

THE KING AND HIS CROSS



Encounters with Jesus in the Gospel of Mark

Mark 15:1-15

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.

Mark 15:1-15

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.

Mark 15:1-15

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.

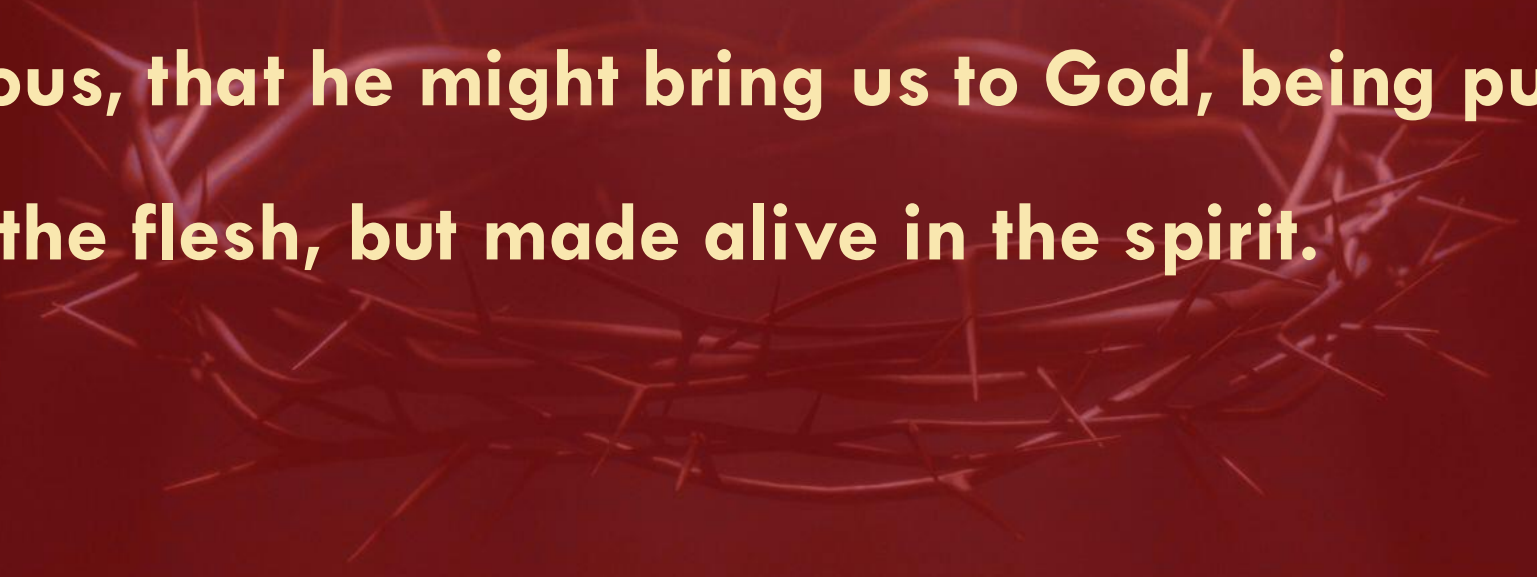


1. We witness a great exchange: *substitution*

Mark 15:1-15

1 Peter 3:18

For Christ also suffered once for sins, the righteous for the unrighteous, that he might bring us to God, being put to death in the flesh, but made alive in the spirit.



2 Corinthians 5:21

**For our sake he made him to be sin for us who knew no sin,
so that in him we might become the righteousness of God.**





This is that mystery which is rich in divine grace to sinners: wherein by a wonderful exchange our sins are no longer ours but Christ's: and the righteousness of Christ not Christ's, but ours. He has emptied himself of his righteousness that he might clothe us with it, and fill us with it: and he has taken our evils upon himself that he might deliver us from them...



**Learn Christ and him crucified. Learn to pray to him and, despairing of yourself, say:
“Thou, Lord Jesus, art my righteousness, but I am thy sin. Thou hast taken upon thyself what is mine and hast given to me what is thine. Thou hast taken upon thyself what thou wast not and hast given to me what I was not.”**

—Martin Luther



Raising the Cross

Rembrandt, c. 1633

Notice how Rembrandt included himself in the lower left between Jesus and the Roman centurion.



1. We witness a great exchange: *substitution*

Mark 15:1-15



2. We hear a cry in the darkness: *propitiation*

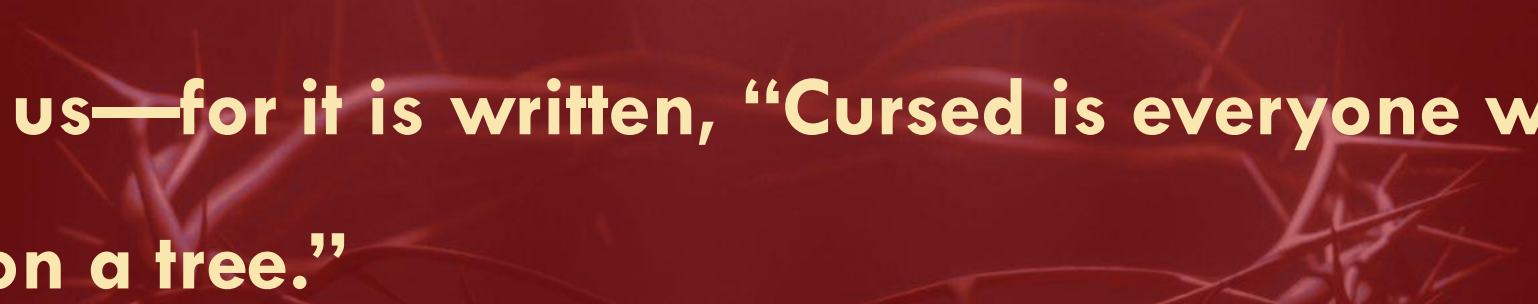
Mark 15:33-34

Mark 15:33-34

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?”

Galatians 3:13

Christ redeemed us from the curse of the law by becoming a curse for us—for it is written, “Cursed is everyone who is hanged on a tree.”



Romans 3:25-26 (NIV)

God presented Christ as a sacrifice of atonement [*propitiation, ESV*], through the shedding of his blood—to be received by faith. He did this to demonstrate his righteousness, because in his forbearance he had left the sins committed beforehand unpunished—²⁶ he did it to demonstrate his righteousness at the present time, so as to be just and the one who justifies those who have faith in Jesus.



2. We hear a cry in the darkness: *propitiation*

Mark 15:33-34



3. We see the welcome of the outsiders: *reconciliation*

Mark 15:37-47

Mark 15:37-39

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!”

Mark 15:40-41, 47

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... ⁴⁷ Mary Magdalene and Mary the mother of Joses saw where he was laid.

Mark 15:42-46

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.

Mark 15:42-46

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.



Descent from the Cross

Rembrandt, c. 1634

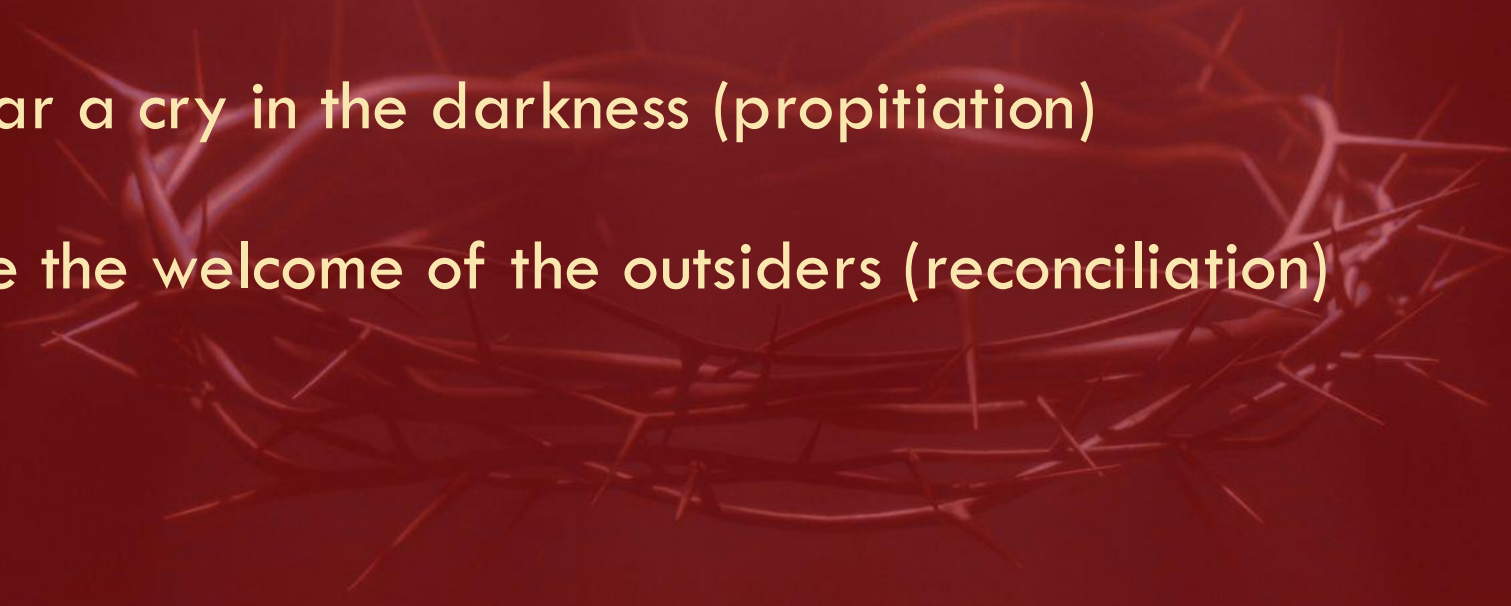
Once again, Rembrandt included himself in the painting. He saw himself as not only responsible for, but also as reconciled to God through, the cross.



3. We see the welcome of the outsiders: *reconciliation*

Mark 15:37-47

Summary

1. We witness a great exchange (substitution)
 2. We hear a cry in the darkness (propitiation)
 3. We see the welcome of the outsiders (reconciliation)
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- A crown of thorns, a symbol of suffering and sacrifice, is positioned in the background behind the list items. It is a circular wreath of sharp, dark thorns.

2 Corinthians 5:18-21

All this is from God, who through Christ reconciled us to himself and gave us the ministry of reconciliation; ¹⁹ that is, in Christ God was reconciling the world to himself, not counting their trespasses against them, and entrusting to us the message of reconciliation. ²⁰ Therefore, we are ambassadors for Christ, God making his appeal through us. We implore you on behalf of Christ, be reconciled to God. ²¹ For our sake he made him to be sin who knew no sin, so that in him we might become the righteousness of God.