

Forsaken (The Epic of the Cross Series – Part IV)

3/22/2009

1. Based on the comments made by Pastor Steve early in the sermon, how is our modern understanding of the word “scandal” different from the use of the word in the time of Jesus?
2. Throughout the Bible a scandal is not a good thing, yet the cross is described as being a scandal, something that causes them to draw back. Does that make any sense?
3. Some of those who were with Jesus as He approached Jerusalem for the last time had difficulty dealing with the reality of what He told them. Read Matt 16:21-23 and consider why the conversation between Jesus and Peter went the way it did.
4. We again see Peter trying to put it all together in Matt. 26:31-33. What is his problem this time?
5. Jesus talks in parables and usually talks about himself indirectly. However, in John 6:52-61, he paints a pretty concrete picture that would shock nonbelievers. What is He trying to say?
6. Turn now to the main scripture for this sermon (Mark 15:25-32). Is there any doubt that Jesus could have come down off that cross if He had wanted to? Wouldn't that have made a bigger impression on the people at that time, causing huge numbers to believe?
7. Finish the passage for today (Mark 15:33-39). Is it possible that there was something more frightful than the pain and suffering of death on the cross that bothered Jesus?

8. Pastor Steve described an altar as a place in our lives where God takes something from us and Jesus doesn't save us. Can you give examples of where that has occurred, either in the Bible or in your own life?

9. If God's plan is to use our suffering, then should we refrain from praying that God remove our suffering or heal our illnesses? Are our pleas to be delivered from unpleasant situations inappropriate?

10. So what does all this mean for us? How are we to approach our difficult times?