

**24 Hours That Changed the World by Adam Hamilton**  
**Session 5 - The Torture and Humiliation of the King**

**Session Goals:**

- Explore the Gospel's account of Jesus' humiliation at the hands of the Roman soldiers on his way to Calvary;
- Explore Jesus' particular experience of suffering as a way of understanding his role in God's redemption of the world;
- Consider our own capacity for inhuman acts and attitudes directed toward others and to identify ways to guard against them.

**Opening Prayer -**

I am poured out like water, and all my bones are out of joint; my heart is like wax; it is melted within my breast; my mouth is dried up like a potsherd, and my tongue sticks to my jaws; you lay me in the dust of death. For dogs are all around me; a company of evildoers encircles me. My hands and feet have shriveled; I can count all my bones. They stare and gloat over me; they divide my clothes among themselves, and for my clothing they cast lots. But you, O Lord, do not be far away! O my help, come quickly to my aid! Deliver my soul from the sword, my life from the power of the dog! Save me from the mouth of the lion! **(Psalm 22:14-21a)**

**Biblical Foundation**

*After flogging Jesus, [Pilate] handed him over to be crucified. Then the soldiers led him into the courtyard of the palace (that is, the governor's headquarters); and they called together the whole cohort. And they clothed him in a purple cloak; and after twisting some thorns into a crown, they put it on him. And they began saluting him, "Hail, King of the Jews!" They struck his head with a reed, spat upon him, and knelt down in homage to him. After mocking they stripped him of the purple cloak and put his own clothes on him. Then they led him out to crucify him. 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. Then they brought Jesus to the place called Golgotha (which means the place of a skull). And they offered him wine mixed with myrrh; but he did not take it. **(Mark 15:15b-23)***

**Watch the Video (9:06 minutes)**

**Questions for Discussion -**

- Why do you think the Gospels say very little about the flogging of Jesus? How do you account for the various placements of the flogging in the four Gospel accounts?
- How do you imagine the scene in which Jesus was mocked? In your mind, how did Jesus respond to this kind of cruelty?
- During the final twenty-four hours of Jesus' life, we see Judas' betrayal, Peter's denial, the disciples' abandonment, the Sanhedrin's jealousy, the crowd's rage, Pilate's acquiescence, and the soldiers' cruelty. What do these sights teach us about what we need saving from?
- What does the example of Simon of Cyrene teach us about discipleship?

**Bible Study and Discussion:**

Read aloud the following passages of Scripture one at a time. Use the question that follows each passage to guide discussion.

**Mark 15:16** *The soldiers took Him away into the palace (that is, the Praetorium), and they called together the whole Roman cohort.*

- In the is verse, Mark uses “cohort,” a term that originally meant one of the ten subdivisions of a Roman legion, several hundred strong. What do you think Mark is trying to emphasize by giving us an image of Jesus surrounded by not just a few, but hundreds of brutal, mocking soldiers?

Read Matthew 2:11 and compare to Mark 15:23

**Matthew 2:11** *On coming to the house, they saw the child with his mother Mary, and they bowed down and worshiped him. Then they opened their treasures and presented him with gifts of gold, frankincense and myrrh.*

**Mark 15:23** *And they tried to give Him wine mixed with myrrh; but He did not take it.*

- Myrrh is mentioned twice in the Gospels: once in Matthew’s account of Jesus’ birth and again in Mark’s account of Jesus’ crucifixion. What connection do you see between these two offerings?

Read Luke 23:26 and compare to Matthew 27:32 and Mark 15:21

**Luke 23:26** *As the soldiers led him away, they seized Simon from Cyrene, who was on his way in from the country, and put the cross on him and made him carry it behind Jesus.*

**Matthew 27:32** *As they were going out, they met a man from Cyrene, named Simon, and they forced him to carry the cross.*

**Mark 15:21** *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.*

- Only Luke mentions that Simon of Cyrene carried Jesus’ cross “behind Jesus.” What insights into the Passion narrative does that detail provide?

Read **Romans 5:6-11**

<sup>6</sup> You see, at just the right time, when we were still powerless, Christ died for the ungodly. <sup>7</sup>Very rarely will anyone die for a righteous person, though for a good person someone might possibly dare to die. <sup>8</sup>But God demonstrates his own love for us in this: While we were still sinners, Christ died for us. <sup>9</sup>Since we have now been justified by his blood, how much more shall we be saved from God's wrath through him! <sup>10</sup>For if, while we were God's enemies, we were reconciled to him through the death of his Son, how much more, having been reconciled, shall we be saved through his life! <sup>11</sup>Not only is this so, but we also boast in God through our LORD Jesus Christ, through whom we have now received reconciliation.

- Why does Paul think it so crucial that Jesus’ death proves God’s love for us?

**Wrapping Up  
In Perspective**

To conclude the session, ask group members to consider and discuss one or more of the following perspectives. For the painting of **Veronese's *Jesus Succumbing to the Weight of the Cross***, google it or print out a color copy and display it or pass it around for the group to see.

#### ALONG THE VIA DOLOROSA

The path that Jesus traveled from the palace of Pontius Pilate to the cross has come to be called the Via Dolorosa (“the way of suffering”). This path has been, for many centuries, a traditional pilgrimage for Christians. Take that journey in your imagination. Put yourself somewhere in the crowd, trailing the struggling Christ who bears his own crossbeam. What do you see? What do you hear? What do you feel?

#### INSIDE THE HEART OF SIMON OF CYRENE

Some of the Roman soldiers have just grabbed you from the crowd of people who have been following Jesus. The soldiers force you to your knees. You can see other soldiers approaching you with the crossbeam that Jesus has been carrying. They want you to carry it! At first you struggle to resist, but then . . . what?

#### IN FRONT OF VERONESE'S *JESUS SUCCUMBING TO THE WEIGHT OF THE CROSS*

Paolo Veronese is considered to be one of the master colorists of the late Renaissance, meaning that his paintings show the artist's highly imaginative eye for and ability to use colors. He is known for his huge, brightly colored frescoes depicting some of the Bible's familiar feast scenes. However, in this painting of Jesus, his hues are indicative of the mood of his subject. Notice the sky. Contrast the color and actions of the man in the upper right and the women in the lower left. Who acts as the central figure in the painting, the man pictured with his back to the viewer or Jesus on the ground? Why do you think so? What insights into this moment in the story does the painting evoke?

#### **Sharing Joys & Concerns**

#### **Closing Prayer**

Now may our Lord Jesus Christ himself and God our Father, who loved us and through grace gave us eternal comfort and hope, comfort your hearts and strengthen them in every good work and deed. Amen. **(2 Thessalonians 2:16-17)**