



A Guide for Spiritual Formation

Text for the Week: Mark 15:25-39

Message for the Week: "Gertrude Stein and the Gospel"

Sunday, February 26

Opening:

What is one low (a bad thing) and one high (a good thing) that happened to you this past week? Write them down and take turns sharing them with the others in your group.

Where have you seen the work of the Holy Spirit in your life this past week?

What is the most unexpected place you have encountered a friend?

Preparation:

Spend 1-2 minutes in silence with God to center and prepare yourself for your time with God today.

Read:

Read / Have two people in your group read [Mark 15:25-39](#) out loud.

(Clicking this link will bring you to multiple translations.)

As you read and/or listen to the text being read, circle, take note of, highlight, or underline what words, phrases, or ideas grabbed your attention and heart in these verses?

Write them down below and/or share them with those who are with you.

Respond / Reflect:

Where are you looking for God? Where has God found you?

Where is the most unexpected place where you have encountered God's presence, or felt you were on holy ground?

If someone were looking for God, where would you point them?

Compare and contrast the Holy of Holies and the cross on Calvary. What does each of these places connote and convey about who God is?

Try It:

Read Mark 15:25-39 in 5 different translations. What is God saying to you about who God is in and through these verses? Where are you meeting God in this story?

Prayer:

Spend time in prayer with/for the other people who are with you. Pray this prayer together:

Holy God, open our eyes this day to see in the cross the revelation of your love; through Jesus the crucified, to whom with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, be honor and praise, now and forever. Amen

Missional/Spiritual Practice for February: Holy Curiosity for the Other

During the month of February, you are invited and encouraged to engage in the missional practice of [Holy Curiosity for the Other](#). By engaging in this practice, we seek to create safe and inviting space in meaningful conversation with others. This involves us risking new and deeper relationships with the people we meet in the context of their lives, developing a holy curiosity that transcends your own needs for affirmation or expression and calls you into full attentiveness and discovery of another person's life and story. When we provide safe, inviting, and prayerful space for another to share, transformative encounters with God and one another occur over time.

Mark 15:25-39

New International Version

²⁵ It was nine in the morning when they crucified him. ²⁶ The written notice of the charge against him read: the king of the Jews.

²⁷ They crucified two rebels with him, one on his right and one on his left. ^{[28] [a]} ²⁹ Those who passed by hurled insults at him, shaking their heads and saying, "So! You who are going to destroy the temple and build it in three days, ³⁰ come down from the cross and save yourself!" ³¹ 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!" ³² Let this Messiah, this king of Israel, come down now from the cross, that we may see and believe." Those crucified with him also heaped insults on him.

³³ At noon, darkness came over the whole land until three in the afternoon. ³⁴ And at three in the afternoon Jesus cried out in a loud voice, "Eloi, Eloi, lema sabachthani?" (which means "My God, my God, why have you forsaken me?"). ^[b]

³⁵ When some of those standing near heard this, they said, "Listen, he's calling Elijah."

³⁶ Someone ran, filled a sponge with wine vinegar, put it on a staff, and offered it to Jesus to drink. "Now leave him alone. Let's see if Elijah comes to take him down," he said.

³⁷ With a loud cry, Jesus breathed his last.

³⁸ The curtain of the temple was torn in two from top to bottom. ³⁹ And when the centurion, who stood there in front of Jesus, saw how he died, ^[c] he said, "Surely this man was the Son of God!"

[Read full chapter](#)

Footnotes

- a. [Mark 15:28](#) Some manuscripts include here words similar to Luke 22:37.
- b. [Mark 15:34](#) Psalm 22:1
- c. [Mark 15:39](#) Some manuscripts saw that he died with such a cry

The Message

²⁵⁻³⁰ They nailed him up at nine o'clock in the morning. The charge against him—the king of the Jews—was scrawled across a sign. Along with him, they crucified two criminals, one to his right, the other to his left. People passing along the road jeered, shaking their heads in mock lament: "You bragged that you could tear down the Temple and then rebuild it in three days—so show us your stuff! Save yourself! If you're really God's Son, come down from that cross!"

³¹⁻³² The high priests, along with the religion scholars, were right there mixing it up with the rest of them, having a great time poking fun at him: "He saved others—but he can't save himself! Messiah, is he? King of Israel? Then let him climb down from that cross. We'll *all* become believers then!" Even the men crucified alongside him joined in the mockery.

³³⁻³⁴ At noon the sky became extremely dark. The darkness lasted three hours. At three o'clock, Jesus groaned out of the depths, crying loudly, "Eloi, Eloi, lama sabachthani?" which means, "My God, my God, why have you abandoned me?"

³⁵⁻³⁶ Some of the bystanders who heard him said, "Listen, he's calling for Elijah." Someone ran off, soaked a sponge in sour wine, put it on a stick, and gave it to him to drink, saying, "Let's see if Elijah comes to take him down."

³⁷⁻³⁹ But Jesus, with a loud cry, gave his last breath. At that moment the Temple curtain ripped right down the middle. When the Roman captain standing guard in front of him saw that he had quit breathing, he said, "This has to be the Son of God!"