

JESUS: THE SERVANT AT WORK

VOLUME THREE

STUDY SEVENTEEN

... And They Crucified Him

Mark 15:24–37

How strange it would be that anyone would hear a message such as this and walk away the same. He didn't simply die; He died on a cross. Not simply a cross, but a place of hours of agony, as He took our sins to the tree.

—Pastor Charles R. Swindoll

WE'VE heard the account of Jesus' crucifixion countless times. Preachers point to His death in weekly sermons. Hymns weave His sacrifice into their stanzas. While taking the Lord's Supper, we hold in our hands the elements representing Christ's sacrifice. Yet we could climb the hill of Calvary, behold the Man on the cross, and still not fully understand what Jesus' death means to us.

Mark's entire gospel has been leading up to Christ's sacrifice on Calvary. From Jesus' first appearance in Capernaum to His widespread fame to His triumphal entry to His treacherous betrayal, it's all come down to this: "And they crucified Him" (Mark 15:24 NASB). With these four words, Mark turns our attention to the culmination of Jesus' mission—the reason the Son of God took on flesh.



PREPARE YOUR HEART

Now and throughout your Bible study, ask the Lord to open the eyes of your heart to behold the Man on the cross, apprehend the depths of His love, and be compelled by the wonder of His grace.



INSIGHT FOR LIVING



Scan to listen to
Chuck's message.

The Bible-Teaching Ministry of Chuck Swindoll
Study 17 • Page 1

SEARCHING
THE
SCRIPTURES
BIBLE STUDIES

... And They Crucified Him

Mark 15:24–37



TURN TO THE SCRIPTURES

Almost everything about Roman crucifixion is different from modern-day executions. Executions today are rare, private, and swift. Crucifixions in the first century were common, excruciatingly painful, and publicly humiliating. The dying process could take days.

The Persians had used crucifixion centuries earlier, but the Romans refined the method to be even more painful for victims. At the crucifixion site, two soldiers stretched out the person's arms on the *patibulum*, or horizontal crossbeam, and then, using five-inch-long square spikes, the soldiers nailed the victim's wrists to the timber.

The soldiers lifted the crossbeam with the victim attached and placed it on top of the vertical beam, called the *stipes*, which was already set in the ground. With the horizontal piece secured to the top of the vertical post, the cross formed a T shape. A board with the name of the criminal and the crime committed was affixed above the person's head. Then the soldiers placed the victim's right foot over the left and drove a spike through them into the *stipes*. The executioner sometimes nailed a saddle, or *sedile*, to the vertical beam as a place to sit. It gave the person some relief from the pain of hanging, but that only prolonged the person's death. Suffocation from collapsed lungs, hunger, exhaustion, heart failure . . . medical experts differ on the exact cause of death in crucifixion. After death, the corpse often hung on the cross for days to slowly disintegrate.

Jesus was crucified at the third hour (9:00 a.m.) and hung until His death at the ninth hour (3:00 p.m.). For a description of the physical agony Jesus endured, read Pastor Chuck's commentary [Insights on Mark](#), or the online commentary [Constable's Notes](#), at netbible.org. Let's look closer at how Mark describes what transpired during those six excruciating hours.



Observation: And They Crucified Him

Imagine yourself at Calvary as you prayerfully read [Mark 15:23–37](#), observing each moment pictured in Mark's account as you witness the horrible scene.¹

Wine and Myrrh—Mark 15:23

The soldiers offered Jesus wine mixed with myrrh to help numb His pain, but “he refused it” (Mark 15:23). Why do you think Jesus refused the drug?

. . . And They Crucified Him

Mark 15:24–37

They tried to give Him this mild sedative, perhaps to help hold Him still as the spikes were driven in. He refused them. He did not take it.
—Pastor Chuck Swindoll

Dividing Garments—Mark 15:24–26

After the soldiers nailed Jesus to the cross, what did they do with His clothes in Mark 15:24–25? Why is this significant, according to [Psalm 22:18](#)? On the sign above Jesus' head was the charge against Jesus: "The King of the Jews" (Mark 15:26). What point was Pilate making by ordering these words to be written?

A victim would be stripped of his clothing, which would include an outer open tunic, an inner seamless gown-like tunic covering, a belt, a pair of sandals, perhaps a head covering of some kind. Matthew and Mark both tell us that they divided the garments among themselves by casting lots.
—Pastor Chuck Swindoll

Two Robbers—Mark 15:27–32

Enter the scene in Mark 15:27–32. What did Mark note about the criminals who were crucified with Jesus? What additional information do you observe in [Luke 23:39–43](#)?

What did those passing by and the religious leaders shout at Jesus, according to Mark 15:29–32? What's the irony in their mockery? Why didn't Jesus save Himself?

... And They Crucified Him

Mark 15:24–37

Darkness, Screaming, and Death—Mark 15:33–37

Between noon and three o'clock, “darkness fell across the whole land” (Mark 15:33). What would the darkness have felt like for those at the scene? What do you think it signified?

What did Jesus cry out in Mark 15:34–36, and how did some bystanders react? How did Mark describe Jesus’ death in 15:37? What did Luke mention in [Luke 23:46](#)? What did Jesus also utter in [John 19:30](#)?

It is the most epic moment in the history of all time, where our sins and those sins of our forefathers, our progeny, and those who will live in future were all laid on Him, so much so that He finally screamed. And not very long thereafter, recorded by the gospel writer, “Tetelestai. It is finished.”
—Pastor Chuck Swindoll



Interpretation: Behold the Man on the Cross

Already in shock from His bloody scourging and beatings, Jesus endured six hours of searing pain. He fought to raise Himself to breathe, and then He collapsed again. Up, then down, His body heaved, then fell, writhing and twisting in agony, His muscles cramping, His nerves raw.

Explore the article “[Crucifixion](#)” in the *Encyclopedia of the Bible* at [biblegateway.com](#). Worshiping a “Christ crucified” was a “stumbling block” to the Jews and “foolishness” to gentiles (1 Corinthians 1:23 NASB). How would Mark’s original readers have understood Jesus’ death on the cross?

. . . And They Crucified Him

Mark 15:24–37

What did Jesus accomplish on the cross for us that only He could do?

The criminal who repented just before he died models some precious truths about salvation. What principles can you glean from his example of faith and from the hope Jesus gave him when He said, “I assure you, today you will be with me in paradise” (Luke 23:43)?

I notice the moment we believe we are instantly saved. Jesus said, “Today you will be with Me in paradise.” The thief is an excellent model to turn to regarding the assurance of salvation that comes as a result of God’s grace.
—Pastor Chuck Swindoll

Jesus’ cry, “Eloi, Eloi, lema sabachthani?” (Mark 15:34), is a quotation from Psalm 22:1—“My God, my God, why have you abandoned me?” Some theologians maintain that this was the moment Jesus was bearing the sins of the world. Why would Jesus quote this psalm at this moment?

What is the significance of Jesus’ declaration, “Tetelestai,” which means “It is finished!” in John 19:30? Jesus then said, “Father, I entrust my spirit into your hands!” (Luke 23:46). How do these words demonstrate that His life was not taken from Him?

You never will pay for your sins. All who teach, “You must return to the ritual for paying for your sin,” have missed it. “Tetelestai. It is finished. Mission accomplished. Paid in full.” —Pastor Chuck Swindoll

. . . And They Crucified Him

Mark 15:24–37



Correlation: Jesus Saves Sinners

Jesus died on the cross that was meant for the notorious criminal Barabbas. What truth does this teach you about Jesus' substitutionary atonement—a concept the New Testament writers elaborated upon in [2 Corinthians 5:21](#); [Colossians 1:22](#); [Hebrews 10:10](#); and [1 Peter 2:24](#)?

I'm convinced the center cross was intended for Barabbas, who was a notorious criminal. He was released when the crowd screamed for Jesus' death. Jesus literally took Barabbas' cross. —Pastor Chuck Swindoll

How does the repentant criminal's salvation illustrate Paul's teaching in [Romans 5:6–11](#)?

The moment the criminal told Jesus, “Remember me when you come into your Kingdom” (Luke 23:42), the man's eternal destiny changed. Instantly, he was *rescued* “from the kingdom of darkness” and *transferred* “into the Kingdom of his dear Son” (Colossians 1:13). What caused that transfer?

Trust Him. Believe in Him. Turn to Him. And because of His grace, you will be accepted into His family, and your future will be removed from the kingdom of darkness in which you have been living to the kingdom of the Son of His love. What grace! —Pastor Chuck Swindoll

... And They Crucified Him

Mark 15:24–37



Application: Behold the Man!

God gave us Scripture to transform our lives. As you ponder the sacred scene and hear Jesus assure the criminal, “today you will be with me in paradise” (Luke 23:43), what has the Holy Spirit communicated to your heart about God’s precious gift of eternal life? What passages of Scripture can you memorize to remember these eternal truths?

Jesus’ words are “Today you will be with Me in paradise. It’s a gift, and I give you the gift as a result of your trust in Me.” —Pastor Chuck Swindoll

How has beholding Jesus on the cross opened your eyes to the depths of His love and the wonder of His grace? In your own words, express your worship of the crucified Christ.



A FINAL PRAYER

Heavenly Father, as best I have been able, I have beheld the Man. I’ve seen Him dying on that cross for my sins. May my worship of Him become deeper because of it. May I find rest and joy in the perfect sacrifice of the Lamb of God, Jesus. In His matchless name, I pray. Amen.

ENDNOTE

1. To learn more about Pastor Chuck Swindoll’s *Searching the Scriptures* Bible-study method, go to the web page “[How Does Pastor Chuck Swindoll Study the Bible?](https://www.insight.org/how-does-pastor-chuck-swindoll-study-the-bible)” at [insight.org](https://www.insight.org).

For the 2027 broadcasts, this *Searching the Scriptures* Bible study was developed by Mirlenda Noëlliste in collaboration with Bryce Klabunde, vice president of *Searching the Scriptures* Ministries, based upon the original outlines, charts, and transcripts of Charles R. Swindoll’s messages. Copyright © 2011, 2026 by Charles R. Swindoll, Inc. All rights are reserved worldwide. Duplication of copyrighted material for commercial use is strictly prohibited.

[insight.org](https://www.insight.org)

Insight for Living
Study 17 • Page 7

[illegible]