, scribes, and the mob

Those who passed by hurled insults at him, shaking their heads and saying, "So! You who are going to destroy the temple and build it in three days, ³⁰ come down from the cross and save yourself!" ³¹ In the same way the chief priests and the teachers of the law mocked him among themselves. "He saved others," they said, "but he can't save himself! ³² Let this Christ, this King of Israel, come down now from the cross, that we may see and believe." Those crucified with him also heaped insults on him. Mark 15:29-32

1. Romans crucified people on public thoroughfares so large crowds would see. This was meant as a warning to the people - but the Jews ignored the warning for themselves and instead mocked Jesus!
2. Mark notes that the mob passing by (v29), the priests and scribes (v31), and the criminals crucified with him (v32) all heaped scorn and abuse on Him.
3. The mob has heard the claim that Jesus would destroy the Temple and mock Him with it as He is on the cross.
4. The word for insult is "blaspheme" - they accused Jesus of blasphemy, but they were the ones blaspheming!

5. The priests and scribes mock Jesus for saving (healing) others but being unable to save Himself.
6. The criminals being crucified also insult Jesus, even as they are being justly punished for their crimes!
7. Jews considered crucifixion proof that the person was dying under God's curse
you must not leave his body on the tree overnight. Be sure to bury him that same day, **because anyone who is hung on a tree is under God's curse.** You must not desecrate the land the LORD your God is giving you as an inheritance. Deuteronomy 21:23
 - a. Jews did not practice crucifixion but rather stoning.
 - b. But to show someone was cursed the body was hung on a tree or pole - and they extended this to one who was crucified.
 - c. Thus they gleefully scorn, mock, and insult Jesus for rather than being honored by God as the Son of Man and Messiah, He dies under the curse of God.

D. Every aspect of Mark's report is soaked with human scorn for the sinless Son of God as He dies for our sin.

IV. The Scripture

A. This passage is full of allusions to Scripture!

1. As is typical, Mark does not quote Scripture directly but alludes to it for the reader to meditate and understand.
2. This begins with remembering Jesus' own words!
"We are going up to Jerusalem," he said, "and the Son of Man will be betrayed to the chief priests and teachers of the law. They will condemn him to death and will hand him over to the Gentiles, ³⁴ who will mock him and spit on him, flog him and kill him. Three days later he will rise." Mark 10:33-34

- a. Jesus was betrayed by Judas to the Sanhedrin
- b. Jesus was condemned to death by the Sanhedrin
- c. The Sanhedrin handed Him over to the Gentiles
- d. The Gentiles mocked, spat on, flogged, and then killed Him.
- e. Everything is happening just as Jesus prophesied!

B. The fulfillment of Scripture in these events

1. The scourging, hitting, spitting, and mocking by soldiers
I offered my back to those who beat me, my cheeks to those who pulled out my beard; I did not hide my face from mocking and spitting. Isaiah 50:6/Mark 15:15-20
2. The division of Jesus' clothing by lot
They divide my garments among them and cast lots for my clothing. Psalm 22:18/Mark 15:24
3. Crucified surrounded by wicked men
Dogs have surrounded me; a band of **evil men has encircled me**, they have **pierced my hands and my feet**. Psalm 22:16/Mark 15:27

he poured out his life unto death, and was **numbered with the transgressors**. Isaiah 53:12/Mark 15:27 (and 28 in some manuscripts)
4. Mocking and shaking the head
All who see me mock me; they hurl insults, shaking their heads: Psalm 22:7/Mark 15:29

I am an object of scorn to my accusers; when they see me, they shake their heads. Psalm 109:25/Mark 15:29

5. The cry of abandonment
My God, my God, why have you forsaken me?
Psalm 22:1/Mark 15:34
6. There are others, but it is clear that Mark wants us to see all of this as the fulfillment of Scripture!
7. This means none of this is outside the authority of the will and the Word of God!

V. Applying the Word

A. This is an example for believers of what to expect and how to respond

1. This is secondary but a clear teaching of the NT
Let us fix our eyes on Jesus, the author and perfecter of our faith, who for the joy set before him endured the cross, scorning its shame, and sat down at the right hand of the throne of God.
³Consider him who endured such opposition from sinful men, so that you will not grow weary and lose heart. Hebrews 12:2-3
 - a. Jesus' experience and response are an example for believers in their own life.
 - b. Just as Jesus looked beyond the shame heaped upon Him to the Father's vindication, so should we.
 - c. Just as Jesus faced opposition for standing for the truth and righteousness so will His followers.
 - d. Jesus' example can strengthen us to endure the opposition we will face if we follow Him.
 - e. I need to meditate on Jesus' sufferings, not just for their atoning work, but as an example of what I should expect and also of how I should respond when I face mockery, scorn, and abuse for the cause of Jesus.

But if you suffer for doing good and you endure it, this is commendable before God. ²¹ To this you were called, because Christ suffered for you, leaving you an example, that you should follow in his steps. ²² “He committed no sin, and no deceit was found in his mouth.” ²³ When they hurled their insults at him, he did not retaliate; when he suffered, he made no threats. Instead, he entrusted himself to him who judges justly. ²⁴ He himself bore our sins in his body on the tree, so that we might die to sins and live for righteousness; by his wounds you have been healed. 1 Peter 2:20-24

- a. When we have to suffer for doing what is right it is commendable before God!
- b. Christ's sufferings are an example for His followers!
- c. Jesus did not verbally or physically retaliate to the scourge and scorn of His fine hours and we must not either!
- d. Jesus did this because He entrusted Himself to the Father Who will perfectly judge and resolve all wrongs IN HIS OWN TIME.
- e. Even Jesus' atoning work (which we can't imitate) is to have the effect of us living for righteousness as He did - which means we respond to the evil words and actions of others as He did!

2. To trust like this I must know the Scripture like Jesus did so that I am not surprised by these trials!
3. To respond like this we have to learn to trust the Sovereign plan of God as Jesus did!

B. Do I see the necessity of Jesus' submission and sacrifice?

In the same way the chief priests and the teachers of the law mocked him among themselves. “He saved others,” they said, “but he can't save himself! Mk 15:31

1. What irony - they are right about this!
2. To trust the Father's plan was to embrace the cross!
3. If Jesus came down from the cross, if He embraced the way of power rather than the way of suffering and sacrifice, it would have been death for us!
4. Even willingly accepting the scourge and the scorn is part of winning blessing and salvation for us!
5. He refused to save Himself to save us! What grace!

C. The Table of Salvation

1. We come now to remember and give thanks that Jesus was scourged, scorned, and sacrificed for us!
2. Come and be strengthened!

The Scourge, the Scorn, and the Scripture

Mark 15:15-32

April 6, 2025

Communion

Hebrews 12:1-3; 1 Peter 2:21; 3:9

Teaching keywords: Christology; cross; prophecy (Old Testament); suffering; Word of God; endurance

Brother and sisters, fix your eyes on Jesus, who for the joy set before Him endured the cross, the scourge, the scorn, and the shame of men and is now seated at the Father's right hand. Follow in His steps, not repaying evil for evil or insult for insult, but rather blessing others, for this is your calling. You are blessed - so be a blessing. (Based on Hebrews 12:1-3; 1 Peter 2:21; 3:9)

Wanting to satisfy the crowd, Pilate released Barabbas to them. He had Jesus flogged, and handed him over to be crucified. ¹⁶ The soldiers led Jesus away into the palace (that is, the Praetorium) and called together the whole company of soldiers. ¹⁷ They put a purple robe on him, then twisted together a crown of thorns and set it on him. ¹⁸ And they began to call out to him, “Hail, king of the Jews!” ¹⁹ Again and again they struck him on the head with a staff and spit on him. Falling on their knees, they paid homage to him. ²⁰ And when they had mocked him, they took off the purple robe and put his own clothes on him. Then they led him out to crucify him.

²¹ A certain man from Cyrene, Simon, the father of Alexander and Rufus, was passing by on his way in from the country, and they forced him to carry the cross. ²² They brought Jesus to the place called Golgotha (which means The Place of the Skull). ²³ Then they offered him wine mixed with myrrh, but he did not take it. ²⁴ And they crucified him. Dividing up his clothes, they cast lots to see what each would get. ²⁵ It was the third hour when they crucified him. ²⁶ The written notice of the charge against him read: THE KING OF THE JEWS.

²⁷ They crucified two robbers with him, one on his right and one on his left. ²⁹ Those who passed by hurled insults at him, shaking their heads and saying, “So! You who are going to destroy the temple and build it in three days, ³⁰ come down from the cross and save yourself!” ³¹ In the same way the chief priests and the

teachers of the law mocked him among themselves. “He saved others,” they said, “but he can’t save himself! ³² Let this Christ, this King of Israel, come down now from the cross, that we may see and believe.” Those crucified with him also heaped insults on him. Mark 15:15-32