

# Mark 15 :1 -15

*People pleasing*

## BIBLE STUDY



## INTRODUCTION

### Starter:

Are you a 'people pleaser'? Do you find it hard to go against the popular flow, or do you enjoy being different?

### Pray to start:

As we see Jesus in an increasingly isolated position, thank him once again for what he was willing to go through for us. Ask that God highlights parts of this story that are particularly pertinent for where we are today.

**Note for leaders:** Israel was under Roman domination. They were allowed a great measure of freedom to try cases and pronounce sentences, but they were not allowed to hand down a sentence of death. This right belonged to the Roman governor alone. The Jews had condemned Jesus to death, but they lacked the authority to carry out the sentence, so they took Jesus to Pontius Pilate, the Roman governor.

**So far we have seen Jesus abandoned by his friends. Now we see him abandoned by his enemies. In today's passage, Jesus is rejected by three sets of people: the priests, Pilate, and the people.**

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Let's unpack the passage.....

### Read : Mark 14: 1-15

1. What was the crime that the Jewish council said that Jesus had committed (Mark 14: 61-64)?
2. What did the chief priests believe they would achieve by getting rid of Jesus? *(By killing Jesus they believed they would preserve their religion; but his death effectively brings that religion to its intended end: here in the death of Jesus the purpose of the priestly role and responsibilities is fulfilled).*
  - What ironies do you detect in this passage? Consider what Pilate asks Jesus (v.2), who it is who accuses Jesus (v.3), and who Pilate releases (v.15).
3. Now facing Pilate, why doesn't Jesus answer the false charges against him? Why do you think Pilate is amazed (vv.2-5)?
4. What indications are there that Pilate is sympathetic to Jesus (vv.6-11)?
5. When you combine the Gospel records of Jesus' meeting with Pilate, you discover that Pilate repeatedly stated that he found no fault in Jesus. What then drove him to make the decision that he did? (see v.15a and Matt 27 v 24)
6. Why did Pilate give the people the choice about who to save? Why did the crowd choose Barabbas?

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## GOING DEEPER

We have pictures of three different groups in today's passage.

- **The chief priests** were desperate to cling on to their interpretation of their religious beliefs, and had missed the message of what Jesus was trying to teach.
- **Pilate** felt convinced that Jesus was innocent, yet ultimately sent him to his death, bowing to pressure.
- **The people**, fascinated by Jesus up until now, allowed themselves to be influenced by the priests to vote in favour of one who was more in line with their idea of a Messiah.

**Which character/s do you most identify with? Are there times / have there been times in your life when you could identify with each of the groups? What caused you to feel this way?**



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**PRAY**

Jesus, thank you that you do not abandon us, no matter how we may treat you at times. Help us to learn fresh lessons as we study this passage - that we may have the courage to 'stand away from the crowd' when we need to stand up for our beliefs in you - that we may not get so caught up in familiar religion that we miss the sometimes startling surprise of being your apprentice.

Help us not to be led astray by popular opinion but to use the plumb line of your word and your teaching to keep us pointing north.

**Amen**

