

mp3/26/MARK 15 1-38.mp3

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[0 : 00] today is Jesus abandoned and that will come clear in a bit. You see at Christmas we get really involved and really excited about Jesus' birth but today I really want us to turn to his death. You know at Christmas you see the incredible incarnation of the Son of God becoming a baby and when he was a baby, a fragile baby, he was given myrrh because his death would be just as significant as his birth. You see Jesus was born for a purpose and that purpose was his death. He spent 33 years of his life was building up to this moment. The entire actually history of the world was building up to this moment. You know from the beginning of the world when Adam and Eve first sinned in Genesis 3.15 and then from then on it's image after image after image of, you know remember Abraham? Instead of sacrificing his son God provided a ram for him and there was the ark of salvation for Noah and his family.

There's the Passover lamb in Egypt and then there's the bronze serpent in the wilderness. Jesus' death was prophesied about for hundreds of years before it actually happened. God revealing to them and to us that it wasn't an accident, it was on purpose, it was meticulously planned.

He's revealing it to them to give them hope. You see in Isaiah 53 read earlier, but he was pierced for our transgressions and he was crushed for our iniquities. This punishment that brought us peace was on him and by his wounds we are healed. This is the greatest moment in eternity.

So do turn with me to Mark 15. We'll read from verse 1 to 39. Mark 15. Very early in the morning, the chief priests with the elders, the teachers of the law and the whole Sanhedrin reached the decision. They bound Jesus, led him away and turned him over to Pilate.

Are you the king of the Jews? Asked Pilate. Yes, it is as you say, Jesus replied. The chief priests accused him of many things. So again Pilate asked him, Aren't you going to answer?

[2 : 24] See how many things they are accusing you of. But Jesus still made no reply. And Pilate was amazed. Now it was the custom at the feast to release a prisoner whom the people requested.

A man called Barabbas was in prison with insurrectionists who had committed murder in the uprising. The crowd came up and asked Pilate to do for them what he usually did. Do you want me to release to you the king of the Jews?

Asked Pilate. Knowing it was out of envy that the chief priests had handed Jesus over to him. But the chief priests stirred up the crowd to have Pilate release Barabbas instead.

What shall I do then with the one you call the king of the Jews? Pilate asked them. Crucify him, they shouted. Why? What crime has he committed? Asked Pilate. But they shouted all the louder.

Crucify him. Wanting to satisfy the crowd, Pilate released Barabbas to them. He had Jesus flogged and handed him over to be crucified. The soldiers led Jesus away into the palace.

[3 : 29] That is the praetorium. And called together the whole company of soldiers. They put a purple robe on him. They then twisted together a crown of thorns and set it on him.

And they began to call out to him, Hail, King of the Jews. Again and again they struck him on the head with a staff and spat on him. Falling on their knees, they paid homage to him.

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. 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. They brought Jesus to the place called Golgotha, Which means the place of the skull. Then they offered him wine mixed with myrrh, But he did not take it.

And they crucified him. Dividing up his clothes, They cast lots to see what each would get. It was the third hour when they crucified him. The written notice of the charge against him read, The King of the Jews.

[4 : 33] They crucified two robbers with him, One on his left, right, and one on his left. Those who were passing by hurled insults at him, Shaking their heads, saying, So, you who are going to destroy the temple And build it in three days, Come down from the cross and save yourself.

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. Let this Christ, this King of Israel, Come down from the cross, That we may see and believe.

Those crucified with him Also heaped insults on him. At the sixth hour, Darkness came over the whole land Until the ninth hour. And at the ninth hour, Jesus cried in a loud voice, Eloi, Eloi, lama sabachthani.

Which means, My God, my God, Why have you forsaken me? When some of those standing near heard this, They said, Listen, he's calling Elijah.

One man ran and filled a sponge With wine vinegar, Put it on a stick, And offered it to Jesus to drink. Now leave him alone. Let's see if Elijah comes to take him down, He said.

[5 : 44] With a loud cry, Jesus breathed his last. The curtain of the temple Was torn in two from top to bottom. And when the centurion, Who stood there in front of Jesus, Heard his cry, And saw how he died, He said, Surely, This man was the Son of God.

This is the hardest time in Jesus' life. The time that he was giving up his life To save everyone in the world.

Surely a hero. But throughout this passage, We're going to see that Jesus was abandoned. He was left to face the torture, The mocking, And the death alone.

So, My first point is that Jesus is abandoned by men. His people, The Jews. Jesus' public ministry in the past, For the last three years, Had actually been followed by thousands.

Some for his teaching, And actually some just for his healing. But, He was followed so eagerly, That, Sometimes he had to sneak away from the crowds, Cross the lake, Just to get some time out.

[6 : 53] He was followed by so many, That on one occasion, He had to feed 5,000 people, Plus women and children. And, He was followed so joyfully, That when he came into Jerusalem, Just a few days ago, People laid their clothes on the ground, Palm branches on the ground, To celebrate that he was coming in, To make a red carpet, For him to process on.

But that was then. And this is now. Look again at verse 9 to 14. Do you want me to release you, The king of the Jews? Asked Pilate. Knowing it was out of envy, That the chief priests, Had handed Jesus over to him.

But the chief priests, Stirred up the crowd, To have Pilate release Barabbas instead. What shall I do then, With the one you call, The king of the Jews? Pilate asked them. Crucify him, They shouted.

Why? What crime has he committed? Said Pilate. But they shouted all the louder, Crucify him. That's potentially, Not the same crowd as before. But, Surely not completely different.

And, And when they were stirred up by the, Chief priests, They completely changed their tune. They wanted Jesus' blood. Crucify him. See, I've been mucked about by people in the past.

[8 : 03] I've had friends, Like, Change allegiance, Just because, They thought it would be, They'd be more popular with other friends. Maybe they'd be safer, With other friends. Sometimes just because they felt like it.

But, No one's ever asked for my blood. Isn't this like a real life example of the parable of the sower? So many people had heard the teaching of Jesus. But hardship came.

Temptations and persuasions came. And they gave up. Their foundations were not deep, They're just superficial. And now they abandoned Jesus, And just cried for his death.

They actually did not care of the consequences. They say in Matthew's account, Let his blood be on us, And on our children. So that was the Jews. But, Surely some people stayed with him.

How about his disciples? Can anybody actually spot a disciple in that passage? Plain wears wallies easy on this. Because his disciples, His friends, The people he spent the last three years of his life with, They've already gone.

[9 : 06] They've already scarpered, And left him in the last chapter. Sure, Peter hung around for a bit. But then he actually denied, Even knowing Jesus three times. And then when Jesus is crucified later on, A few stand back from a safe distance.

But do they stand and be counted with him? Even a boxer has somebody in the ring, Shouting encouragement from the side, Reminding them to keep their defense up, Just letting them know that they're not alone.

And Jesus is about to go into the biggest fight, He's ever experienced. And he's abandoned by all 12 of his disciples. So, Jesus has been abandoned by his people, The Jews.

He's been abandoned by his disciples. And now, His judge, Pilate. So, Here's Jesus. The Jews and, The disciples have abandoned him.

And he's put before Pilate. The Roman governor, That has the authority, To either free Jesus, Or put him to death. And for a moment, You start to think, Awesome!

[10 : 10] Pilate can see through, All the accusations, That have been made at Jesus. He's impressed, And even amazed, That Jesus remains silent. He realizes, That the chief priests, Have only arrested Jesus, Because they're envious of him.

He even offers Jesus his release. And then, Verse 15, Wanting to satisfy the crowd, He had Jesus flogged, And handed him over to be crucified.

See, Standing up for Jesus, Standing up for justice, Was too much for Pilate. He didn't want another revolt, On his hands. He'd had enough trouble, With the Jews already. And just to get rid of a problem, He condemns a man, He feels is innocent, To death.

He may have tried, To wash his hands of this event, Shown in Matthew 27. But his imprint still remains. He abandons Jesus, To be crucified. So, What about us?

I mean, Thankfully we weren't there, Were we? Like, Because we may, May or may not, Have abandoned Jesus, Like the Jews did, Or like the disciples did. And, Though we didn't personally, Nail him to the cross, It was our sin, That held him there.

[11 : 25] I think we sang that earlier actually. It was for us, That he chose to die. It, Was for our sins, That he chose to be rejected. He chose to be, The perfect sacrifice, The ultimate substitute for us.

As I said, We read in Isaiah 53, He was pierced for our transgressions, Crushed for our iniquities. The punishment that brought us peace, Was on him, And by his wounds we are healed.

We all like sheep have gone astray, Each of us has turned to our own way, And the Lord has laid on him, The iniquity of us all. Jesus died for our sins, Our sins led him there, There to pay for our sin.

We didn't crucify him, It was his gift to us. But, Do we abandon him, Like so many other people did? Do you cower, From letting people see, That you love Jesus?

Are you ashamed, Of your connection with him? Or, Do you say, When your friends, Your relatives, Your work colleagues, Anyone, Who asks you, What you did on the weekend, Do you just blurt out, I'm a Christian, Because I'm blown away, That Christ died for me.

[12 : 35] And so should you be. Did you know he didn't, I have to die, He chose to die. That not because I'm amazing, I'm broken, I'm messed up, But because he loved me, He died to fix me.

Doesn't even make sense, Does it selfless love? That means, I can die when I, I can go to heaven when I die. I can have eternal life. Do you believe that? Have you ever said that?

How many times this week, Have you dodged, Having to get around, Saying that you're overwhelmed, That the son of God, Died for you, On the cross. I actually caught myself, Doing this the other week.

I was just, I was on the phone to my dad, Walking down, The Royal Mile in Edinburgh, Which is, Goes from the castle, To the parliament. And actually just talking about, This passage to my dad, And talking about, That Jesus died for us on the cross, And trying to understand, How to best explain it.

And just as a passerby, Came past, Walked past me. I mumbled, Because I got to the part, That I needed to say, Jesus died for me. And I mumbled that, Because I was ashamed, That that passerby, Would know I was a Christian.

[13 : 45] I abandoned Jesus, For my reputation, With a passerby. I abandoned Jesus. See, As a church, We should have a focus, Shouldn't we?

Our primary goal, Should be to preach, Christ crucified. Not just be consumed, With entertaining people. Not making sure, That our message, Is just palatable, For visitors.

Not changing, Talking about God's love, And not also his justice. Not changing our, Theology so that it says, The Bible is just, A book of good morals, That gives hope, And wisdom for daily life.

It does. But the Christian's life, The Christian's belief, Their morals, Their hope, Everything, All pinnacles, On this one moment, When Jesus Christ, Was crucified.

So my second point, Is that Jesus Christ, Was abandoned, To death. Have you spotted, How Mark, Describes this event? Look at verse 24, And they crucified him.

[14 : 48] The whole, The event that the whole, Old Testament, Looks forward to. The act of sacrifice, That we continually, Look back to. A moment that was, Prophesied about.

An incident, That has become, The motif of Christianity. The purpose, Of the incarnation. Jesus, The son of God, Becoming human, Was for this death. And Mark only says, And they crucified him.

Is that it? Is that all we get? We get detail, Of his trial, With Pilate. He talks about, Jesus' torture, And the mocking, By the soldiers.

He even tells us, Who carried his cross, To Golgotha. And they crucified him. You see, I think at the moment, We love build up, Don't we? And once we've, Had build up, We really want, Explosions of detail.

We've become like, The information generation, With 3D TV, Wikipedia, Google,
Everything. But, There's no description, Of the nails.

[15 : 51] There's, No descriptions, Of the seething pain. None of the description, That we're
wondering about. But just that, They crucified him. His death, And his blood, Paid it all.

All the sins, For everyone in the world. End of. So, Jesus Christ, Is about to make, The
greatest sacrifice, The world's ever seen.

The most phenomenal, Act of love, That should have thrown, Everyone into awe and
worship. And, He's on the cross, Abandoned, And rejected by the world.

Hanging between, Two robbers, Being mocked, By people passing by. Not far from death.
And could it get any worse? Look at verse 34.

My God, My God, Why have you forsaken me? Did you hear that? The only son of God,
Cries, My God, My God, Why have you forsaken me?

[16 : 52] So, Point three, Jesus is abandoned by God. Hang on, We've got to figure this out,
Because, This sounds serious. God abandoned, Jesus on the cross.

Before I go any further, Can I be clear, That this isn't a breaking, Of the Godhead. Jesus
didn't become not God, In this moment. He was still fully God, And fully man.

If it wasn't in the Bible, You'd think I was talking, A load of rubbish. So let's have, Let's
figure out, What's going on here. See, Jesus went to the cross, To be punished, In our
place.

Jesus came to earth, To save us, Didn't he? But what do we need saving from? Well,
From all the sins, All, The selfish acts, Of loving ourselves, And just ignoring God.

Our continual greed, Our jealousy, And coveting, Of what others have. The many things,
That we do, That are morally wrong, But we just don't care, Because they give us
pleasure. So many decisions, That we make, Where we just go, I'm doing what I want to
do today.

[17 : 56] I don't care what God says. You know, The ten commandments, Are there to show us,
What we've done wrong. And actually just to teach us, How to please God. It says in
Exodus 20, And God spoke all these words, You shall have no other gods, Before me.

You shall not make for yourself, An idol in the form of anything. You shall not misuse, The
name of the Lord your God. Remember the Sabbath day, By keeping it holy. Honor your
father and mother.

You shall not murder. Jesus later explained, That that's not just murder. That's also hating
somebody, In your heart. You shall not commit adultery. Again, Jesus expanded that, And
showed that it was actually, Meaning about the heart condition, Of lusting after somebody.

You shall not steal. You shall not give false testimony, Against your neighbour. And you
shall not cover, Anything that belongs to your neighbour. And the greatest commandment,
As defined by Jesus himself, Love the Lord your God, With all your heart, With all your
soul, And with all your strength.

Now, Who's guilty? I am. Who's thought, That they know better than these rules? The
words of God.

[19 : 04] Or that they can rework them, Or bend them. Or skip over some, That we should say don't
matter anymore. Or just get away, With doing what we think is best.

And some, We've all just made mistakes, Haven't we as well? We've just been in a bad
mood one day, And thought forget it. Or just been angry, And let that anger really turn to
hatred.

All of that, Is summed up in the word sin. And what does sin deserve? What does it earn? I was saying to the kids earlier, The wages of sin is death. Well, Can we get rid of it ourselves?

Can we balance it out, By doing good? Well, Going on the flower, No we can't. We can't make up for it, By doing good. None of us can have it, Hide our sin. It has to be washed out, Doesn't it?

It stained us. See, Can it just be forgotten about? No. We are marred, By our sin. So if Jesus wants to save us, If God loves us so much, That he wants to forgive us, For our sin, And make us perfect again, What does he need to do?

[20 : 16] If he wants to punish us, Punish our sin, Without punishing us, He, He, Jesus had to take the punishment, On himself. He had, To take our sins, Not just mine, But all of ours.

The sins of everyone in the world, Who believes in Jesus. All of that, On himself. Can you, Begin to imagine the weight, Of that punishment? See, This is happening to Jesus.

This is the son of God, Who's existed for eternity, And is completely perfect. You know, He's never sinned, Not in eternity, Before or after, Being on this earth.

And while he was a child, He's completely perfect. That's what God is. Perfect. But God's, Jesus' mission was to save us. When John the Baptist, First saw him, He says in John 1, 29, He says, Look, The Lamb of God, Who takes away the sin of the world.

It's explained to us again, In 2 Corinthians, It says, God, Who made him, Who had no sin, To be sin for us, So that in him, We might become the righteousness of God.

[21 : 28] You see what just happened there? In order to forgive us, He had to punish Jesus, And pour unto him, The sin of the world. He made him, Who had no sin, To actually be sin.

Jesus, Who had been perfect for eternity, Now carried millions and billions of sins. And God cannot stand sin. You know, When Adam and Eve first sinned, They were thrown out of the garden.

When Satan sinned, He was cast out of heaven, And he'll be punished for eternity. And Jesus just took the sin of the world, On himself. God had to turn his face away.

How could he bear to see Jesus, Just then? And so, God poured on Jesus, All the wrath, And punishment that we deserved.

See, I've been, I've been hurt, When an ex-girlfriend's dumped me before. I've been pretty offended, When friends have disowned me. And I was kind of shocked, When I was made redundant.

[22 : 31] But I've no idea, What it feels like, For Jesus to be abandoned by God. For eternity, They've been in perfect unity. With a perfect relationship, And constant communion.

For eternity. Can you imagine, That being broken, Just for a second. The pain that would cause. See, I remember parents have, Do two, Have two reactions, When you're bad.

The first one's punishment. You know, Maybe a bit of a telling off. For me, A smack bum. Or maybe some kind of future consequence. A grounding or something.

Potentially a bit of anger. I could deal with that. But if I was really bad, It wasn't anger. It was disappointment. And, That just hurt.

Just be angry with me. Don't be disappointed. Now, God wasn't disappointed with Jesus. He actually glorified Jesus, To sit at his right hand, Because of this moment.

[23 : 35] Because of this sacrifice. But, God didn't just punish Jesus for our sins. But because, Of the sin that Jesus was carrying for us, God had to abandon him.

See, This isn't just, A glorious moment of salvation. This is quite a terrifying moment. Jesus is the light of the world. He called himself that, In John 8.

And when he's covered with, All of our sin. All of our evil. The land went dark. See, At midday. That's not maybe so amazing in Britain.

But, In Jerusalem, That's not natural. The land went dark for three hours. Covering the judgment, That was being poured out on Jesus. Hiding the world, From seeing Jesus, Writhing with the torment, Of his body and soul.

Too long for a solo eclipse. The time that the land, Went dark for three hours, Was the time that Jesus, The son of God, The light of the world, Took all of our sin, And bore our punishment, And was abandoned, And was abandoned by God.

[24 : 49] We sing, I'm forgiven, Because you were forsaken. I'm accepted, You were condemned. How deep, The father's love for us. See, It would be a shame, To leave it there.

And, Verse 34, 37, Sorry, Says, With a loud cry, Jesus breathed his last. We're told by the other gospels, That this is, It is finished.

It's over, It's completed. Our sin was paid for. The task that Jesus, Had come from heaven to do, Was actually done now. The curtain in the temple, That blocked, Everyone, But the high priest, From being in the presence of God, Was torn in two, From top to bottom.

And now, Anyone who believes, Can be forgiven, And have eternal life, In the presence of God. Worshipping God, The father, The son, And the holy spirit.

You see, Jesus, Jesus, In his death on the cross, Was abandoned by men. And he was abandoned by God. And yet, Now he's glorified. Now he's in the place of highest honour.

[26 : 01] You know, I'm sure you know this, This progression so well. From Philippians 2. Jesus, Who being in very nature God, Did not consider equality with God, Something to be grasped, But made himself nothing, Taking the very nature of a servant, Being made in human likeness, And being found in appearance as a man, He humbled himself, And became obedient to death, Even death on a cross.

Therefore God exalted him, To the highest place, And gave him the name, That is above every name, That at the name of Jesus, Every knee should bow, In heaven, And on earth, And under the earth, And every tongue confess, That Jesus Christ is Lord, To the glory of God the Father.

When he was on earth, He was rejected, But now he'll be forever glorified, Not only by those who believe, One day, But everyone in the world, Will bow down before him, But, Not everyone will be forgiven, Only those, Who believe now, Will be forgiven.

Those who stop living for themselves, Now, And, Start loving God, Start walking in his ways, And trusting Jesus, For our forgiveness. See, I don't really know many of you yet, But I do know, That because of what we've all done in our lives, Jesus was abandoned by men, Even to death on the cross.

And the cost of paying for our sin, Meant he was abandoned by God. That is what he's done for us, And that's what's made forgiveness possible. Eternal life, Is now possible.

[27 : 42] Instead of death, After death, We can now have life, After death. That's open to everybody. Everyone in here today, Everyone out there, Today.

Whoever believes in Jesus, Shall not perish, Shall not die, But have eternal life. I think that's what we meet together for, Isn't it?

It's what we meet to praise God for. That Jesus Christ was crucified for us. So let's pray. Dear Lord, We thank you for what you actually did on the cross.

That's just, It's incredible to see that, It was your choice, To go to the cross, And be abandoned, By the Jews, By the disciples, By everybody, And take the punishment that we deserved.

Jesus, God is incredible that, You, Took on so much of our sin, That God the Father, Had to turn his face away from Jesus, As he was on the cross.

[28 : 48] Lord, We thank you for, What you've done there. And we thank you that it is, It is finished now. We don't need to try and make up, With, For all our bad things, With, With different good things, That we can do in our lives.

We know that's impossible. And Lord, Actually, Through what you did there, On the cross, By dying for us, That's meant that we can be forgiven. Lord, I pray that we would, Trust in that, That we would, Ask you for your forgiveness.

And Lord, We pray that we'd be able to, Celebrate that now today. Lord, Give us, Just a heart of, Absolute celebration, When we realise what you've done for us. That yes, It's a terrifying moment, But it's also a glorious moment, That's meant we can have, Life after death now.

We can have eternal life with you. Lord, I pray that the rest of today, We would, Remember this. That we would, Be joyful together. And praise in you, For what you have done.

In Jesus name. Amen. May the Lord bless you, And keep you. May the Lord, Make his face shine upon you, And be gracious to you.

[30 : 00] The Lord, Turn his face towards you, And give you peace. Amen. Amen.