



The Darkness Jesus Endured

When we think about Jesus Christ, we often think about how we benefit from His work. In a sense, there is nothing wrong with this. He came to save sinners (1 Timothy 1:15-17), make perfect forever those for whom He died (Hebrews 10:12, 14), and provide rest for our souls in Himself (Matthew 11:28-30). The number of benefits we receive in and through our relationship with Jesus Christ is endless. But in another sense, this view of Jesus Christ is very small—because it puts the focus on ourselves, instead of Christ. God provides great hope and help when we place Christ at the center of the gospel story, where He belongs.

Have you ever seriously thought about the suffering Jesus went through? Have you ever focused for an extended period of time on the darkness Jesus endured? Once you look at His life a little more closely, you will soon realize just how familiar Jesus is with pain and loss—which is why He is known as *the Man of Sorrows*. While we can never fully understand all that Jesus suffered for us, the study that follows can help you grow in your understanding and appreciation of your Savior as you look more closely at how He endured darkness.

Step 1:

Use the chart below to look up various Scripture passages that allow us to see the kind of darkness Jesus experienced. Read through each passage several times, and then use the space provided in the chart to write down everything you learned from that passage about what and how Jesus suffered. Remember, His suffering was more than physical; He suffered in many other ways as well. Look for these as you read the passages below. (If you need help, you can use the chart on the final page of this growth study.)

Scripture Passage	Ways Jesus Endured Darkness
Isaiah 53 *Although Isaiah was written centuries before Christ's incarnation, Isaiah wrote about Him!	
Matthew 26:30-46	
Matthew 27:35-46	

Mark 3:20-22	
Mark 14:53-72	
Luke 9:57-58	
John 18:15-40	
John 19	

Step 2:

Jesus is both truly God and truly man. One common question teens have about this truth is, “If Jesus is God, then how could He really understand me?” The passages you just read show you that Jesus, though God, had a real human nature. He sweat, wept, bled, was tempted, got hungry, and felt deep sorrow. His experiences of suffering should give you great hope. Jesus, who has existed from eternity past, took on a human body in order to glorify the Father and save sinners like you and me. What this means is that He is not distant from your pain. Rather, out of love, He drew near to you in order to do something about your pain. Because Jesus clothed Himself with weakness, He is able to deal gently with you when you go astray (Hebrews 5:1-10). This great difference between Jesus and us is that He suffered *for* us and he suffered *without sin*. He willingly chose to carry your grief and sorrows (Isaiah 53:4). What a friend you have in Jesus!

Look back at the list you made about the ways Jesus suffered darkness. Do you see any similarities between His experience of suffering and yours? Have you endured similar pain that He experienced—betrayed by a friend, lied about, publicly humiliated, abused? In the space below, write down the ways you can relate to the darkness Jesus endured.

How I Relate to Jesus' Darkness:

--

Step 3:

Finally, use the space below to journal a sincere prayer to God, thanking Him for Jesus Christ who lovingly endured darkness on your behalf. Tell Him of all the ways that you can relate to Him, and ask Him to give you strength to depend on Him in the midst of your darkness so that you can become more like Christ. Be specific in your prayer, and use this prayer often so that you can draw near to God in your sorrow.

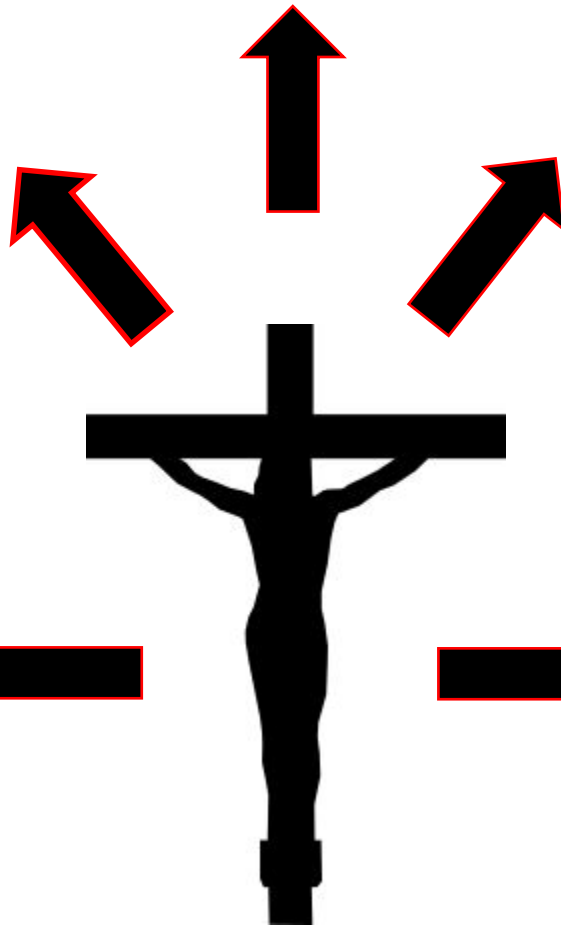
Prayer:

--

He suffered under the
wrath of God to pay the
penalty for our sin.
(Isaiah 53)

He was spit on,
mocked, and tortured.
(Matthew 26:67, Mark
15:16-20, John 19:1-3)

At noon, complete darkness
took over the land for three
hours as He suffered on the
cross. (Matthew 27:45)



Even though animals
had places to sleep at
night, Jesus did not.
(Luke 9:58)

He was despised and
rejected by people,
and He knew grief
well. (Isaiah 54:3-4)

His soul was sorrowful
to the point of death
right before His death.
(Matthew 26:38)

His friends abandoned
Him, and His family
thought He was out of His
mind. (Mark 3:21, 14:50)

He was falsely accused
and sentenced to death
as an innocent man.
(Mark 14:55-56)