

Mark 15:30

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

Save thyself, and come down from the cross.

Analysis

Save thyself, and come down from the cross (σῶσον σεαυτὸν καταβὰς ἀπὸ τοῦ σταυροῦ)—The imperative sōson (σῶσον, 'save!') coupled with katabas (καταβάς, 'coming down') captures the crowd's taunt. This echoes Satan's wilderness temptations (Mark 1:12-13; Matthew 4:1-11): prove Your deity through spectacular demonstration, bypass suffering through self-preservation.

The profound irony: Jesus COULD have descended—twelve legions of angels awaited His command (Matthew 26:53)—but if He saved Himself, He couldn't save humanity. The cross required absolute commitment: salvation demanded substitution, atonement demanded sacrifice. Coming down would have proven power but forfeited redemption. The crowd demanded a sign; Jesus provided salvation. Their challenge unwittingly articulated the heart of atonement: Christ couldn't simultaneously save Himself AND save sinners. He chose us.

Historical Context

Roman crucifixion was designed to maximize public humiliation and deterrence. Victims were displayed on elevated crosses along major roads, fully exposed to crowd scrutiny and mockery. Executioners and crowds routinely taunted the dying—psychological torture amplifying physical agony. The challenge to 'come down' reflected genuine bewilderment: if Jesus performed miracles and claimed divine authority, why couldn't He escape? They couldn't conceive that His remaining was volitional sacrifice, not powerless defeat.

Related Passages

James 2:17 — Faith and works

Hebrews 11:1 — Definition of faith

Study Questions

1. How does Jesus' refusal to 'save Himself' challenge cultural messages about self-preservation and personal empowerment?
2. What does Christ's choice to remain on the cross reveal about the cost and commitment of your redemption?
3. In what circumstances are you tempted to 'come down from your cross'— avoiding suffering God has called you to endure?

Interlinear Text

σῶσον	σεαυτὸν	καὶ	κατάβα	ἀπὸ	τοῦ	σταυροῦ
Save	thyself	and	come down	from	G3588	the cross
G4982	G4572	G2532	G2597	G575		G4716

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