

# Diligently Seeking God (Hebrews 11:6)

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## Scripture of the Week



### Matthew 27:51-53

*"And behold, the veil of the temple was torn in two from top to bottom; and the earth shook and the rocks were split. The tombs were opened, and many bodies of the saints who had fallen asleep were raised; and coming out of the tombs after His resurrection they entered the holy city and appeared to many."*

The day that Jesus was crucified was a day unlike any other day. As Jesus hung on that cross for your sins and mine, some amazing things happened. Verse 45 tells us that darkness covered the land for three hours right in the middle of the daytime. This was in some respects the darkest day in the history of mankind. God's own chosen people had grown so morally corrupt, they had His Only Begotten Son executed as if He were a hardened criminal. Jesus had come to earth as the Light of the world and His own people vainly tried to snuff out that light. Verse 51 says the temple veil was torn into two pieces. This veil was the partition that separated the Holy Place from the Most Holy Place, where the ark of the covenant rested.

The ark represented God's presence and the veil represented the barrier that sin created between God and mankind. When Jesus died for our sins, He tore down the barricade that kept us separated from our Creator. No longer would there be a need for a veil, a high priest, a sacrifice or even a temple. Jesus became all those things for us at His death. He opened the curtain of heaven itself so all of God's faithful children could enter in, when He died that day (Hebrews 6:19-20; 9:24). Verse 52 says that the tombs were opened and many saints arose and walked around. Even at Jesus' death, God gave us a glimpse of the Resurrection. Death couldn't dim the Light of the world and it can't dim our lights either if we belong to Him!

## Let No Man Separate

In Matthew chapter 19 Jesus left Galilee and entered the region opposite Judea on the eastern banks of the Jordan River (verse 1). Large crowds followed Him there and He was healing the infirmities of all who came to Him (verse 2). While He was in this area and engaged in these activities, some Pharisees came to Him with a disingenuous question in order to test Him and try to trap Him in His answer (verse 3). They asked Him if it was lawful for a man to divorce his wife for any reason at all. Jesus pointed out that in the very Scriptures they treasured so greatly, God Himself said that a husband and a wife are joined so tightly together that they are no longer

considered two separate entities by Him, but are seen as "one flesh" in His eyes (verses 5-6). He went on to say in verse six, *"What God has therefore joined together, let no man separate."* While Jesus made this statement in reference to the bonds of marriage, this is a truism and a commandment that must be honored in all instances. Whatever it is that God has joined together, no man has a right to pull apart. For instance, God has joined faith and works inextricably together in His Bible, and yet people the world over try to separate them in the name of the Lord. Most believers have been taught that people are saved by faith alone and that our works have abso-

lutely no bearing on our salvation. And yet we read in James 2:20 that *"faith without works is useless,"* and in verse 24 that *"a man is justified by works and not faith alone."* A workless, worthless faith can save no one (verse 14). God has also joined baptism and salvation together in His word of truth. Jesus said, *"He who has believed and has been baptized shall be saved"* in Mark 16:16, and 1 Peter 3:21 says that *"baptism now saves you."* Just because people don't appreciate the marriage that God created between faith and works and between baptism and salvation, that doesn't give us the right to separate them. We must honor all of God's binding unions.