

Mark 15:16-32

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Preacher: None

[0:00] Please do open your Bibles again to Mark chapter 15. It's on page 852. I'll be looking at verses 16 to 20 this evening.

! Lord God, help us to see the glory of Christ this evening.

Help us to see the victory that he has won for us on the cross. And help us to cling to him all the more. May we find hope and comfort and all that we need in him.

We pray this in his name. Amen. Amen. In 2003, Banksy, the famous street artist, he painted an iconic parachuting rat on the side of a building in Melbourne, Australia.

And it was a treasured piece of work in Australia. And many consider it a priceless piece of art. But one day in 2010, the local council came along.

[0:59] They saw the spray paint and they destroyed it by cleaning it off. They thought it was some sort of gang-related graffiti. And so they destroyed it. And they thought they were doing the world good by getting rid of it, didn't they?

But what were they actually doing? They were actually destroying a masterpiece. There was a real irony here. They had no idea what they were doing.

And that is what's going on in our passage here. These soldiers think that they were doing the world good by getting rid of Jesus. By mocking him. They thought he deserved it. But what was the reality?

They were actually destroying a masterpiece. There is a real irony here. Now, irony, the word irony is a word I want us to think about for a moment.

Irony in storytelling is when the characters in a story think something isn't true. But we, the audience, we know that it is true.

[2:03] That's what irony is. So think of the film Jaws. People are swimming in the sea. They think it's safe. They think everything's normal. But then we, the audience, we hear something.

Dun, dun, dun, dun, dun, dun. We know the reality. We hear that music. And we know the reality that there's a shark in the water. We, the audience, know the reality is the opposite of what the characters think.

That is irony. That is dramatic irony. And that is what Mark is doing in this passage. He's presenting a moment of dramatic irony. The soldiers mock Jesus by pretending he's a king.

And they make fun of him. But actually, he is the king. So look at the scene here. So verse 16, Jesus is led inside a palace.

And they gather together the whole battalion around him. He's like a king over an army. And verse 17, they clothed him in a purple cloak. Purple was a very expensive and royal color in those days.

[3:10] They put royal robes on him. In verse 17, twisting together a crown of thorns, they put it on him. He's crowned. Verse 18, they began to salute him.

And what do they call him? Hail, king of the Jews. Verse 19, they struck him on the head, spat on him, knelt down in homage to him. They bow down to him.

What do these soldiers think is the reality? They think this man is no king. They dress him up as a king to show everyone how unkingly he is.

But what is the reality? What are we meant to know? This is actually the king. They think they're doing good, but they're destroying a masterpiece.

They think everything is normal, but we hear the real music. But it's not the Jaws theme music. It's the music of a coronation.

[4:09] It's trumpets and horns and choirs and harps and violins and a royal band, all signaling to us, this is actually the king.

That is what Mark is presenting us with here. This is dramatic irony. He's doing this to emphasize that Jesus is actually the king.

And he's doing this to make a point, to show us the reality of what the soldiers missed, to show us what's really going on at the cross. So the past few weeks, we've seen that all the events leading up to the cross have been there to show us what's really happening at the cross.

They're kind of like a red carpet. You look at the red carpet, and it tells you what's going on at the main event. And we've seen these events, and we've seen what's going on at the cross.

Jesus is dying for sinners. He's being condemned by the divine judge so that rebels go free. Well, here we see something else about the cross.

[5:18] We see that the cross was the enthronement of Jesus. It's where he became king. And that is the big thing to see today, that the cross was the enthronement of Jesus.

But before we unpack that, we need to see that dramatic irony like this, it only works if there's an author behind it. This scene only makes sense and has meaning if it's designed to be like this.

This isn't just a coincidence that these soldiers mock the true king by dressing him up as a king.

Note, there's an author behind this. But Mark is not the real author of these events.

Mark didn't make these events happen. No, God is the author of these events. This was all planned by God.

The cross was planned by God. And this is the first thing I want us to see today before we get to our main point. The cross was planned by God. In all these events we have seen so far, all these red carpet moments that show us the main event, the cross, what it's all about, all these events, they're not, this isn't just coincidence.

[6:37] It's not like, oh, Jesus was condemned by Pilate. Oh, and he was condemned by God. Oh, that's a funny coincidence. Or, oh, Jesus is mocked as a king, and he's the true king.

Oh, that's a funny coincidence. No, this isn't Mark just making up poetic connections. No, these events took place the way they did, and they all point to the cross because God planned it.

God authored all of this to show the world what the cross is really about. And we need to grasp this. The cross was planned by God.

And we see this all the way back in the Old Testament. Isaiah 53 speaks of this suffering servant who will save his people by suffering for them. Speaking of Jesus.

And Isaiah writes, it was the will of the Lord to crush him. It was God's will to crush Jesus. God crushed his own son.

[7:40] It was in God's will to do this. The cross wasn't an unfortunate accident. No, it was the son's will and the father's will for Jesus to go to the cross.

It was in God's plan. It was always his desire. The cross was planned by God. And in the New Testament, the apostle Peter preaches at Pentecost, and he says this, Jesus was delivered up according to the definite plan and foreknowledge of God.

It's clear. The cross was planned by God. This wasn't an unfortunate accident that God then turned into a good thing.

No, the cross was planned by God from eternity to be salvation, to be the way that Jesus becomes king. It was God's will to make his son king.

That was his will in heaven. And God has constructed all these events so that his will would be done on earth as it is in heaven.

[8:48] So that heaven played out on earth. His will in heaven can be seen in his will on earth. These earthly events show us the true spiritual heavenly reality.

That is why the earthly court with Pilate shows us the heavenly court of God's justice. And that is why today, these soldiers mocking Jesus shows us the reality of the cross.

This happened because God wanted to show us something, something about Jesus and the cross. God is showing us actually the cross is Jesus' enthronement.

The cross was the enthronement of Jesus. Which brings us back to our main point, which is where we're going to spend the rest of our time, back to our main point.

The cross was the enthronement of Jesus. So we need to answer now, well, how was the cross the enthronement of Jesus? We can kind of see how he was a sacrifice, can't we?

[9:54] Sacrifices need to die for sins. We can kind of see how he's a substitute, right? He died instead of sinners. But how was the cross the enthronement of Jesus?

How does that make him a king? As the soldiers place a crown of thorn on Jesus, why is Mark telling us that, well, Jesus is actually a king?

Well, we need to understand what a king does. A king does two things. A king defeats his enemies, and a king rules his people.

A king defeats his enemies, and a king rules his people. And ever since the fall, the world has desperately needed a king. A king to defeat the enemies of the world, and a king to rule the people of this world.

So let's ask, why is the world today the way it is? It's because we're needing a king to completely rule over this world.

[10:57] In the fall, we rejected God as king. We didn't want God to rule over us, and instead we chose to follow Satan. And we let sin rule over us instead.

Sin controlled us and governed us. It had power over us. Paul says in Romans, sin reigned in death. Sin was a king over us.

It reigned. We were slaves to sin. That is the problem of this world. Sin reigns. It has a king-like grip over the world.

When sin reigns, we can't help but sin. Sin is king in the lives of those without Christ. Lives are destroyed in this life, and perish in the next, because sin is king over them.

And because sin reigned over us, death reigned over us. The wages of sin is death, and so death reigned. Without Christ, death is like a king over us.

[12:05] We can't escape it. We simply do what it says. We die. Without Christ, death has dominion over us. And not only that, in the fall, Satan was let loose into this world.

He's been like a king over us. Jesus calls him the ruler of this world. Paul calls him the prince of the power of the air. Satan's evil forces are called rulers and authorities in this world.

Satan is the enemy of God, and he's the opposing king in this world. And so, while this is God's world, he's in complete control. He's always the king of creation.

Satan has had a king-like influence over us. He's had power over us, making us follow him, leading us into sin and evil, and he's accusing us in our sin.

And eventually, he seeks to drag us to hell. Death. This is what's wrong with the world. These are the enemies.

[13:16] It's sin, death, Satan, and hell. And what do we need? We need a king to defeat them. The world has been in desperate need to end the reign of these enemies, to end their power, and to destroy them.

And we need a good king to come in and rule. The world needs a king to be enthroned. And in Mark today, we see that long-awaited king.

Mark is telling us, this is that king. While the soldiers think they're mocking Jesus, what is the music that we hear? It's trumpets.

It's a royal band, a king's coronation. The cross was the enthronement of Jesus. But if a king defeats enemies, and a king rules his people, how does the cross do that?

How does that make Jesus king? Well, for those in Christ, on the cross, our sin was taken off us and laid on Jesus.

[14:25] He bore our sins. He became sin for us. And so when Jesus died, he took all our sin to the grave with him.

It was destroyed. It was dealt with. So whatever sin, whatever reign sin had over you, it's ended. It's dead. Sin had guilt over you, but that was buried, dead, in the grave.

There is no guilt living over you. But also, sin's power over you has now been broken. Before, we couldn't help but sin.

Sin was king over us, reigned over us, but on the cross, Jesus tore that king off the throne of our hearts. He broke the power of sin.

So we can now obey God. We can now stop sinning. That king's sin no longer reigns over you.

[15:29] Now, it needs to be said, that doesn't mean Christians will never sin. No, sin will still dwell in us until glory. But it does mean the power, the reign of sin is broken.

For those in Christ, sin is not king over your heart now. Jesus is king over your heart now. He rules over you.

The love for Jesus and the desire to please him and serve him and obey him, that has power over you now. When you come to the cross, you come to a king and his love grips your heart.

He becomes your king. Sin has been dethroned in your life. Jesus now reigns. So if you don't have Christ as your king here tonight, you need to know, you may think you're free, but actually sin reigns over you.

You have a king that you don't realize and Christ can set you free. You need a better and perfect king. So don't be like these soldiers.

[16:40] Don't miss the king in front of you. Come to the cross. The cross was the enthronement of Jesus. But sin wasn't the only enemy defeated on the cross.

Satan was defeated on the cross. Do you know what Satan's name means? Do you know what Satan means? Satan means the accuser.

The power of Satan is to accuse. He's like an evil lawyer who sees your sin and your guilt and accuses you before God.

Look what this person did. Look what they deserve. And he leads us into more sin to accuse us all the more. Satan's power in this world is to accuse.

Accuses of the debt we owe because of our sin. But Paul tells us what happened on the cross. Jesus cancelled the record of debt that stood against us with its legal demands.

[17:45] This he set aside nailing it to the cross. He disarmed the rulers and authorities and put them to open shame by triumphing over them.

On the cross Christ took the accuser's power away from him. He disarmed him. How? Because there is nothing Satan can accuse you with anymore.

There is no sin reigning over you. There is no guilt hanging over you. As you stand before the judgment seat of God Satan can accuse you all he likes.

It means nothing. Because all your sin has been paid for Satan can say nothing about you before God. Christ is our king and on the cross he has disarmed Satan.

Taken away his weapons destroyed his power. Satan has nothing on you. And now Satan is just awaiting his doom where he will be gone forever.

[18:51] And that day is certain because Christ has already conquered him on the cross. And so if you're not a Christian here today without Christ Satan can still accuse you.

He can bring charges against you and God will see those charges and he'll see them as true. Your sin is not covered by Christ. The legal demands still weigh on you and you need a king to disarm Satan.

To destroy any power he has to accuse you. Christ is the king who disarms all the weapons of Satan. He's disarmed his accusations and he's also disarmed death itself.

Hebrews says Jesus destroyed the one who has the power of death. That is the devil. When the devil accuses you he accuses you for the punishment of death.

The wages of sin is death. Death is his weapon as well. But if there's no guilt then there's no death. When Christ dealt with your guilt he ended the reign of death over you.

[20:04] Death looks like it has its grip on this world. Like it rains, like it's winning. And yes unless Christ returns we will all die. But death will not win.

Death has been dethroned. Eternal life is coming. That is what Christ did on the cross. He made sure death will no longer rule in this world.

And who rules instead? death, a new ruler full of life. Eternal life. He now reigns over this world. The gracious king who holds the keys of death in Hades.

