

Book of Mark

Table of Contents:

Outline

Mark 1

[1:1-11](#)
[1:12-13](#)
[1:14-20](#)
[1:21-34](#)
[1:35-45](#)

Mark 2

[2:1-12](#)
[2:13-17](#)
[2:18 – 22](#)
[2:23 – 3:6](#)

Mark 3

[3:1-12](#)
[3:13-19](#)
[3:20-35](#)

Mark 4

[4:1-20](#)
[4:21-34](#)
[4:35-41](#)

Mark 5

[5:1-20](#)
[5:21-43](#)

Mark 6

[6:1-13](#)
[6:14-29](#)
[6:29](#)
[6:30-44](#)
[6:45-56](#)

Mark 7

[7:1-23](#)
[7:24-37](#)

Mark 8

[8:1-9](#)
[8:10-21](#)
[8:22-30](#)
[8:27-29 \(Christmas 2018\)](#)
[Mark 8:29 & Mark 1:1 \(Christmas Eve 2018\)](#)
[8:31-38](#)

Mark 9

[Mark 9:1-13](#)
[Mark 9:14-29](#)
[Mark 9:30-50](#)

Mark 10

[Mark 10:1-16](#)
[Mark 10:13-31](#)
[Mark 10:32-34](#)
[Mark 10:35-52](#)

[Mark 11](#)

[Mark 11:1-11](#)
[Mark 11:12-19](#)
[Mark 11:20-33](#)

[Mark 12](#)

[Mark 12:1-12](#)
[Mark 12:12-17](#)
[Mark 12:18-27 \(Easter 2019\)](#)
[Mark 12:28-34](#)
[Mark 12:35-44](#)
[Special Study – Trauma Is Not a Life Sentence](#)

[Mark 13](#)

[Mark 13:1-8](#)
[Mark 13:9-27](#)
[Mark 13:28-37](#)
[10 Reasons for the Pre-Tribulation Rapture of the Church](#)

[Mark 14](#)

[Mark 14:1-9](#)
[Mark 14:10-21](#)
[Mark 14:22-25](#)
[Mark 14:26-31](#)
[Mark 14:32-42](#)
[Mark 14:43-52](#)
[Mark 14:53-65](#)
[Mark 14:66-72](#)

[Mark 15](#)

[Mark 15:1-20](#)
[Mark 15:15-20](#)
[Mark 15:21-22](#)
[Mark 15:22-32](#)
[Mark 15:33-39](#)
[Mark 15:40-47](#)

[Mark 16](#)

[Mark 16:1-8](#)
[Mark 16:9-18](#)
[Mark 16:19-20](#)

Other Notes:

[Notes – The 613 Commandments](#)

Outline of the Book of Mark

Mark 1

- John the Baptist Prepares the Way (1:1-8)
- John Baptizes Jesus (1:9-11)
- Satan Tempts Jesus (1:12-13)
- Jesus Begins His Public Ministry (1:14-15)
- Jesus Calls His First Disciples (1:16-20)
- Jesus Cast Out an Unclean Spirit at a Synagogue (1:21-28)
- Jesus Heals Peter's Mother-In (1:29-31)
- Jesus Heals Many Sick and Demon Possessed (1:32-34)
- Jesus Preaches in Galilee (1:35-39)
- Jesus Cleanses a Leper (1:40-45)

Mark 2

- Jesus Forgives and Heals a Paralytic (2:1-12)
- Jesus Calls Matthew (2:13-14)
- Jesus Eats with Sinners (2:15-17)
- Jesus is Challenged About Fasting (2:18-22)
- Jesus is the Lord of the Sabbath (2:23-28)

Mark 3

- Jesus Heals the Man with a Withered Hand on the Sabbath (3:1-6)
- A Great Multitude Follow Jesus (3:7-12)
- Jesus Appoints the Twelve Disciples (3:13-19)
- A House Divided Cannot Stand (3:20-27)
- The Unpardonable Sin (3:28-30)
- Jesus' Mother and Brothers Come for Him (3:31-35)

Mark 4

- The Parable of the Sower and the Seed (4:1-9)
- The Purpose of Parables (4:10-12)
- The Parable of the Sower Explained (4:13-20)
- A Light is Not Put Under a Basket (4:21-25)
- The Parable of the Growing Seed (4:26-29)
- The Parable of the Mustard Seed (4:30-32)
- Jesus Speaks in Parables (4:33-34)
- The Wind and the Waves Obey Jesus (4:35-41)

Mark 5

- A Demon-Possessed Man in Gadarenes is Healed (5:1-20)
- A Girl Restored to Life and a Woman Ill for Twelves Years Healed (5:21-43)

Mark 6

- A Prophet is Not Honored in His Hometown (6:1-6)
- Jesus Sends Out the Twelve (6:7-13)
- John the Baptist is Beheaded (6:14-29)
- Jesus Feeds the Five Thousand (6:30-44)
- Jesus Walks on Water (6:45-52)
- Many Touch Jesus and Are Made Well (6:53-56)

Mark 7

- Defilement Comes from Within (7:1-23)
- A Gentile Woman Asks for Bread Crumbs (7:24-30)
- Jesus Heals a Deaf Mute (7:31-37)

Mark 8

- The Feeding of the Four Thousand (8:1-19)
- The Pharisees Seek a Sign (8:10-12)

- Beware of the Leaven of the Pharisees and Herod (8:13-21)
- A Blind Man Healed at Bethsaida (8:22-26)
- Peter Confesses Jesus as the Christ (8:27-30)
- Jesus Predicts His Death and Resurrection (8:31-33)
- Take Up the Cross and Follow Me (8:34-38)

Mark 9

- Jesus Transfigured on the Mount (9:1-13)
- A Boy is Healed – But Only Through Much Prayer and Fasting (9:14-29)
- Jesus Again Predicts His Death and Resurrection (9:30-32)
- Jesus Tells Who is the Greatest (9:33-37)
- Jesus Forbids Sects (9:38-41)
- Jesus Warns of Sin (Hand, Eye, Foot) – (9:42-48)
- Tasteless Salt is Worthless (9:49-50)

Mark 10

- Jesus Teaches on Marriage and Divorce (10:1-12)
- Jesus Says Let the Children Come Unto Me (10:13-16)
- Jesus Counsels the Rich Young Ruler (10:17-22)
- Difficulties of Riches (10:23-27)
- Eternal Reward (10:28-31)
- Jesus for Third Time Predicts His Death and Resurrection (10:32-34)
- Greatness is Serving (10:35-45)
- Jesus Heals Blind Bartimaeus (10:46-52)

Mark 11

- The Triumphal Entry (11:1:11)
- The Fig Tree Withered (11:12-14)
- Jesus Cleanses the Temple (11:15-19)
- The Lesson of the Withered Fig Tree (11:20-24)
- Forgiveness and Prayer (11:25-26)
- The Religious Leaders Question Jesus' Authority (11:27-33)

Mark 12

- The Parable of the Wicked Vinedressers (The Stone Builders Rejected) – (12:1-12)
- Is It Lawful to Pay Taxes to Caesar (12:13-17)
- The Sadducees Ask About the Resurrection (12:18-27)
- The Scribes Ask Which is the Greatest Commandment (12:28-34)
- Jesus Says the Christ is the Son of David (12:35-37)
- Beware of the Scribes (12:38-40)
- The Widow's Two Mites (12:41-44)

Mark 13

- Jesus Predicts the Destruction of the Temple (13:1-2)
- Jesus Tells of the Signs of the Last Days (13:3-13)
- Jesus Tells of the Great Tribulation (13:14-23)
- The Second Coming of Christ (13:24-27)
- The Parable of the Fig Tree (13:28-31)
- No One Knows the Day or Hour (13:32-37)

Mark 14

- The Religious Leaders Plot to Kill Jesus (14:1-2)
- A Woman Anoints Jesus' Head with Oil (14:3-9)
- Judas Agrees to Betray Jesus (13:10-11)
- Jesus Celebrates the Passover with His Disciples (14:12-21)
- Jesus Institutes the Lord's Supper (14:22-26)
- Jesus Foretells of Peter's Denial (14:27-31)

- Jesus Prays in the Garden of Gethsemane (14:32-42)
- Jesus Betrayed and Arrested in the Garden (14:43-50)
- A Young Man Flees naked (14:51-52)
- Jesus' Mock Trial Before the Sanhedrin (14:53-65)
- Peter Denies Jesus (14:66-72)

Mark 15

- Jesus Taken before Pilate (15:1-5)
- The Multitude Takes Barabbas Over Jesus (15:6-15)
- The Soldiers Mock and Beat Jesus (15:16-20)
- God Hangs on the Cross (15:21-32)
- Jesus Dies on the Cross (15:33-41)
- Jesus Buried in Joseph's Tomb (15:42-47)

Mark 16

- Jesus Rises from the Dead (16:1-8)
- Mary Magdalene Sees the Risen Lord (16:9-11)
- Jesus Appears to Two Disciples (16:12-13)
- The Great Commission (16:14-18)
- Jesus Ascends to the Right Hand of the Father (16:19-20)

Mark 1

Mark 1:1-11

The Old Testament Ended With / Then 400 Years of Silence

The Old Testament ended with the following verse, and then there was 400 years of silence of God to His people:

Malachi 4:4-6 (NKJV) ⁴ "Remember the Law of Moses, My servant, Which I commanded him in Horeb for all Israel, With the statutes and judgments. ⁵ Behold, I will send you Elijah the prophet Before the coming of the great and dreadful day of the LORD. ⁶ And he will turn The hearts of the fathers to the children, And the hearts of the children to their fathers, Lest I come and strike the earth with a curse."

Today's Passage

Mark 1:1-11 (NKJV) ¹ The beginning of the gospel of Jesus Christ, the Son of God. ² As it is written in the Prophets: "Behold, I send My messenger before Your face, *Who will prepare Your way before You.*" ³ "The voice of one crying in the wilderness: 'Prepare the way of the LORD; *Make His paths straight.*'" ⁴ John came baptizing in the wilderness and preaching a baptism of repentance for the remission of sins. ⁵ Then all the land of Judea, and those from Jerusalem, went out to him and were all baptized by him in the Jordan River, confessing their sins. ⁶ Now John was clothed with camel's hair and with a leather belt around his waist, and he ate locusts and wild honey. ⁷ And he preached, saying, "There comes One after me who is mightier than I, whose sandal strap I am not worthy to stoop down and loose." ⁸ I indeed baptized you with water, but He will baptize you with the Holy Spirit." ⁹ It came to pass in those days *that* Jesus came from Nazareth of Galilee, and was baptized by John in the Jordan. ¹⁰ And immediately, coming up from the water, He saw the heavens parting and the Spirit descending upon Him like a dove. ¹¹ Then a voice came from heaven, "You are My beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased."

Today 16 Chapters of Good News

Today we start 16 chapters of the only good news on this planet. Take away Jesus and there is no good news.

We Sing Nothing But the Blood

We sing the song, "Nothing but the Blood". Its lyrics go, "what can wash away my sin?, Nothing but the blood of Jesus, What can make me whole again? Nothing but the blood of Jesus, Oh precious is the flow, That makes me white as snow, No other fount I know, Nothing but the blood of Jesus". Now, imagine if He hadn't come to be the Lamb of God? That song would still be true, it just would not be available. And imagine the hopelessness in our lives. What can wash away my sin (my sin that is wretched before the Holy God, separates me from the Holy God, and condemns me to hell), nothing but the blood of Jesus, the Son of God. Imagine that knowledge, that there was a cure, but it was not given, not provided, and we could know there was a cure, but we could not touch, apply, or be cleansed by the cure. Oh how hopeless life would be to know and continue to live, but not to have. But oh what a life..... to know, and to have, because verse 1 of the Gospel of Mark, The beginning of the gospel (good news) of Jesus Christ, the Son of God.

Mark 1:1 (NKJV) ¹ *The beginning of the gospel of Jesus Christ, the Son of God.*

400 years of Silence

For 400 years the Nation of Israel sat in silence. God had not sent them a prophet to speak to them since Malachi, and for 400 years, the people sat in silence. Then with a thunder, a man comes on the scene, John the Baptist and cries out to the people, prepare ye the way of the Lord..... The King is Coming! And the King is none other than God's Son, and God Himself.

Mark 1:2-3 (NKJV) ² *As it is written in the Prophets: "Behold, I send My messenger before Your face, Who will prepare Your way before You."* ³ *"The voice of one crying in the wilderness: 'Prepare the way of the LORD; Make His paths straight.'*"

Malachi 3:1 (NKJV) ¹ "Behold, I send My messenger, And he will prepare the way before Me. And the Lord, whom you seek, Will suddenly come to His temple, Even the Messenger of the covenant, In whom you delight. Behold, He is coming," Says the LORD of hosts.

Isaiah 40:3-6 (NKJV) ³ The voice of one crying in the wilderness: "Prepare the way of the LORD; Make straight in the desert A highway for our God. ⁴ Every valley shall be exalted And every mountain and hill brought low; The crooked places shall be made straight And the rough places smooth; ⁵ The glory of the LORD shall be revealed, And all flesh shall see it together; For the mouth of the LORD has spoken." ⁶ The voice said, "Cry out!" And he said, "What shall I cry?" "All flesh is grass, And all its loveliness is like the flower of the field.

Today 16 Chapters of Good News

Today we start 16 chapters of the only good news on this planet. Take away Jesus and there is no good news.

Imagine Receiving this Letter / Me Personally – 27 Years of Emptiness – I Want Every Detail

400 years of silence. Imagine receiving this letter for the first time, especially after 400 years of silence and it starts with Jesus Christ, the Son of God. Imagine receiving this and I hope that we don't have to imagine far that we can let this first verse sink in and say, we have been given a letter from God about his Son. After 400 years of silence, I want to know every word. For me personally after 27 years of vanity and emptiness, I wanted to know every word, every detail, of a God who would die for me, that not just could wash away my sin by His very own blood, but did, and counted it joy to do so, and considers me His reward for His labor; oh Lord please tell me, please make known to me, every word, every word, every word.

Hebrews 12:2 (NKJV) ² looking unto Jesus, the author and finisher of our faith, who for the joy that was set before Him endured the cross, despising the shame, and has sat down at the right hand of the throne of God.

I Pray Take Us on Great Adventure

Lord, I pray you'd give us fresh manna in our study through Jesus Christ, the Son of God. We are studying and looking in to the Son of God. Surely there is depths that we've never traded in mountains and heights. We've never scaled to be for breadth and width of greatness that we never knew existed and I pray that God shows us, takes us on a great adventure, takes us to the depths of the heart of the Son of God and his father, God who loves us deeply.

Prayer – Boldly Ask Your God

The Word of God is Living and Powerful, and is ready, and will do a mighty work in our lives.

Hebrews 4:12 (NKJV) ¹² For the word of God is living and powerful, and sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing even to the division of soul and spirit, and of joints and marrow, and is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart.

In Every Study

- Who Is God? (How Great is He?)
- What Does He Think of Me? (How Wonderful Are His Thoughts Towards Me?)
- What Does He Want Me to Do?
- What Can I Boldly Request of Him?
- What Do I Need to Be on Guard of When I Leave Here Today?

Boldly Come to Throne of Grace

Boldly come to the throne of grace, ask God to reveal Himself in a mighty way to you, and to do I might work in you, and through you.

**Hebrews 4:16 (NKJV) ¹⁶ Let us therefore come boldly to the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy and find grace to help in time of need.*

John the Baptist Prepares the Way (1:1-8) – (Matt. 3:1–11; Luke 3:3–16; John 1:19–34)

Mark 1:1 The beginning of the gospel of Jesus Christ, the Son of God.

Gospel Means Good News / Saved & Spirit Empowers to Overcome

Verse one - is the Gospel (euangelion – means “good news”) and the good news is that the law of God, that we broke Jesus fulfilled trading places with us, taking our sin and then the law that we couldn't keep, the spirit of God himself will take up residence and give us the ability to keep the law and to live a life set apart for God. We will trade in these old grave clothes to put on the robes of righteousness, to be made clean.

Romans 3:23 (NKJV) ²³ for all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God,

Romans 6:23 (NKJV) ²³ For the wages of sin is death, but the gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord.

2 Corinthians 5:21 (NKJV) ²¹ For He made Him who knew no sin to be sin for us, that we might become the righteousness of God in Him.

Isaiah 61:10 (NKJV) ¹⁰ I will greatly rejoice in the LORD, My soul shall be joyful in my God; For He has clothed me with the garments of salvation, He has covered me with the robe of righteousness, As a bridegroom decks himself with ornaments, And as a bride adorns herself with her jewels.

1 Corinthians 3:16 (NKJV) ¹⁶ Do you not know that you are the temple of God and that the Spirit of God dwells in you?

You can have that today. You can be made today, new life through Christ Jesus.

He is the Son of God (Isaiah 9)

The good news, verse one, He's the Son of God, fulfillment of Isaiah 9:6, but Isaiah goes way beyond just the Son of God and as great as that, but he is the father also, the trinity. God steps into mankind's history to show us the father, to show us the way he becomes touchable. We could actually feel, can handle God as Peter would tell us, and John would tell us, and not only that, but God would touch man. That is glorious good news (gospel).

Isaiah 9:6–7 (NKJV) ⁶ For unto us a Child is born, Unto us a Son is given; And the government will be upon His shoulder. And His name will be called Wonderful, Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace. ⁷ Of the increase of His government and peace There will be no end, Upon the throne of David and over His kingdom, To order it and establish it with judgment and justice From that time forward, even forever. The zeal of the LORD of hosts will perform this.

1 John 1:1–4 (NKJV) ¹ That which was from the beginning, which we have heard, which we have seen with our eyes, which we have looked upon, and our hands have handled, concerning the Word of life—² the life was manifested, and we have seen, and bear witness, and declare to you that eternal life which was with the Father and was manifested to us—³ that which we have seen and heard we declare to you, that you also may have fellowship with us; and truly our fellowship is with the Father and with His Son Jesus Christ. ⁴ And these things we write to you that your joy may be full.

No Genealogy

If you notice, there is not genealogy in the Gospel of Mark. There's no genealogy given here because Jesus represented in Mark as a slave. God became a slave for you.

- Matthew: Jesus is the King, the Lion of Judah - speaks of authority, and being the Messiah
- Mark: Jesus the servant.
- Luke: Jesus is the Son of man - speaks of his humanity.
- John: Jesus is the Son of God - speaks of His deity

Lord Jesus Christ

He is the Lord Jesus Christ. Lord is his title, Jesus is His name, and Christ is his mission and Christ means Messiah.

Jesus Christ – Name Above All Names

Notice the name given, “Jesus Christ”. We need to live in the light of a title of a name. He is not the big man upstairs. He is the Lord Jesus Christ. He is God and he deserves and is worthy of praise and honor and respect.

Philippians 2:9–11 (NKJV) ⁹ Therefore God also has highly exalted Him and given Him the name which is above every name, ¹⁰ that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of those in heaven, and of those on earth, and of those under the earth, ¹¹ and that every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father.

Written by Mark / Very Careful in his Account

This Gospel was written by Mark, who's Hebrew name was John and hence why we call him John Mark. He was not an apostle (as Luke was not either). He was not an eyewitness either. He was tutored by Peter and so much of what we read then is very much an eyewitness account of what Peter saw in the Ministry of Jesus Christ. Early church fathers make note of how careful Mark was in recording this account we read. He didn't say what did Jesus say, but he said, what did Jesus say exactly! Where were these events, exactly, etc.

Immediately – As a Slave Does the Master's Will

This Gospel of Mark has been likened to a news report, simply reporting a news event, and then moving on to the next news events. This Gospel is very fast paced. We continually see the word immediately and then Jesus immediately is here or going there. Jesus immediately gets up and does this, and that's purposeful. It's a picture of a servant. A servant immediately responds to the call, the master and Jesus, a slave submitting to his father's will, laying down his rights

Mark 1:2 As it is written in the Prophets: “Behold, I send My messenger before Your face, Who will prepare Your way before You.”

Mark 1:3 “The voice of one crying in the wilderness: ‘Prepare the way of the LORD; Make His paths straight.’ ”

Quotes Malachi & Isaiah

Mark quotes only two prophecies in his entire Gospel: this one, from Malachi 3:1; and Isaiah 40:3, which refers, of course, to John the Baptist.

Malachi 3:1 (NKJV) ¹ “Behold, I send My messenger, And he will prepare the way before Me. And the Lord, whom you seek, Will suddenly come to His temple, Even the Messenger of the covenant, In whom you delight. Behold, He is coming,” Says the LORD of hosts.

Isaiah 40:3–6 (NKJV) ³ The voice of one crying in the wilderness: “Prepare the way of the LORD; Make straight in the desert A highway for our God. ⁴ Every valley shall be exalted And every mountain and hill brought low; The crooked places shall be made straight And the rough places smooth; ⁵ The glory of the LORD shall be revealed, And all flesh shall see it together; For the mouth of the LORD has spoken.” ⁶ The voice said, “Cry out!” And he said, “What shall I cry?” “All flesh is grass, And all its loveliness is like the flower of the field.

LORD- TETRAGRAMMATON

Verse three – notice LORD is all capital letters. All capitals is used in the Old Testament when referring to God. This verse is applied to Jesus, so here we have very clearly that Jesus is God! When the scribes would write the Name of God, so holy was He, that they feared mispronouncing His Name, so they removed all the vowels so no one could try to pronounce His Holy Name, and when they came to the Name, they would simply stop in reverence, bow their head, and say “the Name”. So Holy was God to the scribes, that when they would write His Name (LORD), they would bath, get a new pen, and fresh ink, and then write His Name. How Holy is He to You today?

TETRAGRAMMATON* Term referring to the four consonants of one of the primary Hebrew names, for God (from Greek tetra, “four,” and gramma, “a letter of the alphabet”). These letters are the Hebrew equivalents of English Y (or J), H, W, and H. The most widely accepted meaning of the name is “the one who is, that is, the absolute and unchangeable one.” This is the name the Lord revealed to Moses (Ex 3:15; cf. vv 13–14; Jn 8:56–58). According to the Ten Commandments, the Jews were not to take this name in vain (Ex 20:2, 7). The Jews, therefore, regarded the name as so holy that they would not pronounce it but said instead Adonai, “Lord.” Originally the text was written only with consonants, but when the scholars called Masoretes added the vowel points, they inserted the vowels for Adonai as a reminder not to read the sacred name. Non-Hebraists combined the vowels of Adonai with the consonants of JHWH, producing a new form, “Jehovah,” which does not exist in the Hebrew language. The correct pronunciation of the name must have been Yahweh, but most translations render it LORD, using capital letters to distinguish it from other uses of the English word “Lord.”

*Elwell, W. A., & Comfort, P. W. (2001). In Tyndale Bible dictionary (pp. 1248–1249). Wheaton, IL: Tyndale House Publishers.

When King Was Coming – Roads were Made Straight

Verse three - the King's highway, the road into a city was always made straight and clean when the expectation of a king was coming.

Cried with Passion

Verse three, this word for crying. It's an emotion. There's a passion behind it. John the Baptist is saying, the king is coming, prepare you the way of the Lord. The Son of God is coming. Prepare ye the way of the Lord, and I pray that when we speak the name of Jesus, we can't speak it with anything less than passion and power God's Son given for you, given for me. Can we speak it in any other voice except with the voice of passion?

Israel was Wandering – Maybe You Wandering – King Coming to Bring You into His Sheepfold

Prepare the way of the Lord. The king is coming for 400 years. Israel really was just wandering in the wilderness even though they were in the land, they had no aim, they had no purpose. Now the prophet John the Baptist says, prepare the way of the Lord. Your wilderness wandering, you're aimless wondering is coming to an end because the king is coming.

It's interesting that Israel would have kept doing religion, but all the while not knowing that it was aimless and had no purpose in it, and that might be someone here today that you've been in the wilderness wandering. You're tired, it's empty. Maybe you have even been going to temple, Aka going to church or some religious activity, but you know it's still empty and you know it's still void. You can come in and prepare and have rest today through Jesus Christ. The king is coming. Simply prepare the way of the Lord. Let him into your heart.

And there's the beautiful promise that when you come in from the wilderness, you come into the sheep fold and Jesus will be your shepherd. And He will take you to still waters, and He will feed you and heal and nourish you, and he'll give you rest and protection. That's whether you have known him personally or maybe you've wandered in the wilderness, been wayward and prodigal. Jesus came to serve and shepherd, calls the sheep to come into the field, out of the wilderness. He prepares the way and shows the way.

Psalm 23:title-6 (NKJV) A Psalm of David. ¹ The LORD is my shepherd; I shall not want. ² He makes me to lie down in green pastures; He leads me beside the still waters. ³ He restores my soul; He leads me in the paths of righteousness For His name's sake. ⁴ Yea, though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil; For You are with me; Your rod and Your staff, they comfort me. ⁵ You prepare a table before me in the presence of my enemies; You anoint my head with oil; My cup runs over. ⁶ Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me All the days of my life; And I will dwell in the house of the LORD Forever.

400 Years Silence / Where is the Messiah

And just a word on 400 years of silence. They still had the scriptures, they still had the scriptures that pointed to and declared, and even to the day, when Jesus, their Messiah, their savior would ride in to Jerusalem and be declared their king in their savior. And although there were no prophets for 400 years and although there was silence, there was still a word to hear, he who has an ear, let him hear what the scripture says. There was perfect prediction of the Messiah coming and the application for us today is people have been sitting and saying, Oh, they've been saying that Jesus is coming back for 2000 years and still not Jesus. And to which people then fall asleep and fall away begin to carouse, and as the scripture says, they begin to mistreat their fellow believers, lose their purity (as is the purpose of the imminent return of Christ).

Daniel 9:24-25 (NKJV) ²⁴ "Seventy weeks are determined For your people and for your holy city, To finish the transgression, To make an end of sins, To make reconciliation for iniquity, To bring in everlasting righteousness, To seal up vision and prophecy, And to anoint the Most Holy. ²⁵ "Know therefore and understand, That from the going forth of the command To restore and build Jerusalem Until Messiah the Prince, There shall be seven weeks and sixty-two weeks; The street shall be built again, and the wall, Even in troublesome times.

Matthew 24:45-25:1 (NKJV) ⁴⁵ "Who then is a faithful and wise servant, whom his master made ruler over his household, to give them food in due season? ⁴⁶ Blessed is that servant whom his master, when he comes, will find so doing. ⁴⁷ Assuredly, I say to you that he will make him ruler over all his goods. ⁴⁸ But if that evil servant says in his heart, 'My master is delaying his coming,' ⁴⁹ and begins to beat his fellow servants, and to eat and drink with the drunkards, ⁵⁰ the master of that servant will come on a day when he is not looking for him and at an hour that he is not aware of, ⁵¹ and will cut him in two and appoint him his portion with the hypocrites. There shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth. ¹ "Then the kingdom of heaven shall be likened to ten virgins who took their lamps and went out to meet the bridegroom.

1 John 3:1-3 (NKJV) ¹ Behold what manner of love the Father has bestowed on us, that we should be called children of God! Therefore the world does not know us, because it did not know Him. ² Beloved, now we are children of God; and it has not yet been revealed what we shall be, but we know that when He is revealed, we shall be like Him, for we shall see Him as He is. ³ And everyone who has this hope in Him purifies himself, just as He is pure.

Beloved Keep Looking for His Second Coming

May we not be like the people that we will read of. So many of them couldn't recognize the Messiah because they quit looking for the Messiah and may we not be a people who quit looking for his second coming. The first coming was exactly to the day. The second coming is imminent with no man knowing that day or the hour so that we might live in a continual state of readiness, and when you live in that continual state of readiness,

- then you will live focused on heaven.
- You will live knowing that any moment you could see your Lord,
- you will live in purity.
- You will live in unity. You will live in love because you'll constantly be looking for Jesus Christ knowing that he may come at any moment and that is a life of power.

Mark 1:4 John came baptizing in the wilderness and preaching a baptism of repentance for the remission of sins.

Mark 1:5 Then all the land of Judea, and those from Jerusalem, went out to him and were all baptized by him in the Jordan River, confessing their sins.

If Sin No Big Deal – What is the Good News Then

Verse four, if sin is no big deal, then remission of sin is no big deal, and then this good news?. What's the big deal about it?

Jordan River – Snow Cap Mountains

The Jordan River begins at Mount Hermon, the beautiful snowcapped mountain that melts and flows into the Jordan River. I'm immediately reminded of what Isaiah would say, white as snow. Though my sins were as scarlet, they shall be white as snow and the beautiful picture baptism to be made white as snow. The burying of the old man in the raising of the new man washed and cleaned by the blood of the lamb. The precious cleansing snowcapped pure mountain water to refresh us to cleanse us.

Isaiah 1:18 (NKJV) ¹⁸ "Come now, and let us reason together," Says the LORD, "Though your sins are like scarlet, They shall be as white as snow; Though they are red like crimson, They shall be as wool."

Baptism of Repentance – Full Immersion – Full Repentance

Verse four - it's a baptism of repentance. Repentance of sin. Baptism means full immersion, so it's not just some repentance, but a full immersion of turning from our sin.

Confession Means to Agree With / Agree Quickly

Verse five - Confession means to agree with. Is there something you need to confess before the Lord and agree with? Do it quickly. Do it immediately, do it right now, and you'll be immediately forgiveness because it's based on the precious blood of Jesus.

Mark 1:6 Now John was clothed with camel's hair and with a leather belt around his waist, and he ate locusts and wild honey.

You Locust Eaters

This Bible is perfect in every way and we're given here some great insight for those who love to eat locusts. God is given us through the scripture the information we may not know, and that you locust eaters, the best recipe is with honey. So there you have it.

Camel's Hair

John didn't care about the fashions of the world, the comforts of the world, he was singularly focused on one thing, "preparing the way". Camels hair at that time was a poor mans fabric. Locust, that is what was plentiful in the wilderness, and again was a commoners food. What is clear from this description is that John wasn't making profit off his calling. He wasn't distracted by cares of the world, and the comforts of the world, he was singularly focused on one thing, "preparing the way of the Lord". When a minister, pastor, servant, of the Lord loses that one focus, begins to look at other things (respect, credit, promotion, financial), they will lose their reason for the calling, to prepare the way of the Lord.

Mark 1:7 And he preached, saying, "There comes One after me who is mightier than I, whose sandal strap I am not worthy to stoop down and loose.

John Won't Touch the Glory

John won't touch the glory. He won't in any way take any credit for the people coming to him as if it was him and some great anointing or great gifting or talent on his behalf. He won't touch the glory. He just points to the glory and that's what successful ministry does. Point to the glory

Don't Look to the Instrument

And just a word to maybe you're a new believer. It's an easy mistake and honest mistake that you look at the person God's using and miss the fact that they're just an instrument that God is choosing to use. Nothing to do with their being great. Everything to do with God.

John Greatest Prophet – Because Got to Say "Behold the Lamb of God Who Takes Away the Sin of the World"

It's been estimated that John's ministry maybe last 18 months, and yet he's been called the greatest prophet ever, and that's by Jesus himself, and the reason being is that no other Prophet Elijah, Jeremiah, Moses, David, could say this, behold the Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world, and here we have the bless it, opportunity the say Jeremiah, Elijah, Moses, David, the great prophets of the Old Testament could never say, behold the Lamb of

God who takes away the sin of the world, and therefore we have opportunity for greatness. Every time we get the point people to the Lamb of God. John did no miracles, wrote no epistles,
Luke 7:28 (NKJV) ²⁸ For I say to you, among those born of women there is not a greater prophet than John the Baptist; but he who is least in the kingdom of God is greater than he."

John 1:29–31 (NKJV) ²⁹ The next day John saw Jesus coming toward him, and said, "Behold! The Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world! ³⁰ This is He of whom I said, 'After me comes a Man who is preferred before me, for He was before me.' ³¹ I did not know Him; but that He should be revealed to Israel, therefore I came baptizing with water."

Mark 1:8 I indeed baptized you with water, but He will baptize you with the Holy Spirit."

Immersed with God

Verse Eight – Baptism means to immerse, saturate, God will immerse you with God Himself. You can leave here today with the immersion of God.

Christ (God in You)

Christ in you the hope of glory. I am in Christ and Christ is in me. Second Corinthians 5:21, notice we are "in Him".
2 Corinthians 5:21 (NKJV) ²¹ For He made Him who knew no sin to be sin for us, that we might become the righteousness of God in Him.

Colossians 1:27 (NKJV) ²⁷ To them God willed to make known what are the riches of the glory of this mystery among the Gentiles: which is Christ in you, the hope of glory.

John Baptizes Jesus (1:9-11) – (Matt. 3:13–17; Luke 3:21–23)

Mark 1:9 It came to pass in those days that Jesus came from Nazareth of Galilee, and was baptized by John in the Jordan.

Nazareth & Jesus = Common / Approachable and Discoverable

Nazareth was a hick town. Jesus was the most common name among Jewish men. It's the word Joshua, and here Jesus comes from a nowhere place and uses a common name so that he might become relatable to us. Our God does not want to be elusive. He wants to be known.

How Long did John Preach Before Ministry Fulfilled? / Stay Faithful Christian

Verse nine - how long did John Preach and how often did he wonder, when will my preaching see it's fulfillment? We're totally not sure, but he was faithful, and he saw it fulfilled and so too will you simply remained faithful.

Mark 1:10 And immediately, coming up from the water, He saw the heavens parting and the Spirit descending upon Him like a dove.

Mark 1:11 Then a voice came from heaven, "You are My beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased."

Trinity is Present

Here all 3 Persons of the Trinity are clearly delineated. See note on Luke 3:22. The Father's command to hear His Son and the Spirit's vindication and empowerment officially inaugurated Christ's ministry.

This is My Son Well Pleased – Confirms Jesus was Perfect

Jesus's baptism confirms and validates that he was sinless and perfect. He did not come to be baptized for the remission of sin because he was spotless, the perfect lamb of God, and the father confirms it by saying, this is My Son in whom I'm well pleased. My beloved Son, he's faithful, he's obedient. He always does the will of the father.

Christ Identifying with Sinners

Christ was here identifying Himself with sinners. He will ultimately bear their sins; His perfect righteousness will be imputed to them (2 Cor. 5:21). This act of baptism was a necessary part of the righteousness He secured for sinners. This first public event of His ministry is also rich in meaning: 1) it pictured His death and resurrection (cf. Luke 12:50); 2) it therefore prefigured the significance of Christian baptism (see note on v. 6); 3) it marked His first public identification with those whose sins he would bear (Is. 53:11; 1 Pet. 3:18); and 4) it was a public affirmation

of His messiahship by testimony directly from heaven. My beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased. This heavenly pronouncement combines language from Ps. 2:7 and Is. 42:1—prophecies that would have been well known to those with messianic expectations. Cf. 17:5; Mark 1:11; 9:7; Luke 3:22; 9:35.

2 Corinthians 5:21 (NKJV) ²¹ For He made Him who knew no sin to be sin for us, that we might become the righteousness of God in Him.

Our Baptism is Us Identifying with Christ

Our baptism is us identifying with Christ, in the burial of the old man, and raising again unto the new man.

Romans 6:5–11 (NKJV) ⁵ For if we have been united together in the likeness of His death, certainly we also shall be in the likeness of His resurrection, ⁶ knowing this, that our old man was crucified with Him, that the body of sin might be done away with, that we should no longer be slaves of sin. ⁷ For he who has died has been freed from sin. ⁸ Now if we died with Christ, we believe that we shall also live with Him, ⁹ knowing that Christ, having been raised from the dead, dies no more. Death no longer has dominion over Him. ¹⁰ For the death that He died, He died to sin once for all; but the life that He lives, He lives to God. ¹¹ Likewise you also, reckon yourselves to be dead indeed to sin, but alive to God in Christ Jesus our Lord.

All Jesus Did – Connection to the Father (Philippians 2 & Mark 1)

As we've studied before in Philippians chapter 2, everything he did, he did through his connection with his heavenly father. Everything he did it was in response to what God would say to Him to do and empower Him to do. And we'll see, Jesus knew the will of his father because Jesus will demonstrate through his life here on earth a picture for us, that he was connected to the father through prayer. And that is a calling for all of us. It's a sweet, glorious calling and privilege. It's not burdensome, but just to sit at the feet of the father, connect with his heart, and then go forth in his heart with what he would call us to do and that's what will continually be demonstrated of Jesus Christ in our study through this book of Mark.

Philippians 2:5–8 (NKJV) ⁵ Let this mind be in you which was also in Christ Jesus, ⁶ who, being in the form of God, did not consider it robbery to be equal with God, ⁷ but made Himself of no reputation, taking the form of a bondservant, *and* coming in the likeness of men. ⁸ And being found in appearance as a man, He humbled Himself and became obedient to *the point of* death, even the death of the cross.

Mark 1:35 (NKJV) ³⁵ Now in the morning, having risen a long while before daylight, He went out and departed to a solitary place; and there He prayed.

Holy Spirit Comes Upon

Notice that the Holy Spirit comes upon Jesus, not into Jesus. Jesus is God. We wrap our minds around that, but the Holy Spirit comes upon him as he begins his public ministry, just as we saw in Acts, the Spirit came upon the disciples; the Holy Spirit was in them as believers, but before they went out into their public ministry, the Holy Spirit came upon them and then they went and did the works of God in the ministry.

The Holy Spirit that came upon Jesus for his public ministry is the same Holy Spirit that came upon the disciples for their public ministry and is the same Holy Spirit that is available to us for our public ministry.

Mark 1:10 (NKJV) ¹⁰ And immediately, coming up from the water, He saw the heavens parting and the Spirit descending upon Him like a dove.

Acts 1:8 (NKJV) ⁸ But you shall receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you; and you shall be witnesses to Me in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the end of the earth."

When Get Wet – Hug Someone

Back in verse 8 John said that Jesus would baptize us in the Holy Spirit. If I was to be immersed in our baptismal pool, and when I came up out of the water, and you hugged me, what would you get all over you? Yes water, what I had just been immersed in. And so the truth of the baptism of the Holy Spirit, that when the Holy Spirit comes upon us, people come in contact with what we have been immersed in, and that is God Himself. They come in contact with God, not us (the old stinky us).

Conclusion & Communion

Moravian Missionaries

Two young Moravians heard of an island in the West Indies where an atheist British owner had 2000 to 3000 slaves. And the owner had said, "No preacher, no clergyman, will ever stay on this island. If he's shipwrecked we'll keep him in a separate house until he has to leave; but he's never going to talk to any of us about God. I'm through

with all that nonsense." Three thousand slaves from the jungles of Africa brought to an island in the Atlantic and there to live and die without hearing of Christ.

Two young Moravians heard about it. They sold themselves to the British planter and used the money they received from their sale, for he paid no more than he would for any slave, to pay their passage out to his island for he wouldn't even transport them. As the ship left its pier in the river at Hamburg and was going out into the North Sea, carried with the tide, the Moravians had come from Herrnhut to see these two lads off, in their early twenties. Never to return again, for this wasn't a four-year term; they sold themselves into life-time slavery. Simply that as slaves, they could be as Christians where these others were. The families were there weeping, for they knew they would never see them again. And they wondered why they were going and questioned the wisdom of it. As the gap widened and the housings had been cast off and were being curled up there on the pier, and the young boys saw the widening gap, one lad with his arm linked through the arm of his fellow, raised his hand and shouted across the gap the last words that were heard from them, they were these: "**MAY THE LAMB THAT WAS SLAIN, RECEIVE THE REWARD OF HIS SUFFERING!**" This became the call of Moravian missions. And this is the only reason for being, That the Lamb that was slain, may receive the reward of His suffering.

May We Live Wholly Unto Him

Yes a great cry for missions and the need of, but my application for us today is a full consecrated life unto Him. And I pray as we start this new glorious great adventure, we start with communion, that we commit ourselves wholly unto Him, and He may find us His Bride, living wholly unto Him.

MAY THE LAMB THAT WAS SLAIN, RECEIVE THE REWARD OF HIS SUFFERING!

Communion

1 Corinthians 11:23–26 (NKJV) ²³ For I received from the Lord that which I also delivered to you: that the Lord Jesus on the same night in which He was betrayed took bread; ²⁴ and when He had given thanks, He broke it and said, "Take, eat; this is My body which is broken for you; do this in remembrance of Me." ²⁵ In the same manner He also took the cup after supper, saying, "This cup is the new covenant in My blood. This do, as often as you drink it, in remembrance of Me." ²⁶ For as often as you eat this bread and drink this cup, you proclaim the Lord's death till He comes.

Prayer – Boldly Ask Your God

The Word of God is Living and Powerful, and is ready, and will do a mighty work in our lives.

Hebrews 4:12 (NKJV) ¹² For the word of God is living and powerful, and sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing even to the division of soul and spirit, and of joints and marrow, and is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart.

In Every Study

- Who Is God? (How Great is He?)
- What Does He Think of Me? (How Wonderful Are His Thoughts Towards Me?)
- What Does He Want Me to Do?
- What Can I Boldly Request of Him?
- What Do I Need to Be on Guard of When I Leave Here Today?

Boldly Come to Throne of Grace

Boldly come to the throne of grace, ask God to reveal Himself in a mighty way to you, and to do I might work in you, and through you.

**Hebrews 4:16 (NKJV)* ¹⁶ Let us therefore come boldly to the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy and find grace to help in time of need.

End of Study

Mark 1:12-13

Recap / Intro

Today we will cover just two verses for our main study, we will get a running start a few verses prior, but for our study today we will look at verses 12-13; Jesus' wilderness testing. We joke, but seems so true, that we seem to be in a trial, or coming out of a trial, or going into a trial. Well I decided to slow down to just two verses today so we can talk about this, as we can so often wonder why am going through this trial, why now, where's God, when will this ever end, and Lord what are You doing. So an outline for our study, and our remembrance, that in every trial, there is a timing, a revealing, instructing, an audience, and loving. T-R-I-A-L.

Mark 1:12–13 (NKJV) ¹² Immediately the Spirit drove Him into the wilderness. ¹³ And He was there in the wilderness forty days, tempted by Satan, and was with the wild beasts; and the angels ministered to Him.

T-R-I-A-L

- T- Timing
- R – Revealing
- I – Instructing
- A – Audience
- L - Loving

And I pray that as we study this passage we will see God's heart towards us, what He is doing in our lives, what we need to be on guard about, and what we can boldly request of God, even in the midst of a fiery trail.

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**Hebrews 4:16 (NKJV) ¹⁶ Let us therefore come boldly to the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy and find grace to help in time of need.*

But for Context (verses 8-11)

But for context, let's start back in verse 8 and look at Jesus baptism, before he entered into the trial.

John Baptizes Jesus (1:9-11) – (Matt. 3:13–17; Luke 3:21–23)

Mark 1:8 I indeed baptized you with water, but He will baptize you with the Holy Spirit."

Mark 1:9 It came to pass in those days that Jesus came from Nazareth of Galilee, and was baptized by John in the Jordan.

Mark 1:10 And immediately, coming up from the water, He saw the heavens parting and the Spirit descending upon Him like a dove.

Mark 1:11 Then a voice came from heaven, "You are My beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased."

Purpose of Holy Spirit

"Let's keep the plumb line of God's purpose in mind. The Holy Spirit was given to glorify Jesus in our hearts, minds, and actions; in our homes and relationships; in our service, fellowship, and worship in His church.""

The Trinity

Why do I always make the point of the Trinity when we come across the Trinity in the Scriptures? Because of the church, the world, and Satan's misrepresentation of the Trinity, and specifically the misrepresentation of the Spirit. The Holy Spirit is not an "it", or a "force", or "mystical feeling", He is a person. By making Him an (it, force, feeling), we make Him an object rather than a being. We make Him something we try to grab, call down, rather than a person we invite, we walk with, we have a loving and personal relationship with Him. Jesus told us that He will send the Helper (the Holy Spirit), who will come alongside of us, and help us walk the walk.

- Inside - I don't have to fight temptation alone, for the Holy Spirit, fights for me, if I ask Him to. Since He is a person, I simply ask Him, give Him the authorization to do so, as I still have free-will and I can fight it alone in my own strength, or ask God the Spirit to help me fight the fight.
- Outside - And when I share the gospel (Good News), I let Him overflow from me unto that person, and let Him reach their heart with His touch. When I jump in the lake and come out and whoever I hug will get wet with the water I just got immersed in, and so too it is that when I ask the Lord to baptize me with the Spirit, I will be soaking wet in Him, and whoever I hug will get wet with what is dripping and overflowing from me. It won't be me, it will be God Himself.

That is why we make such a big deal about the Trinity every time we see it in the Word, and it is vital in every trial to understand the Holy Spirit, who He is, and what He wants to do for us..... in good times, and the trials.

Satan Tempts Jesus (1:12-13) – (Matt. 4:1-11; Luke 4:1-13)

Mark 1:12 Immediately the Spirit drove Him into the wilderness.

Mark 1:13 And He was there in the wilderness forty days, tempted by Satan, and was with the wild beasts; and the angels ministered to Him.

T- Timing

The Spirit Drove Him / God Allows/Brings the Trials

Verses 12 - Immediately the Spirit drove Him into the wilderness. - Notice the "Spirit" drove Jesus into the wilderness. Drove means to lead, to force out, to draw out with force. We can get into trials and we can lose our way, lose focus of what God is doing in them and desiring to give us in the midst of them and hence we have to continually remember that it's God who has allowed us into this trial just like he allowed Job into his trial, Daniel, Abraham, Peter, and many more.

40 Days / Trials have a Time

Verse 13 - And He was there in the wilderness forty days - Forty—as in the forty days of Jesus in the wilderness—is a number that often shows a time of testing or judgment. In Noah's flood, it rained for 40 days and 40 nights. Israel was in the wilderness 40 years. Moses kept sheep in the wilderness for 40 years. This is Jesus' time of testing. Trials have time and you may say, that is true, I'm in a trial all the time and there's some truth to that. I want to make the point. Trials don't have to be long to be a trial. You can have a trial that you get that are day long and are extremely intense, or some trials we wish were only 40 days, but here I am going into year four.

God Holds You in His Hand / His Hand is on the Stopwatch & the Thermostat

And beloved, you must know this (based on this – the Spirit drove Him into the wilderness), and that God holds you in His hand. And God sets and knows the time of every one of your trials, He holds the stopwatch in His hand, and His hand is upon the thermostat, and He sets and determines the temperature.

John 10:27-30 (NKJV) ²⁷ My sheep hear My voice, and I know them, and they follow Me. ²⁸ And I give them eternal life, and they shall never perish; neither shall anyone snatch them out of My hand. ²⁹ My Father, who has given them to Me, is greater than all; and no one is able to snatch them out of My Father's hand. ³⁰ I and My Father are one."

1 Corinthians 10:13 (NKJV) ¹³ No temptation has overtaken you except such as is common to man; but God is faithful, who will not allow you to be tempted beyond what you are able, but with the temptation will also make the way of escape, that you may be able to bear it.

May I Point Out – Wilderness after Wonderful

Regarding timing. Jesus just had a wonderful moment. Baptized and hearing the voice of his father, say that He is pleased with Him, and then immediately he finds himself in the wilderness. I think many of us can relate to that high wonderful mountain experiences with the Lord thinking this is the way it's always going to be where we finally have arrived into some spiritual state and then we find ourselves in a trial so we're not alone.

Mark 1:11 (NKJV) ¹¹ Then a voice came from heaven, "You are My beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased."

My Post Bible College Trial

I'm reminded of coming out of Bible College ready to start my so called public ministry, and I was immediately drove into the wilderness not realizing that truly at the time until I was well into it, that I see that this was God's timing. You can pass all the courses, but here comes your graduate class. Real life experience. Can you still trust the Lord even in the midst of a trial? God set the timing of that trial, and I can see His wisdom and wonder in so doing. It was 9 months long, it was extremely hot at times, but God's timing was perfect, and full of wisdom, the vessel (me) had knowledge, but needed to be broken before the Master could use it.

Maybe Feel – People Only See 2 Verses

Matthew's account of this is 11 verses, and Luke's account is 13. Mark in Mark fashion of quick news flash, then on to the next story, only gives 2 verses. Just a side note, maybe you are in the midst of a great trial in your life personally, and it is long, and it is tiring, and it is pressing you from sun up to sundown, yet it seems those around you, they give your trial two verses, and move on. I pray you see this here today, that if the Spirit leads you into your wilderness trial, He will also be with you through your whole trial, for it is God's promise to you to never leave you nor forsake you.

Hebrews 13:5-6 (NKJV) ⁵ Let your conduct be without covetousness; be content with such things as you have. For He Himself has said, "I will never leave you nor forsake you."⁶ So we may boldly say: "The LORD is my helper; I will not fear. What can man do to me?"

God Reveals in the Trials

And God has purposes in every trial, and that is He wants to reveal something to us.

R – Revealing

Tempted – Proves Out

Verse 13 - tempted by Satan, and was with the wild beasts – Tempted means to “prove, examine, test for determining quality”. So the trial, proves what is in us, examines and show, and reveals what is in us. The trial proves the quality of our walk.

God Reveals in a Trial

- Reveals Something About Us
 - A Trial of Correction
 - A Trial of Perfection
 - A Trial of Adjustment
- Reveals Something About Him
- Reveals Something About Others

Reveals Something About Us

A Trial of Correction

Sometimes the trial is a trial for correction, we are in sin, rebellion, and God brings us into the trial to show us our sin, to stop us in our tracks to examine, evaluate, what is going on, and to see we are way off track and need to repent and turn back to Him.

Proverbs 3:11-12 (NKJV) ¹¹ My son, do not despise the chastening of the LORD, Nor detest His correction; ¹² For whom the LORD loves He corrects, Just as a father the son in whom he delights.

Hebrews 12:10-11 (NKJV) ¹⁰ For they indeed for a few days chastened us as seemed best to them, but He for our profit, that we may be partakers of His holiness. ¹¹ Now no chastening seems to be joyful for the present, but painful; nevertheless, afterward it yields the peaceable fruit of righteousness to those who have been trained by it.

A Trial of Perfection

There is the trial of perfection where God is allowing, bringing, this trial into your life to perfect you, to complete you, to make you like Jesus.

Philippians 1:6 (NKJV) ⁶ being confident of this very thing, that He who has begun a good work in you will complete it until the day of Jesus Christ;

Trees Need Wind

I read an interesting report on a science project that was done for possible life outside this planet. Scientist have easily replicated plants and vines in zero gravity conditions (as it would be on the moon or space station). But in the attempt to replicate tree growth in zero gravity, they had great rich soil, feed the tree sprout with nutrients, water it well, just the right amounts of sun, and oxygen, and although the tree grew, and looked like a tree, it couldn't grow to sizes of trees in normal earth environment, and the fruit was greatly stunted. Their conclusion after much analysis? It was because there is no wind in space, in zero gravity environments, and thus the trees root system did not and would not develop deep and strong, because it had no need to, because there was no wind threatening to topple it over.

We are too Small to Decide

Maybe you say no thanks to a trial of perfection, you are just fine as you are, life is good, and I don't care to upset my goodness. To which I can say to you, and myself, we are just way too small, we are way too small to make such determinations, because we never know the winds that will be blowing 5 years from now, or 5 weeks from now, but God does, and He is growing us and perfecting us for them when they come. And, to shape us and mold us into the reflection of His Son so the world may see Christ in Us.

A Trial of Adjustment

Then there the trial of adjustment that God slows you down, allows a trial, brings the trial, so you can make a course adjustment before you enter into sin and will need a "trial of correction", God will give you this trial of adjustment, so He can get you on the path to perfecting you, making you into His likeness.

Just this week, Lord put me into a trial. It took me a couple of days to come to the understanding of what he was doing, but it was a trial of adjustment where the Lord was speaking to me. You're not gonna make it. If you don't make a course adjustment, you need to make an adjustment so that you can continue. Now in this marathon called ministry period. New paragraph, and in this trial that I was in just this week, I spent time at the Lord's feet and he gave me instruction of what I needed to do based on what he revealed to me.

God gives course adjustments in trials as he says and shows in the midst of a trial. Don't go there. Go here or go here. This is where I want you in this trial is a wind that is blowing you into the direction I want you. He may be saying separate from those people. I put this trial in that in you so that you can see that

Reveals Something About Him

Sometimes you only learn things about God in the midst of a trial, his faithfulness, his provision, his love, and his mercy, and you will only see that in and through a trial. This trial here is literally to show us Jesus can relate to us and our temptation.

Philippians 4:19 (NKJV) ¹⁹ And my God shall supply all your need according to His riches in glory by Christ Jesus.

Romans 8:37-39 (NKJV) ³⁷ Yet in all these things we are more than conquerors through Him who loved us. ³⁸ For I am persuaded that neither death nor life, nor angels nor principalities nor powers, nor things present nor things to come, ³⁹ nor height nor depth, nor any other created thing, shall be able to separate us from the love of God which is in Christ Jesus our Lord.

Reveals Something About Others

And sometimes, it takes a trial for God to reveal something about others, that we would never have seen or known had it not been for the trial. You won't truly know what is in bottle, until it is overturned. That is in others, and ourselves I might add. This trial literally shows us the ways and schemes of the Devil

Ask the Lord – What Are You Trying to Reveal to Me in this Trial?

Now there's a place where we examine ourselves and we asked the Lord, is there something in me that you are pulling out for correction, but let me also add that it may very well be a testing and a trial of perfection and therefore don't sit and keep looking for some sin or something that you've done wrong and then make things up. It must be this or sit there and analyze yourself to the nth degree. There's a place where you come. I've searched my heart. I've asked the Lord to search my heart to reveal if there's sin in me that needs to be corrected and if not Christian, if nothing comes to the surface and you're honest, then move on and accepted as a sin that is not present and therefore it's a trial for perfection that God is working in you. But on the same. Don't deceive yourself. When you feel God poking and you know this is what the issue and the subject matter is, then deal with it. Don't try to say, Nah, that's not it, because it could end up being a very long trial.

God Wants to Instruct

Instructing, God's purpose for revealing is always intended to put into some type of action and therefore action always needs correct instructing from the Lord on how to handle the situation in the will of the Lord and how to handle the situation in the heart of the Lord.

I – Instructing

Jesus was Vulnerable

Verse 13 - and was with the wild beasts - Wild beast would make Jesus vulnerable, Jesus is not geared up. He has no sword, no staff, no slingshot. He's absolutely vulnerable, period. And the extreme heat and extreme cold. It can swing anywhere to 120 in this wilderness down to 40 at night, a 70-80 degree swing in temperature, cold nights sleeping, hot days walking. Jesus is totally vulnerable. Heat, fatigue, hunger and thirst, and with wild beast. You can't sleep at night, you'd have to constantly be on guard of what slithering around you. Wild beast in the day. You can't put your guard down because a scorpion bite or viper bite and it's over. Jesus is absolutely vulnerable. And here comes Satan.

Satan is Watching You

Notice the place Satan attacks Jesus, here in the wilderness, and most likely there in the Garden of Gethsemane, as Luke's account of this trial says that when it was over Satan left Him until an opportune time, and the Garden was probably that place considering the cross before Jesus. Satan knows when to attack, and that is when you are weak and vulnerable. And Speaking of the timing thing, Satan watches you. He times his attack just as God knows the time and his hand is on the thermostat and the clock, Satan has his timing, he's waiting for that moment where you're vulnerable, where you're weakest, where you're isolated, where you're at your lowest, and here Satan waits for Jesus to be vulnerable. He waits for Jesus to be weakened physically. He waits for Jesus to be isolated, and waits, enough time that he believes it has settled in and now is the time to attack. Satan is patient and he will wait and wait. He may, and will, drop little pieces of bits here and there, but he's waiting for the moment, for the full-on attack.

Luke 4:13 (NKJV) ¹³ Now when the devil had ended every temptation, he departed from Him until an opportune time.

John 14:29–31 (NKJV) ²⁹ “And now I have told you before it comes, that when it does come to pass, you may believe. ³⁰ I will no longer talk much with you, for the ruler of this world is coming, and he has nothing in Me. ³¹ But that the world may know that I love the Father, and as the Father gave Me commandment, so I do. Arise, let us go from here.

The Devil is watching you Christian, know that and therefore there is no day off, the day you think well today's not the day, that the day Satan's going to attack because you're weak or you're vulnerable you're isolated and you think the yep I'm going to be totally covered because I'm in such a weak state and God will cover me. That's when Satan will show up and God will allow it because he's doing a work in this time

Satan is patient, don't ever forget that.

Jesus is Instructing & Teaching Us in the Trial

- The Power of the Word as a Weapon
- The Power of Morning Devotions

The Power of the Word as a Weapon

Jesus Uses the Word

Regarding instructing Jesus gives us instruction examples for us to apply in our trials and notice the first one here is that when Jesus was in his trial, we see the power of the Word as a weapon, and Jesus is going to use the Word as a weapon against the attack of the Devil. Jesus shows us the use of the word as a weapon just as we're told in Ephesians that it is a sword, whether it's Satan, the world or your flesh, as the thoughts keep coming to attack you, you have to keep a word ready to respond and if you have no word to draw from, then you'll have no word to fight with and to use as a counter attack. Jesus was locked and loaded with the Word:

Ephesians 6:17 (NKJV) ¹⁷ And take the helmet of salvation, and the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God;

Matthew 4:3-4 (NKJV) ³ Now when the tempter came to Him, he said, "If You are the Son of God, command that these stones become bread." ⁴ But He answered and said, "It is written, 'Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceeds from the mouth of God.' "

Matthew 4:5-7 (NKJV) ⁵ Then the devil took Him up into the holy city, set Him on the pinnacle of the temple, ⁶ and said to Him, "If You are the Son of God, throw Yourself down. For it is written: 'He shall give His angels charge over you,' and, 'In their hands they shall bear you up, Lest you dash your foot against a stone.'" ⁷ Jesus said to him, "It is written again, 'You shall not tempt the LORD your God.' "

Matthew 4:8-10 (NKJV) ⁸ Again, the devil took Him up on an exceedingly high mountain, and showed Him all the kingdoms of the world and their glory. ⁹ And he said to Him, "All these things I will give You if You will fall down and worship me." ¹⁰ Then Jesus said to him, "Away with you, Satan! For it is written, 'You shall worship the LORD your God, and Him only you shall serve.' "

It is Written – Remind Yourself – Throwing it in Face of Devil

When the devil comes with the attack does the Bible really say that? And you yourself can even say it, does the Bible really say that? Your responses? It is written. It is written, it is written. You're reminding yourself, it is written and you throw it into the face of the devil..... it is written. There's nothing to discuss, It is written!

Many Fall in This Area – Because Not in Scriptures

But many people they fall in this area because they aren't convinced of the scriptures because they don't study them. Some people fall in this area because they can't quote a scripture because they're not in the

Too Often Don't Use Word – Because Focused on Trial

Too often we don't use the weapons that he's provided for us because we're too focused on the trial. That's how we lose so many of the days of our trail because we're so focused on the trail and all that we can think of is the trial rather than the weapon that we have and the responses that God's has shown us, and the instruction on how to overcome

The Word is the Spirit – We Release God When We Release the Word

We read in Ephesians that the word of God is the Spirit of God and as we read the word and speak the word, we're releasing the Spirit in our life and there is nothing that can defeat us. When the Spirit of God is released in Jesus shows that.

Ephesians 6:17 (NKJV) ¹⁷ And take the helmet of salvation, and the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God;

The Power of Morning Devotions

The Power of Devotion

And let me show you this, and that is all three counters to the Devil, all came from the Book of Deuteronomy. Chapters 6-8. You know what I think? His weapon is his morning devotion that I believe as he was in the book of Deuteronomy that morning and when Satan comes with his volley, Jesus quotes the scriptures that he was in that day.

Matthew 4:3–4 (NKJV) ³ Now when the tempter came to Him, he said, “If You are the Son of God, command that these stones become bread.” ⁴ But He answered and said, “It is written, ‘Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceeds from the mouth of God.’”

Deuteronomy 8:3 (NKJV) ³ So He humbled you, allowed you to hunger, and fed you with manna which you did not know nor did your fathers know, that He might make you know that man shall not live by bread alone; but man lives by every word that proceeds from the mouth of the LORD.

Matthew 4:5–7 (NKJV) ⁵ Then the devil took Him up into the holy city, set Him on the pinnacle of the temple, ⁶ and said to Him, “If You are the Son of God, throw Yourself down. For it is written: ‘He shall give His angels charge over you,’ and, ‘In their hands they shall bear you up, Lest you dash your foot against a stone.’” ⁷ Jesus said to him, “It is written again, ‘You shall not tempt the LORD your God.’”

Deuteronomy 6:16 (NKJV) ¹⁶ “You shall not tempt the LORD your God as you tempted Him in Massah.

Matthew 4:8–10 (NKJV) ⁸ Again, the devil took Him up on an exceedingly high mountain, and showed Him all the kingdoms of the world and their glory. ⁹ And he said to Him, “All these things I will give You if You will fall down and worship me.” ¹⁰ Then Jesus said to him, “Away with you, Satan! For it is written, ‘You shall worship the LORD your God, and Him only you shall serve.’”

Deuteronomy 6:13 (NKJV) ¹³ You shall fear the LORD your God and serve Him, and shall take oaths in His name.

Many Fall in This Area – Because Not in Scriptures

But many people they fall in this area because they aren't convinced of the scriptures because they don't study them. Some people fall in this area because they can't quote a scripture because they're not in the scriptures and I can tell you if you're just in your daily reading, it will give you the power for today. You can say, I don't know, 31,102 versus well, just know the chapters that you're in today are the two or three chapters you're in for this devotional time and you'll have the word to say it is written. It is written!

Devotion Includes Praise and Worship

Jesus's devotion would have included prayer and that is a weapon for us as Jesus would be continually connected to his father in heaven. And Jesus, his prayer would have included praise because what is praise and worship, but spoken prayer as we worship and glorify God. Praise and worship lifts us out of this immediate every day earth, and lifts us into the heavenlies, where God is seated, and you know what, everything comes into perspective there, especially in the midst of a trial. Look at some of the power Jesus would have meditated on that day just in chapter 6-8:

Deuteronomy 6:1–9 (NKJV) ¹ “Now this is the commandment, and these are the statutes and judgments which the LORD your God has commanded to teach you, that you may observe them in the land which you are crossing over to possess, ² that you may fear the LORD your God, to keep all His statutes and His commandments which I command you, you and your son and your grandson, all the days of your life, and that your days may be prolonged. ³ Therefore hear, O Israel, and be careful to observe it, that it may be well with you, and that you may multiply greatly as the LORD God of your fathers has promised you—‘a land flowing with milk and honey.’” ⁴ “Hear, O Israel: The LORD our God, the LORD is one! ⁵ You shall love the LORD your God with all your heart, with all your soul, and with all your strength. ⁶ “And these words which I command you today shall be in your heart. ⁷ You shall teach them diligently to your children, and shall talk of them when you sit in your house, when you walk by the way, when you lie down, and when you rise up. ⁸ You shall bind them as a sign on your hand, and they shall be as frontlets between your eyes. ⁹ You shall write them on the doorposts of your house and on your gates.

Deuteronomy 7:9–11 (NKJV) ⁹ “Therefore know that the LORD your God, He is God, the faithful God who keeps covenant and mercy for a thousand generations with those who love Him and keep His commandments; ¹⁰ and He repays those who hate Him to their face, to destroy them. He will not be slack with him who hates Him; He will repay him to his face. ¹¹ Therefore you shall keep the commandment, the statutes, and the judgments which I command you today, to observe them.

Deuteronomy 8:2–5 (NKJV) ² And you shall remember that the LORD your God led you all the way these forty years in the wilderness, to humble you and test you, to know what was in your heart, whether you would keep His commandments or not. ³ So He humbled you, allowed you to hunger, and fed you with manna which you did not know nor did your fathers know, that He might make you know that man shall not live by bread alone; but man lives by every word that proceeds from the mouth of the LORD. ⁴ Your garments did not wear out on you, nor did your foot swell these forty years. ⁵ You should know in your heart that as a man chastens his son, so the LORD your God chastens you.

Everything Jesus Did – Was By Connection to Father / Don't Need to be God to Defeat Satan

Reminder, in everything that Jesus did, he did it through the connection to the father. He never exercised his divine powers apart from the will of the father and hence he could say I do all things in accordance to the will of my father. And what he shows us is that through our connection to the father, tapping on his divine power, Satan can be defeated. You don't need to be God to defeat Satan. You need to tap on the power and the connection and the will of God to defeat Satan, but you do not have to be God to defeat Satan. What we see as Jesus never worked independently of the father and he came to earth to identify to you and I that very same principle, that we don't work apart and separate from God the father.

John 5:19–20 (NKJV) ¹⁹ Then Jesus answered and said to them, “Most assuredly, I say to you, the Son can do nothing of Himself, but what He sees the Father do; for whatever He does, the Son also does in like manner. ²⁰ For the Father loves the Son, and shows Him all things that He Himself does; and He will show Him greater works than these, that you may marvel.

Same Victorious Jesus of Wilderness – Is in You

Now what Jesus was in the wilderness, complete, victorious and empowering, so too, he is inside of us. He's the same yesterday, today, and forever. That power to overcome the evil one and temptation lives inside of us. He gives us the power to overcome and have a victorious Christian life, hence why we must call upon him and seek him and let him have his way in us.

Colossians 1:27 (NKJV) ²⁷ To them God willed to make known what are the riches of the glory of this mystery among the Gentiles: which is Christ in you, the hope of glory.

A – Audience

The Audience of One – Is Worth It

The audience of one is worthy just for the one, even if the world saw nothing that happened in the trial, but that through the trial and in the trial I was pleasing to my Lord like yielded to him I was a bed and to him I honored him and if no one else in the world would know a God did, if no one else in the world heard God speak well done, this is my son and whom I'm well pleased. It would still be worth it. All of it, however long it is and whatever pain was adored, it would be worth it for the audience of one because the one is the only one that matters

Matthew 6:31–34 (NKJV) ³¹ “Therefore do not worry, saying, ‘What shall we eat?’ or ‘What shall we drink?’ or ‘What shall we wear?’ ³² For after all these things the Gentiles seek. For your heavenly Father knows that you need all these things. ³³ But seek first the kingdom of God and His righteousness, and all these things shall be added to you. ³⁴ Therefore do not worry about tomorrow, for tomorrow will worry about its own things. Sufficient for the day is its own trouble.

BTW Youth – Jesus Shows it Can be Done

This is my beloved son in whom I'm well pleased. Jesus is about 30 years old at this time. That would have meant that he made it all the way through his teenage years and I just want to make that point. For the youth that are here today, It can be done through a connection with God, the father and the Holy Spirit submitting and calling upon. I by no means am talking about sinless perfection, but I am talking about “that thing” in your life right now that you think is a mountain and impossible to take down, that it can be done, even as a youth, because Jesus showed that it can be.

The World is Watching

The audience people are watching and nobody maybe reading their Bible, but they are reading you in Jesus Christ in you

2 Corinthians 3:2–3 (NKJV) ² You are our epistle written in our hearts, known and read by all men; ³ clearly you are an epistle of Christ, ministered by us, written not with ink but by the Spirit of the living God, not on tablets of stone but on tablets of flesh, that is, of the heart.

L – Loving

My Beloved Son

The Father who said this is my beloved Son in whom I am well pleased, is the Father who allowed Jesus to go into this trial. The next words spoken after I love Him, then allows Him. In love He brought the Son into the trial. So too it is for you in your trial.

Mark 1:11–12 (NKJV) ¹¹ Then a voice came from heaven, “You are My beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased.” ¹² Immediately the Spirit drove Him into the wilderness.

Verb Tense is Continual

Verse 13 - and the angels ministered to Him - The verb tense is that Jesus was in the wilderness for 40 days and the verb tense is that the Devil tempted Him continually and the verb tense is that the angels ministered to him continually. It was not just that he was ministered to at the end, but he was ministered to through the whole time and that's what the Lord does for us through our whole trial.

God Loves Me – Has a Purpose for the Trial

My God loves me. Whether he's correcting me, he corrects me in love. Whether he's making course adjustment, it's for love for my purposes and it fits for perfection is because he loves me. He wants me to reflect his glory. I pray for you tonight. If you're in a storm that you know that your God loves you, regardless of what the state of the storm is, his hand is on the stopwatch and the thermostat.

Jeremiah 18 – the Potter and the Clay

Jeremiah 18. Come down to the Potter's house. God's gives the picture. Let me show you what I can make, and mold make this beautiful object of you on the potter's wheel. That wheel that spins, it spins at the speed and the pace that the potter determines with his foot as he pumps the wheel. The pressure that's put onto the clay, that's all determined by the potter and how much pressure he determines. I pray you trust the Potter's touch. I pray you trust the potters heart, and pray you trust the potters wisdom, and that you will see the beautiful vessel that he is creating for he who began a good work will be faithful to complete it.

Jeremiah 18:1–2 (NKJV) ¹ *The word which came to Jeremiah from the LORD, saying: ² “Arise and go down to the potter’s house, and there I will cause you to hear My words.”*

Isaiah 64:8 (NKJV) ⁸ *But now, O LORD, You are our Father; We are the clay, and You our potter; And all we are the work of Your hand.*

Conclusion

Prayer – Boldly Ask Your God

The Word of God is Living and Powerful, and is ready, and will do a mighty work in our lives.

Hebrews 4:12 (NKJV) ¹² *For the word of God is living and powerful, and sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing even to the division of soul and spirit, and of joints and marrow, and is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart.*

In Every Study

- Who Is God? (How Great is He?)
- What Does He Think of Me? (How Wonderful Are His Thoughts Towards Me?)
- What Does He Want Me to Do?
- What Can I Boldly Request of Him?
- What Do I Need to Be on Guard of When I Leave Here Today?

Boldly Come to Throne of Grace

Boldly come to the throne of grace, ask God to reveal Himself in a mighty way to you, and to do I might work in you, and through you.

Hebrews 4:16 (NKJV) ¹⁶ *Let us therefore come boldly to the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy and find grace to help in time of need.*

End of Study

Mark 1:14-20

Intro/Recap

We have come to verse 14 today in our study of Mark, and Jesus will begin His public preaching and select His first disciples. In our first two studies, we saw John the Baptist “preparing the way” of the Lord, pointing to Jesus as the Promised One, the Messiah, who would take away the sin of the world (John 1:29), we saw Jesus being baptized in the Jordan River by John, and hearing those words, “this is My beloved Son in whom I am well pleased”, as the Father puts His approval upon Jesus that He is worthy, perfect, and accepted by the Father. We saw the Spirit of God come upon Jesus, and then immediately we read of Jesus’ 40-day trial/temptation in the wilderness. Jesus has demonstrated authority over the devil and hence the witness to us of his wilderness 40 Day trial temptation. And he’ll do it again, for the next three and a half years of His ministry, and then crush sin, death, and the Devil there upon the cross. Now Jesus begins to preach, but we see that before Jesus preached, He lived out what He would preach. He had a witness before He gave a word, He lived the word before He spoke a word, He practiced before He preached.

The Gospel / Follow Me

Today Jesus begins preaching and proclaiming the Good News, I am reminded of the story of Billy Graham in his earlier days of ministry came to small town for a crusade, he needed to mail a letter and walks the town to find the post office, he sees a little boy on a bicycle and says, “young man could you tell me where the post office is”, to which the little boy points the way. Before departing Billy said, “young man tonight at the city center I am going to be telling people how they can get to heaven, would you like to come?” To which the little boy says, “no thanks sir, no offense, but you don’t even know how to get to the post office”. Today in our passage Jesus will give very clear directions on how to get to heaven, to enter into the kingdom of God, to be forgiven of sin and have new life. And the Good News is still good news today regardless how long ago you received Jesus Christ as your Lord and Savior, for each day, today being one of them, you can receive the good news again, not for salvation, but restoration, that as you pick up the spots and soils of this world, we have the good news that we can be cleansed and forgiven, made white as snow, and walk in beautiful and perfect harmony with our heavenly Father. How glorious, as His mercies are new every morning, great is His faithfulness.

1 John 1:9 (NKJV) ⁹ If we confess our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.

Lamentations 3:22–24 (NKJV) ²² Through the LORD’s mercies we are not consumed, Because His compassions fail not. ²³ They are new every morning; Great is Your faithfulness. ²⁴ “The LORD is my portion,” says my soul, “Therefore I hope in Him!”

And then He starts to call His first disciples to “Follow Me”. And today, His Good News still changes lives, and His calling to follow is the greatest calling upon the earth, as the Lord invites “you” today, to “follow”, and He will take you to heights and depths of love and amazement, and that we will get to know “Him” in an intimacy, that is real and personal. We will get to hear His voice, experience His presence, and walk with God Himself.

Outline 1:14-20:

- Jesus Begins His Public Ministry (1:14-15)
- Jesus Calls His First Disciples (1:16-20)

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Hebrews 4:16 (NKJV) ¹⁶ *Let us therefore come boldly to the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy and find grace to help in time of need.*

Jesus Begins His Public Ministry (1:14-15) – (Matt. 4:12–17; Luke 4:14-15)

Mark 1:14 Now after John was put in prison, Jesus came to Galilee, preaching the gospel of the kingdom of God,

Mark 1:14 Now after John was put in prison,

Imprisoned because Obedient / Trial of Glorification

Verse 14, John the Baptist is put in prison for preaching the Gospel, and so we see that hardship doesn't necessarily mean that we're in some type of error. John the Baptist was obedient, and hardship came upon him. Now we add onto our study from last week as we talk about trials and their purposes and we talked of a trial of perfection, a trial of correction, and we talked of a trial of adjustment and now John the Baptist shows us a fourth and that is a trial of glorification. The trial and temptation that John is in will bring glorification to Jesus Christ.

Reasons for Trials:

- A Trial of Correction
- A Trial of Perfection
- A Trial of Adjustment
- A Trial of Glorification

John Would not Compromise / There is a Strength in a Man who Will not Compromise / Weakness when Do

John could have escaped. He's put in prison because he told it like it was to King Herod, that the wife that he has, should not be his because it's his brother's wife. He called sin, sin. He doesn't call it a mistake. He doesn't call it an indiscretion. He doesn't call it an affair. He calls it sin and he will not compromise, and King Herod puts him in prison for it and all John would have to do is compromise the word and he would have been set free. But he won't compromise, and we see a strength in any man that will not compromise because there will never be a glorification of God in the midst of compromise, in whatever it is in your life. If there's any compromise, it will never truly produce glorification of Jesus Christ.

Mark 6:17–18 (NKJV) ¹⁷ *For Herod himself had sent and laid hold of John, and bound him in prison for the sake of Herodias, his brother Philip's wife; for he had married her.* ¹⁸ *Because John had said to Herod, "It is not lawful for you to have your brother's wife."*

Job-Daniel-Jeremiah-Noah-Abraham / No Compromise – Become a Trophy of God

John's trial is for the glorification of God. Fully unto God. We saw that in Job Job's obedience. God was glorified. And we saw it in Daniel and his obedience, refusal to compromise and into the lion's den he goes. God was glorified. Jeremiah preaching faithfully and would not compromise even when beaten; God was glorified. Noah preached faithfully, would not compromise. God was glorified. Abraham would take his son up to the mount, would not compromise. God was glorified. And all of them, and you too will be, when we go through a trial and we endured simply for the glorification of God, we become a trophy. A champion that God holds up before man and says, look, look at this one. Look at my beloved. I'm well pleased.

John First Martyr in New Testament

Most people say that Steven is the first martyr in the New Testament, but really in the New Testament, John the Baptist is. Steven will be the first martyr on the other side of the cross, the new covenant sealed by the blood of the Lamb. But in the new covenant era, the Kingdom of God being at hand as the king has come, Jesus Christ, the first martyr in that era is John the Baptist. And countless millions of martyrs to follow will remember the story of John the Baptist. A man who - no compromise, no escape, but for the full glory of his God, he will take the full wrath of whatever the world would pour on him and still hold true to the word of God and the God that he pointed to, the Lamb of God, Jesus Christ who takes away the sin of the world

Does Thought of Trial Scare You ? / Purpose Regardless – I will Bring You Glory in This

Does the thought of a trial of glorifications scare you? Listen, whatever trial you are in purpose in your heart and say, (and it doesn't matter if you're in a trial of perfection, a trial of adjustment, a trial of correction, a trial of glorification), purpose in your heart and say, I purpose in my heart and commit completely to you, Lord, that in this trial, in this temptation, in this thing that is before me, I am yours and I am going to give and bring you glory so that you will be glorified.

- My marriage right now feels like a prison, but I will stay and be faithful without compromise so that you might be glorified.
- This physical temptation, I am battling. It is hard, but I will stay obedient to you and I purpose that through it all, I will bring you glory.
- This interpersonal conflict I have with this person. I'm going to walk it out and live it out according to your word, in the audience to your word so that you might be glorified in it.
- This financial woe that I'm in, I'm not going to complain through it and I'm not going to poor mouth you.

I am going to live it out trusting you and I purpose that through this trial, I am going to bring you glory. My heart wants to bring you glory.

If You Will Purpose Glory for God – You Will Walk in a Newness of Power

If you will, in the midst of your trial, in the midst of your temptation, even the ones that are trials of correction where Satan is trying to knock you down, slap you down, try to condemn you, make you feel like a loser. Even in the midst of that battle you say, I purpose that I am going to plow through this and battle through this so that you will be glorified and when you start with that mindset, you will find strength and power in that trial and that temptation and you will come out victorious if you will, in the midst of your trial, in the midst of your temptation, say this is hard, but I'm going to live it out so that God might be glorified. You will find incredible power in the midst of your trial.

Imagine Heart of God – When You Do!

Imagine the heart of God as he looks at the person as he looks at you, living for him saying, I will, regardless of how hard, regardless of how hot, regardless of how long I will purpose, and I am going to bring you glory. Imagine how that moves his heart. Do you not think God's heart will be moved to say, that is my beloved son, that is my beloved daughter, in whom I am well pleased.

Time to bring God Glory is In It – Not After It!

And the time to bring God glory? Listen Christian, the time to bring God. Glory is in it, not after it. It's always easy to try to say and praise and point people look what God did after it's over, but the power will be when you're in it and you say yes, but though this trial is hard, I still praise him and I trust him and I will be victorious because my God loves me and he's on the throne and he is on the move and doing something in my life for my glory and his glory.

[Mark 1:14 Jesus came to Galilee,](#)

Did John Wonder Why?

Do you wonder if John the Baptist questions God, and his wisdom of putting him in jail, he may have said, look at all the fruit of this ministry, why would you put me in jail? Who is going to minister to these people? John the Baptist could have been very upset saying, who's going to minister in Aenon, I have a thriving ministry going on there, and not only has God allowed me to be taken away from it, I would at least have expected Jesus to pick up the ministry there, and not go up to Galilee? Not knowing that when he was taken out, Jesus was going to fulfill the greater ministry.

I Just Have to Be Faithful in My Area of Calling

Verse 14, why did Jesus go to Galilee? I don't know, nor need to know. Why isn't God doing this over there today, or that over here we could ask. I don't know, nor do I need to know, I simply need to do what Jesus called me to do, when he called me to do it, and where he called me to do it, and trust him to go and send someone else in the

places that I'm not or the things that aren't there. I just need to be faithful to my area. One of the dangers I have seen over the years is that some people spend so much time and energy pointing out all the "voids", that not only do they not fill any of the voids, they become critical of others (namely the church, or mission organizations) saying they are missing it. We don't need to focus on the what not, but the what is, and that is what is it that you want me to do Lord and I will trust you to cover the what is not being covered.

John 3:23–24 (NKJV) ²³ Now John also was baptizing in Aenon near Salim, because there was much water there. And they came and were baptized. ²⁴ For John had not yet been thrown into prison.

I am Reminded When I was in Russia

We don't know the thoughts that ran through his (John's) head, but I can relate somewhat. When I was in Russia, 1993, Moscow and various cities, large cities around the USSR, communism was still rearing its head even after the fall of the walls, but all the people were hungry for hope. They were hungry for the Gospel. My ministries on the street were absolutely amazing. I would stand outside the subway and every three minutes another 200 people would get off the subway and be before me. They're massive mode of transportation to move all the people was subway as they didn't have cars like we have. I would preach, and hundreds of people would walk by and easily 30, 40 people every time would stop and listen. Everywhere I was going, if I would just pass somebody on the streets, it was easy for me to engage them in the gospel and how readily many would just sit and hear it and many would receive it. I would preach on the street with a pile of tracks, a stack of bibles, and we'd have to carry them in a duffel bag because that's how quickly they would get distributed. Can you imagine what that would look like? Carrying the Duffel bag full of tracks and being empty at the end of your time on the streets in just a few hours? But then something started to happen to me as I would lead people to Christ. I started to say, well, where are they going to go to church? What's the purpose? What's the fruit of this that I lead them to Christ, they're most likely just going to get eaten up by the enemy as soon as I walked away because there is no church to send them to as the walls just come down and there were no Bible teaching churches. I struggled with that and as I struggled with that, the effectiveness of my street evangelism plummeted along with that struggle,

Until the Lord simply spoke to me, this is what I called you to do. I'll take care establishing the church. I will take care of raising up pastor/teachers. I'll take care of all that. You just be faithful to what I'm calling you to do right here, and right now. Immediately, I was free to just work within the realm what God called me to do, where God called me to do it, and when God called me to do it, having the faith that Jesus, (if you would, we come/go to Galilee) and establish a church, and everything needed to build a strong thriving church body into which He did.

IBS

Interesting enough, even right there where I was at that moment, I started to teach the Inductive Bible Study to what turned out to be hundreds of people and out of those hundreds of people I know even still to this day, three young men who were in that inductive Bible study who went and started Bible Studies, have grown into strong flourishing churches that simply teach the word chapter by chapter, verse by verse.

Don't Worry About Over There – Just Here

So Christian, don't worry about what there isn't. Just be faithful to what there is and pour yourself into it and give yourself to what's God called you to do, where He has called you to do it, and when He has called you to do it.

Mark 1:14 preaching the gospel of the kingdom of God,

Kingdom of God – Not Kingdom of Man / It is the Only True Gospel

Verse 14, it's the gospel of the Kingdom of God. Man today has a version of the gospel of good news, but is the Kingdom of man, not God. Jesus Christ in His 40-day trial clearly established for the world God's kingdom over any temporary man kingdom, as Satan would offer him the world, he would not trade the world's kingdom for God's kingdom. But there is today continual among the world trying to mix and merge some spirituality and call it the kingdom of God. Even in the church, the church trying to merge in the world and mix and make a kingdom of God that is not the Kingdom of God because there's only one pure gospel and it's the Kingdom of God and it's the one that Jesus preaches right here.

Matthew 4:8–10 (NKJV) ⁸ Again, the devil took Him up on an exceedingly high mountain, and showed Him all the kingdoms of the world and their glory. ⁹ And he said to Him, "All these things I will give You if You will fall down and worship me." ¹⁰ Then Jesus said to him, "Away with you, Satan! For it is written, 'You shall worship the LORD your God, and Him only you shall serve.' "

Jesus Preaching in Power

Let it be seen, let it be known, Jesus Preaching the Gospel of the Kingdom of God in the power of the Holy Spirit that fell upon him at his baptism. May every pulpit teacher, may, every street evangelist, may, every Sunday school worker, may every youth group worker, and may, every witness for Christ. Wherever you may be, see that the gospel must be preached in the power of the Holy Spirit and anything else will fall flat if it is not for it is merely in the human flesh and energies.

Mark 1:9–11 (NKJV) ⁹ It came to pass in those days that Jesus came from Nazareth of Galilee, and was baptized by John in the Jordan. ¹⁰ And immediately, coming up from the water, He saw the heavens parting and the Spirit descending upon Him like a dove. ¹¹ Then a voice came from heaven, "You are My beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased."

Mark 1:15 and saying, "The time is fulfilled, and the kingdom of God is at hand. Repent, and believe in the gospel."

4-Fold Ministry

Jesus's ministry is fourfold we see from this verse.

Mark 1:15 and saying, "The time is fulfilled,"

Time of Law & Prophets Over

He said, the time is fulfilled. He is referencing to that the law and the prophets is over. John the Baptist brings to an end, the law and the prophets. John is still preaching the law, but now Jesus comes on the scene to preach grace. Jesus comes to prepare and receive the bride. The law indeed came through Moses, but grace and peace comes through Jesus Christ. John has fulfilled his ministry and he closes the book on the ministry of the law and the prophets as we see through the Old Testament and now comes the ministry of grace and peace through Jesus Christ. So God has a timing and the preparing of everything. And now here Jesus begins his preaching.

John 1:17 (NKJV) ¹⁷ For the law was given through Moses, but grace and truth came through Jesus Christ.

In Gospel of Matthew, Jesus speaks of the end of the law and the prophets, and John is the end of that string.

Matthew 11:11–13 (NKJV) ¹¹ "Assuredly, I say to you, among those born of women there has not risen one greater than John the Baptist; but he who is least in the kingdom of heaven is greater than he. ¹² And from the days of John the Baptist until now the kingdom of heaven suffers violence, and the violent take it by force. ¹³ For all the prophets and the law prophesied until John.

The law was based on man's ability to keep the Law, and be right before God, which ever man failed, and that was the purpose of the Law to show man he could not be perfect before God, and that he needed a Savior. Jesus is coming on the scene to be the Savior of man for his sin before the holy God.

Galatians 3:24 (NKJV) ²⁴ Therefore the law was our tutor to bring us to Christ, that we might be justified by faith.

Romans 3:19–20 (NKJV) ¹⁹ Now we know that whatever the law says, it says to those who are under the law, that every mouth may be stopped, and all the world may become guilty before God. ²⁰ Therefore by the deeds of the law no flesh will be justified in His sight, for by the law is the knowledge of sin.

2 Corinthians 5:21 (NKJV) ²¹ For He made Him who knew no sin to be sin for us, that we might become the righteousness of God in Him.

John 1:29 (NKJV) ²⁹ The next day John saw Jesus coming toward him, and said, "Behold! The Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world!"

The law and the prophets are over, and now comes the Savior, who would not only be the Son God, but be God, and the King of the Universe.

Mark 1:15 and saying, "..... and the kingdom of God"

Kingdom Where King Is

Secondly, the Kingdom of God is here because he is the king. What is the Kingdom of God? It's where the king is.

Again – God’s Kingdom – Not Man’s

And again, it is the Kingdom of God, His way, not man’s way, else that would be the kingdom of man.

Mark 1:15 and saying, "..... Repent,"

Entrance by Repentance / First Words / Repent (full immersion) – Not Just One’s Agree With

Thirdly, the entrance into the Kingdom is repentance of sin. Jesus, his first words of his public ministry is repent, John would say, he prepared the way and his message was repentance. Baptism of repentance. Baptism means immersion and here the theme is its full immersion into repentance, not just the ones that we agree with and are comfortable with, but the ones we aren't comfortable with and the ones that we may not agree with God and think that they're outdated. Repentance is full immersion and the turning away from sin. John’s message was repentance, Jesus’ first words of public ministry was repent, and Peter in his first sermon preached a sermon calling for repentance. Repentance is requirement for entrance into the kingdom of God.

Matthew 3:1–2 (NKJV) ¹ In those days John the Baptist came preaching in the wilderness of Judea, ² and saying, "Repent, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand!"

Matthew 4:17 (NKJV) ¹⁷ From that time Jesus began to preach and to say, "Repent, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand."

Acts 2:38 (NKJV) ³⁸ Then Peter said to them, "Repent, and let every one of you be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins; and you shall receive the gift of the Holy Spirit."

Repentance – change Your Mind / God Can’t Change Heart Till You Change Your Mind

Repentance means to change direction and to have a change of direction. You have to change your mind. You have to change your mind about the flesh, the world, and the devil because they're all going in a different direction than God is, and God can't change your heart until you change your mind. God can't give you a new heart until you change your mind that you need a new heart. Repentance is a beautiful word. When you're tired, going in the direction that is empty, void and vain and to hear that there's not only another way, but that other way is given and provided for you to go, it becomes the most beautiful freeing word you ever hear? Repent? Turn around. For the Kingdom of God is here and you go walk in to the Kingdom of God and behold the king himself, who is God and who will receive you and love you and make you a son and make you a daughter? I thank God for repentance and not just once for salvation, but daily for a new start, a new beginning, a new cleansing.

Repentance is a Symphony Sung by Father, Son, Holy Spirit

Repentance to some is nails on a chalkboard, but to those that have been there, it's a symphony of love, sung by a Father and a Son and Holy Spirit. All three who'd be willing to pay the price for the reward to make us his own.

Mark 1:15 and saying, "..... and believe in the gospel."

4th - Believe

And fourthly, believe. Believe means, to put your trust into. To trust no other way for salvation except by the Gospel of verse 1,

Believe = Recognize – Repent - Receive

Verse 15, believe means to recognize, repent and receive.

- **(Recognize)** - a need for the Savior. Your sin separates you from the Holy God.
- *Romans 3:19–20 (NKJV) ¹⁹ Now we know that whatever the law says, it says to those who are under the law, that every mouth may be stopped, and all the world may become guilty before God. ²⁰ Therefore by the deeds of the law no flesh will be justified in His sight, for by the law is the knowledge of sin.*

- **(Repent)** – change your mind about sin, and agree that is an offense before God, so offensive that someone has to die for it.
- **Mark 1:15 (NKJV)** ¹⁵ and saying, “The time is fulfilled, and the kingdom of God is at hand. Repent, and believe in the gospel.”
- **(Receive)** – Ask God to trade place with you, and He takes your sin and your punishment, and you get pardoned for your sin and become Holy before Him, just like His Son Jesus.
- **Romans 10:8–13 (NKJV)** ⁸ But what does it say? “The word is near you, in your mouth and in your heart” (that is, the word of faith which we preach): ⁹ that if you confess with your mouth the Lord Jesus and believe in your heart that God has raised Him from the dead, you will be saved. ¹⁰ For with the heart one believes unto righteousness, and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation. ¹¹ For the Scripture says, “Whoever believes on Him will not be put to shame.” ¹² For there is no distinction between Jew and Greek, for the same Lord over all is rich to all who call upon Him. ¹³ For “whoever calls on the name of the LORD shall be saved.”

Repentance & Belief is Personal Decision – Must be Spoken to God

It's a personal decision. It's one that is made with the mouth. Some people they can go through their whole life and never speak to God and say, I confess with my mouth the Lord Jesus Christ and I believe in my heart that God raised him from the dead. And you can do that today, you can have eternal life, by speaking to God, and confessing.

Belief Looks Like Something

Belief looks like something you can actually see it. It's not something that we speak, but it's something that can be seen because it becomes a life that follows after God.

Jesus Calls His First Disciples (1:16-20) – (Matt. 4:18-22)

Mark 1:16 And as He walked by the Sea of Galilee, He saw Simon and Andrew his brother casting a net into the sea; for they were fishermen.

Mark 1:17 Then Jesus said to them, “Follow Me, and I will make you become fishers of men.”

As He Walked

Mark 1:16 And as He walked by the Sea of Galilee - As he walked it says. God will always put himself on your path. He doesn't say, come find me. He says to man, here I am. Will you follow me?

Not First Meeting

This is not their first meeting. They had heard of him and his mission. Andrew was John the Baptist's disciple, and actually went and visited with Jesus we read in John 1. Andrew had heard of Jesus and his preaching and went and told Peter.

John 1:35–42 (NKJV) ³⁵ Again, the next day, John stood with two of his disciples. ³⁶ And looking at Jesus as He walked, he said, “Behold the Lamb of God!” ³⁷ The two disciples heard him speak, and they followed Jesus. ³⁸ Then Jesus turned, and seeing them following, said to them, “What do you seek?” They said to Him, “Rabbi” (which is to say, when translated, Teacher), “where are You staying?” ³⁹ He said to them, “Come and see.” They came and saw where He was staying, and remained with Him that day (now it was about the tenth hour). ⁴⁰ One of the two who heard John speak, and followed Him, was Andrew, Simon Peter's brother. ⁴¹ He first found his own brother Simon, and said to him, “We have found the Messiah” (which is translated, the Christ). ⁴² And he brought him to Jesus. Now when Jesus looked at him, He said, “You are Simon the son of Jonah. You shall be called Cephas” (which is translated, A Stone).

Peter and Andrew Were Brothers / Youth Led You Siblings to Christ

Peter and Andrew were brothers. So you youth today, I challenge you to tell your siblings about Jesus and why he came.

Responsibility & Equipping

Mark 1:17 Then Jesus said to them, “Follow Me, and I will make you become fishers of men.” - Notice that the disciple's responsibility was to follow, and Jesus said he'll take the responsibility to make them Fisher of men. God does the equipping. We just do the availability. Here I am, Lord, send me. I've seen your heart and now I want to share your heart, and he'll do the equipping from there. Whether it's Fisher of men or Sunday school teachers. If God calls you, he will equip you and you can rest in that. Just call on his power.

Notice – God Called the Working

One of the things you'll notice through the scriptures is everybody Jesus called, he called them while they were working, and I find that very interesting to me. They were engaged in the discipline of work and when you do work the way God intends it to be, you develop yourself a discipline.

Attributes of Fisherman / Work Ethics – But Church not a Business Model

And Jesus called fisherman, I can see the attributes of a fisherman that would mean so much to fishers of men. He gets up to work and sometimes you have nothing. You get up and you toil, you catch one or two, but you just keep toiling. Early mornings, late nights, whatever it may be. There's some great attributes of a fisherman and I think God uses work ethics for the work of the ministry, but I do have to always, forewarn, that work ethics is glorious, but many people then want to bring business methods into the church and then you go from being of living organism to a business machine and things become mechanical. Things aren't led by the spirit and Oh, it might continue on and produce, but it won't have the lifelong fruit and lasting fruit regardless of how much activity there is. Because the Church of God is spiritual. It's not a business model.

Evangelism – Lots of Casting

Just a note on fishing and evangelism, they have some great similarities, and that is lots of casting, lots of casting, lots of casting. Even with the right bait, and the right gear, there is still lots of casting before something is caught in the net.

Mark 1:18 They immediately left their nets and followed Him.

How to Stay Obedient – Follow Jesus Closely

It's hard to walk in obedience, the full immersion of repentance. Well, I think we see one of the simplest pictures of how the disciples did as they walked with Jesus, they followed him and that kinda makes it that simple. I walked with him. I follow him. I live victorious. We start entertaining the world, it's easy to become a Judas were your eyes are more on the world than Jesus, and that's not following. You can be a Peter following from a distance (as we see in the warming of the fire on the night Jesus was arrested), for in that distance will eventually bring you to a fall because there's no way to keep an eye on Jesus from a distance

Mark 1:19 When He had gone a little farther from there, He saw James the son of Zebedee, and John his brother, who also were in the boat mending their nets.

Mark 1:20 And immediately He called them, and they left their father Zebedee in the boat with the hired servants, and went after Him.

Jesus Purposed Today is the Day – Will Do the Same with You

Verse 19. This is the same walk with Jesus. He called the two (Andrew and Peter), and was the three of them, and they go a little further. and He came, the James and John and he said, follow me. So Jesus had a purpose, that day was going to be the calling of these disciples, and Jesus has a day that he purposed that he speaks to us specifically what might be speaking to you today.

Follow Me – Don't Look Back

Follow me. One of the meanings of follow is don't look back. Now Jesus by saying follow me is giving an offer, that the good news is available to them. They can be cleaned, they can be forgiven. They can have a life that is abundant and excited. Jesus is calling them to a life that is beyond anything this world could ever offer them, and they take it.

Disciples heard About John Baptist – But Still Followed

There's no denying these disciples believed in Jesus because they followed him even to the end. Now mind you, everybody knew who John the Baptist was and everybody would have known that he's now in prison for his faith in Jesus Christ and his witness of Jesus Christ. And yet these disciples are willing to follow at all costs.

Our American Mentality – What is In It for Me

We have this American mentality of what is in it for me, and that mentality must die. We must say, what's in it for the glory of God? What's in it for the Kingdom of God? What's in it for heaven's and eternity's sake, and that will change the way we live. It is the kingdom of God, not the kingdom of man! Our rewards are not earthly based, but kingdom, God's Kingdom based. For the Kingdom is, where the King is.

Left Father / Youth it is Your Decision Personally

They left their father. Youth, it's your decision personally, but even adults won't go fully after Jesus because they fear what their parents think. Everyone has their own personal walk and it can't be determined by what their parents think. Nor can it be determined as an inheritance received from their parents. Everyone makes her own personal decision. Many children do not come to the Lord or follow hard after the Lord because of the concern what their parents think. But let us not miss, so to do many parents, they don't follow hard after the Lord because of their children and what their children may think or their children not wanting to be as fully engaged in the things of the Lord as they are, so they don't come and follow. This goes both sides, children, and parents. But it is interesting. We don't know what happened to John and James Father, but we know that their mother will what? Appears. They will believe, she will believe in Jesus. So did she follow because of the sons? What if the sons didn't follow? Would mother had followed? Did she come the faith because of them. And there's great indication that their witness is what drew their mother.

Follow – It is There Only Hope

Parent, or child, follow after Jesus and trust that the power of that witness, will do a work in our parents' life or our children's life. And I say, the only hope your parents have of getting saved, is that you follow, and they watch and see God in your life.

Immediately – Has God Called You to Do Something?

Immediately they followed Jesus and we'll see John and James immediately leave their nets. Has God called you to do something and you've been tarrying? I pray that God would speak to you, breakthrough today of the word - immediately - and that you would respond to whatever that call was, to do something, to call somebody, to repent of something, to give your life to him, to receive him as Lord and Savior. I pray He breaks through and you hear the word spoken through this gospel mark over and over immediately because that's God's time period right now for you is immediately.

Conclusion

Jeremiah 18 – the Potter and the Clay

Jeremiah 18. Come down to the Potter's house. God's gives the picture. Let me show you what I can make, and mold make this beautiful object of you on the potter's wheel. That wheel that spins, it spins at the speed and the pace that the potter determines with his foot as he pumps the wheel. The pressure that's put onto the clay, that's all determined by the potter and how much pressure he determines. I pray you trust the Potter's touch. I pray you trust the potters heart, and pray you trust the potter's wisdom, and that you will see the beautiful vessel that he is creating for he who began a good work will be faithful to complete it.

Jeremiah 18:1–2 (NKJV) ¹ The word which came to Jeremiah from the LORD, saying: ² "Arise and go down to the potter's house, and there I will cause you to hear My words."

Isaiah 64:8 (NKJV) ⁸ But now, O LORD, You are our Father; We are the clay, and You our potter; And all we are the work of Your hand.

Prayer – Boldly Ask Your God

The Word of God is Living and Powerful, and is ready, and will do a mighty work in our lives.

Hebrews 4:12 (NKJV) ¹² For the word of God is living and powerful, and sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing even to the division of soul and spirit, and of joints and marrow, and is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart.

In Every Study

- Who Is God? (How Great is He?)
- What Does He Think of Me? (How Wonderful Are His Thoughts Towards Me?)

- What Does He Want Me to Do?
- What Can I Boldly Request of Him?
- What Do I Need to Be on Guard of When I Leave Here Today?

Boldly Come to Throne of Grace

Boldly come to the throne of grace, ask God to reveal Himself in a mighty way to you, and to do I might work in you, and through you.

Hebrews 4:16 (NKJV) ¹⁶ Let us therefore come boldly to the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy and find grace to help in time of need.

End of Study

Mark 1:21-34

Recap/Intro

We have come as far as Jesus is about a year, maybe year-half, into His public ministry. In our last study He called His first disciples (Andrew, Peter, James, and John), and today we study “a day in the Life of Jesus”, as these verses all take place in a 24-hour period. It begins with Jesus entering the synagogue in Capernaum, and preaching, and then literally..... hell breaks loose, for the Word of God is living and powerful, and no one can stay neutral when they hear it, it shakes the very core of hell, and I pray it shakes our very souls today. That we don't come to church today because it is what we do, but we come today seeking the Living God, to shake our lives, to move us beyond motions, but give us life and that more abundant, to know Him more, to become more like Him, to impact every area of our lives, and then take us out of here to impact the lives of our area. That people will know, we have been with Jesus.

Hebrews 4:12 (NKJV) ¹² For the word of God is living and powerful, and sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing even to the division of soul and spirit, and of joints and marrow, and is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart.

John 10:10 (NKJV) ¹⁰ The thief does not come except to steal, and to kill, and to destroy. I have come that they may have life, and that they may have it more abundantly.

Acts 4:13 (NKJV) ¹³ Now when they saw the boldness of Peter and John, and perceived that they were uneducated and untrained men, they marveled. And they realized that they had been with Jesus.

Outline Mark 1:21-34:

- Jesus Cast Out an Unclean Spirit at a Synagogue (1:21-28)
- Jesus Heals Peter's Mother-In (1:29-31)
- Jesus Heals Many Sick and Demon Possessed (1:32-34)

Jesus Cast Out an Unclean Spirit at a Synagogue (1:21-28) – (Luke 4:31-37)

Mark 1:21 Then they went into Capernaum, and immediately on the Sabbath He entered the synagogue and taught.

See Pictures of Capernaum

Capernaum is simply beautiful. There are incredible archeological ruins that are from the time of Jesus, one being this very synagogue, and next to the ruins of this synagogue is what “tradition” claims is the ruins of Peter's home, literally right next to the synagogue.

Difference Synagogue and Temple

The synagogue is not the temple. The temple—where sacrifices were made, where the priesthood served—was in Jerusalem. Synagogues, on the other hand, dotted the countryside of Israel, having come into being during the Babylonian captivity when Jews were unable to worship at the temple in Jerusalem. Usually small in structure, synagogues were established wherever ten or more Jewish males lived, and were not places of sacrifice, but of study, worship, and prayer. They were overseen not by the traditional priesthood, but by laymen through a council of elders—one of whom was appointed ruler. When a rabbi would come into the area, the ruler of the synagogue would invite him to come and speak on the Sabbath day. As we see in the Book of Acts, Paul took advantage of this, going from synagogue to synagogue preaching Jesus. (Courson)

Wuest Word Study - Taught

Taught - , didaskō (διδάσκω), the inchoative imperfect here, speaking of entrance into an activity. As soon as our Lord entered the synagogue, He went to teaching. The action of the imperfect is progressive, indicating that our Lord's message was a discourse of some length. In other words, He did an extended piece of work in His teaching. Both kērussō (κηρυσσω) “to make a proclamation,” and didaskō (διδάσκω) “to teach” are used of our Lord. He adapted His method of delivery to the place, time, audience, and subject matter. (Wuest)

In Every Study

In every Bible study, we will always see these things as God opens the Word to us, and illuminates His heart and mind to us:

- Who Is God? (How Great is He?)
- What Does He Think of Me? (How Wonderful Are His Thoughts Towards Me?)
- What Does He Want Me to Do?
- What Can I Boldly Request of Him?
- What Do I Need to Be on Guard of When I Leave Here Today?

- **Prayer – Boldly Ask Your God**
- The Word of God is Living and Powerful, and is ready, and will do a mighty work in our lives.
- *Hebrews 4:12 (NKJV)* ¹² For the word of God is living and powerful, and sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing even to the division of soul and spirit, and of joints and marrow, and is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart.

- **Boldly Come to Throne of Grace**
- Boldly come to the throne of grace, ask God to reveal Himself in a mighty way to you, and to do I might work in you, and through you.
- *Hebrews 4:16 (NKJV)* ¹⁶ Let us therefore come boldly to the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy and find grace to help in time of need.

Jesus Teaches – Because of Compassion

In chapter 6 of our study through Mark, we will see why Jesus teaches, because His heart is moved with compassion for His sheep, He feeds them. When time for His departure came, He took Peter aside, and we all know the deep heart exchange between them, with Jesus giving Peter the command, the calling, the charter..... feed My Sheep. When Jesus is moved with compassion for His sheep, He feeds them His Word. Here today, the fact that we are studying God's Word, a Word preserved and protected for us to do so, God's compassion is being poured out upon you, us, because when God has compassion on His sheep, He feeds them.

Mark 6:33–34 (NKJV) ³³ But the multitudes saw them departing, and many knew Him and ran there on foot from all the cities. They arrived before them and came together to Him. ³⁴ And Jesus, when He came out, saw a great multitude and was moved with compassion for them, because they were like sheep not having a shepherd. So He began to teach them many things.

John 21:15–17 (NKJV) ¹⁵ So when they had eaten breakfast, Jesus said to Simon Peter, "Simon, son of Jonah, do you love Me more than these?" He said to Him, "Yes, Lord; You know that I love You." He said to him, "Feed My lambs." ¹⁶ He said to him again a second time, "Simon, son of Jonah, do you love Me?" He said to Him, "Yes, Lord; You know that I love You." He said to him, "Tend My sheep." ¹⁷ He said to him the third time, "Simon, son of Jonah, do you love Me?" Peter was grieved because He said to him the third time, "Do you love Me?" And he said to Him, "Lord, You know all things; You know that I love You." Jesus said to him, "Feed My sheep.

Mary Magdalene on Resurrection Day

I find it more than interesting, but pure power, on Resurrection Day when Jesus appears to Mary Magdalene, through her tears, what one word does she call Jesus? Rabboni, to which the passage goes on to (which is to say teacher). Mary knew the heart of Jesus, the compassion of Jesus, because of and through, His teaching. She did not call Him, Lord, Savior, Mighty God, friend, nor even Jesus, she called Him.....teacher. It was through His teaching she knew His heart, and was one with His heart.

John 20:15–16 (NKJV) ¹⁵ Jesus said to her, "Woman, why are you weeping? Whom are you seeking?" She, supposing Him to be the gardener, said to Him, "Sir, if You have carried Him away, tell me where You have laid Him, and I will take Him away." ¹⁶ Jesus said to her, "Mary!" She turned and said to Him, "Rabboni!" (which is to say, Teacher).

Jesus Was Equipping the Saints for Work of Ministry

Now, Jesus taught when He came into the synagogue, and let us not forget who He taught other than the people in the synagogue, but the disciples with Him who He would entrust the ministry into after His departure.

Ephesians 4:11–16 (NKJV) ¹¹ And He Himself gave some to be apostles, some prophets, some evangelists, and some pastors and teachers, ¹² for the equipping of the saints for the work of ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ, ¹³ till we all come to the unity of the faith and of the knowledge of the Son of God, to a perfect man, to the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ; ¹⁴ that we should no longer be children, tossed to and fro and carried about with every wind of doctrine, by the trickery of men, in the cunning craftiness of deceitful plotting, ¹⁵ but, speaking the truth in love, may grow up in all things into Him who is the head—Christ—¹⁶ from whom the whole body, joined and knit together by what every joint supplies, according to the effective working by which every part does its share, causes growth of the body for the edifying of itself in love.

Hence Why We Teach

Jesus taught, and He taught an in-depth Bible study. And thus, why we do the same. I have been asked why I teach an in-depth Bible study on Sunday mornings, rather than a short topical message Sunday morning, and wait until a night during the week to teach in-depth? Because Sunday morning is our greatest opportunity to gather, more than any other day and time of the week. When Jesus was moved with compassion, He taught. Hence why we seek to keep a distraction free environment in our sanctuary when we study God's word. It is why we ask all to minimize movement in the sanctuary, it is why we do not have babies in the sanctuary, it is why we ask people to hold their conversations for after the study. Jesus, when He was moved with compassion for the sheep, He taught them. He tells Peter to feed them, for that is God's compassion for His people.

Mark 1:22 And they were astonished at His teaching, for He taught them as one having authority, and not as the scribes.

Jesus Taught with Power Because He Believed / It Is Written!

The scribes would speak from authorities, quoting rabbis in their teachings. Jesus, however, spoke with authority. "Ye have heard it said... but I say unto you...." He declared (Matthew 5--6). (Courson)

Jesus taught with power, because He believed the Word that He spoke, for He lived the Word, He is the Word, and He knew the heart of God, and He believed the Word of God can change lives!

The Scribes and Pharisees, the religious leaders of the day, they were afraid to stand on the Word of God alone, they would quote others but never simply say, this is what the Word of God says. We see that today, as many pastors and Christians are afraid to say, this is what the Word of God says, regardless what the culture says. If it offends or moves you, good, for it is meant to change your life.

Beloved, the power comes when we own the Word, when we believe, can quote, can claim it as our own. We believe the Word, is the inspired Word of God, given to us from God Himself.

2 Timothy 3:16-17 (NKJV) ¹⁶ All Scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness, ¹⁷ that the man of God may be complete, thoroughly equipped for every good work.

As we say Jesus slap down the Devil in the wilderness trail, Jesus would say - It is written, It is written, it is written. The Word says it, that settles it. Believe it and you will live in power, question it and you will continual live in weakness and defeat. God said it, that settles it. It Is Written! It Is Written! It Is Written! And you will live in power.

They Were Astonished

They were astonished, *eplēssō* (ἐκπλησσω), a very strong word meaning, "to strike out, expel by a blow, drive out or away, to strike one out of self-possession, to strike with panic, shock" in a passive sense "to be struck with astonishment, amazed." The verb is in the pictorial imperfect, describing the prolonged amazement of the audience. It is in the passive voice, showing that this amazement was caused by an outside influence, the tremendous impact that the Messiah made upon them by the new type of teacher and teaching that met their eyes and ears. (Wuest)

Luke Tells Us He Taught Gracious Words

In Luke, we're told that when Jesus taught, His words were gracious words. So when He taught His teaching had compassion in it, it had the heart of God, and the passion of God in every Word.

Luke 4:20-22 (NKJV) ²⁰ Then He closed the book, and gave it back to the attendant and sat down. And the eyes of all who were in the synagogue were fixed on Him. ²¹ And He began to say to them, "Today this Scripture is fulfilled in your hearing." ²² So all bore witness to Him, and marveled at the gracious words which proceeded out of His mouth. And they said, "Is this not Joseph's son?"

It was Church as Usual

These people came to synagogue every week, just like we go to church every week, and church (if you would) had become nothing but a routine, the sermon a speech, the worship a song, the fellowship a greeting. But when Jesus shows up, everything changes for those who have come to meet with God. We will see throughout this Gospel of

Mark, that not everyone came to the synagogue to meet with God, it still was just a routine for them. Oh precious church, we must guard ourselves that we do not allow church to become a routine for us. May we believe, and fully expect, that every time we come into this church that God will walk amongst us, and astonish us, impart gracious loving words, illuminate His heart to us, and not leave us the same person we were when we walked in, but change us to be more like Him, because we have been with Him.

Acts 4:13 (NKJV) ¹³ Now when they saw the boldness of Peter and John, and perceived that they were uneducated and untrained men, they marveled. And they realized that they had been with Jesus.

Mark 1:23 Now there was a man in their synagogue with an unclean spirit. And he cried out, **Mark 1:24** saying, “Let us alone! What have we to do with You, Jesus of Nazareth? Did You come to destroy us? I know who You are—the Holy One of God!”

Church as Usual / Hell Breaks Loose When Jesus Shows Up

Although this man may have sat undetected in the synagogue week after month after year, it wasn't until Jesus showed up that all hell broke loose quite literally. This should not be surprising. Whenever the Son of God shows up, the forces of hell respond. (Courson)

Demons Know His Name / And He is Holy

The Demons know who Jesus is. The Demon calls Jesus “the Holy One of God”. The demon himself testified that Jesus was holy and pure. The demons admitted that their wilderness temptations failed to corrupt Jesus

James 2:18–19 (NKJV) ¹⁸ But someone will say, “You have faith, and I have works.” Show me your faith without your works, and I will show you my faith by my works. ¹⁹ You believe that there is one God. You do well. Even the demons believe—and tremble!

Knowing Does Not Equal Salvation

But see this, knowing who Jesus is, does not mean salvation. The Devil and the demons know Jesus is God, but that doesn't mean they have salvation. You must receive Him as your Lord and Savior. Savior – because your sin separates you from the Holy God, you have broken God's Holy Law and that crime is punishable by death, but Jesus took your punishment there upon the cross. Lord – means master, and you will know if He is your Lord because you will follow Him.

Romans 3:23 (NKJV) ²³ for all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God,

Romans 6:23 (NKJV) ²³ For the wages of sin is death, but the gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord.

John 3:16 (NKJV) ¹⁶ For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have everlasting life.

Romans 10:9–10 (NKJV) ⁹ that if you confess with your mouth the Lord Jesus and believe in your heart that God has raised Him from the dead, you will be saved. ¹⁰ For with the heart one believes unto righteousness, and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation.

Mark 1:25 But Jesus rebuked him, saying, “Be quiet, and come out of him!”

Jesus Won't Take Public Press from Devil

You would think Jesus would let the demon talk more so everyone could see and hear that the demons proclaim Him as the Holy God, but Jesus won't take public press from the Devil. He doesn't need it. Nor will He allow the world to see that the Devil has any standing or clout to actually talk to the Holy God. Jesus says shut up, you don't talk to me you Devil, I am God, the Holy One, you are not my equal.

When Devil Talks – Say Shut Up

Notice Jesus doesn't dialogue with the demon, He simply says shut up. It is ok to be rude with the Devil. You know what, too many of you listen way too long to the Devil. When he speaks his lies to you, say shut up, when he speaks to call you away to some sin, say shut up. When he speaks to tear down your brother or sister in Christ, say shut up. We listen way too long to his voice, and Jesus shows us the way..... Shut up, we have nothing to discuss!

Tongue of Hell

And for me personally, when people come at me with the “tongue of hell”, to destroy me with their words, I stop them and simply say, we have nothing more to discuss, I will not stand here and let you destroy me with your tongue, for it is surely not from the Lord, but hell and the flesh. That goes for professing believer or the unbeliever. I am not going to allow you to put that poison in my mind, then I go home and think about over and over, churn it over and over, I simply say “stop” we have nothing more to discuss, until you talk to me as a person filled with the Holy Spirit.

James 3:5–6 (NKJV) ⁵ Even so the tongue is a little member and boasts great things. See how great a forest a little fire kindles! ⁶ And the tongue is a fire, a world of iniquity. The tongue is so set among our members that it defiles the whole body, and sets on fire the course of nature; and it is set on fire by hell.

James 3:13–18 (NKJV) ¹³ Who is wise and understanding among you? Let him show by good conduct that his works are done in the meekness of wisdom. ¹⁴ But if you have bitter envy and self-seeking in your hearts, do not boast and lie against the truth. ¹⁵ This wisdom does not descend from above, but is earthly, sensual, demonic. ¹⁶ For where envy and self-seeking exist, confusion and every evil thing are there. ¹⁷ But the wisdom that is from above is first pure, then peaceable, gentle, willing to yield, full of mercy and good fruits, without partiality and without hypocrisy. ¹⁸ Now the fruit of righteousness is sown in peace by those who make peace.

Mark 1:26 And when the unclean spirit had convulsed him and cried out with a loud voice, he came out of him.

Demon Got In this Man

So, you just don't one day become demon possessed. Somewhere, one day, this man entertained the demonic, dark, realm, and invited the demon into a personal relationship with him. Now we don't see much demon possession today, but I have definitely seen it, I have looked into the eyes of darkness I am sure of that, but rarely do we see it. But I know today we see lots of people energized and influenced by the devil, and it fuels the works of the flesh.

Youth – Be on Guard

I don't want to deep dive that subject today, but I do want to speak to the youth here today something very specific, and that is you must be on guard, you have to realize that there is a spiritual realm that we live in, this passage proves it and declares it. This man opened himself up somehow, some way, on day. And the Word of the Lord for you today, is don't buy the lie of this world, of the so-called innocent fun or entertainment of such things as, Dungeons and Dragons game, or the Ouija Board, or these Vampire Shows. That is a dark realm and you need to stay away from it. And let me tell you this, in Galatians 5, talking about the works of the flesh, verse 20 says “sorcery”, and we go oh yes this is that Ouija Board and likes you are talking about; yes, but check this out, the Greek word there for “sorcery is – pharmakeia”, it is where we get our English word for pharmacy. What do you go to the pharmacy for? To get Drugs. In the time of Jesus people would take drugs, to open themselves up to the dark spiritual, demonic, sorcery realm. And that is the same today, drugs (whether that is marijuana, opioids, or prescription drug abuse) open a person to a dark realm, but of course it is never presented that way, it is always presents as something fun, relieving, or even spiritual. It is presented as opening your eyes, enlightenment, leaving childhood and becoming an adult, and that is a lie, drugs are darkness, and quench the Light, don't go there. And if you have, shut it down, SHUT IT UP, and flee to the Light of Jesus Christ.

Galatians 5:19–21 (NKJV) ¹⁹ Now the works of the flesh are evident, which are: adultery, fornication, uncleanness, lewdness, ²⁰ idolatry, sorcery, hatred, contentions, jealousies, outbursts of wrath, selfish ambitions, dissensions, heresies, ²¹ envy, murders, drunkenness, revelries, and the like; of which I tell you beforehand, just as I also told you in time past, that those who practice such things will not inherit the kingdom of God.

Whole Bible – Whole Christian Life

It has been said, “We need the Whole Bible, for the Whole Christian Life”. I am teaching the whole Bible today. Not sermonettes for Christian-ettes, but fully equipping the saints of God.

Mark 1:27 Then they were all amazed, so that they questioned among themselves, saying, "What is this? What new doctrine is this? For with authority He commands even the unclean spirits, and they obey Him."

Mark 1:28 And immediately His fame spread throughout all the region around Galilee.

They Were Amazed - New Doctrine

They were amazed, because Jesus taught with power and authority, and He commanded even the demons with power and authority. We read here, and continually throughout the Gospels that many people had unclean spirits, demons in them. And what we are reading is that people just took it as "usual", yep that is the way it is around these parts, lots of people have demons, but what can a person do about it. They were used to "powerless", they were used to lives of bondage, they were used to church as usual, that demons can come to church but there was no power to do anything about it. They never expected God to show up and do something about it, they never expected that "hopelessness" could ever change. Until Jesus showed up. And your hopelessness, your bondage, your life as usual does not have to be that way, for when Jesus shows up, everything changes. Invite Jesus into that thing that binds you, and you will be ASTONISHED!

Hebrews 13:8 (NKJV) ⁸ Jesus Christ is the same yesterday, today, and forever.

Jesus Heals Peter's Mother-In (1:29-31) – (Matt 8:14-15, Luke 4:38-39)

Mark 1:29 Now as soon as they had come out of the synagogue, they entered the house of Simon and Andrew, with James and John.

Mark 1:30 But Simon's wife's mother lay sick with a fever, and they told Him about her at once.

Mark 1:31 So He came and took her by the hand and lifted her up, and immediately the fever left her. And she served them.

Bring Jesus Home with You

And here is what is important to see, and that is to bring Jesus home with you. Jesus was more than the God they talked about at church but brought Him home and their whole house was changed forever.

She Serves

It's interesting to me when God touches somebody, and they know it's been the touch of God, how their responses to get up and to serve others, and we see that here in Peter's mother-in-law, Jesus touch her and heals her, and she gets up and she serves others

Peter was Married

And it might be worth noting that if Peter, as the Catholic church will say, is the first pope. There's something tremendously missing in the Catholic understanding of the role of the pope because Peter is married and he has a home and that was his life.

Jesus Heals the Sick and Demon Possessed (1:32-34) – (Matt 8:16-17, Luke 4:40-44)

Mark 1:32 At evening, when the sun had set, they brought to Him all who were sick and those who were demon-possessed.

Mark 1:33 And the whole city was gathered together at the door.

Mark 1:34 Then He healed many who were sick with various diseases, and cast out many demons; and He did not allow the demons to speak, because they knew Him.

Miracles Prove Jesus is Promised Messiah

So Jesus begins to do miracles and that is fulfillment of the prophecy that the Messiah would do miracles and bring many healings. So one of the purposes of Jesus's Ministry of miracles, of healing is to validate and confirm the scriptures that he is the Messiah.

*Isaiah 35:4-6 (NKJV) ⁴ Say to those *who are* fearful-hearted, "Be strong, do not fear! Behold, your God will come *with* vengeance, *With* the recompense of God; He will come and save you." ⁵ Then the eyes of the blind shall be opened, And the ears of the deaf shall be unstopped. ⁶ Then the lame shall leap like a deer, And the tongue of the dumb sing. For waters shall burst forth in the wilderness, And streams in the desert.*

Tiberius Mineral Springs

They brought unto Him all that were diseased. “Brought” is pherō (φέρω), “to carry some burden, to move by bearing.” The verb is imperfect, speaking of continuous action. They were carrying the sick in a steady stream to Jesus. One marvels at the number of sick people who were brought to our Lord at this place. H. V. Morton, in his excellent volume, *In the Steps of The Master* has an interesting bit of information for us on this point. He speaks of hot mineral waters containing curative properties, that were the center of the most famous spa in the country. This was located at the city of Tiberius which was ten miles from Capernaum. He says that in the time of our Lord these baths attracted the sick from every part of the country. And so it was that in the midst of a great health resort country, the Great Physician ministered to the ailments of multitudes. “All that were diseased” is literally “All those who were having ailments. (Wuest)

24 Hour Period / How Blessed to be Refreshed by Peter’s Mother-in-Law

Now remind you, this is a 24 hour period. This is all in a day a day's work, if you would, for our understanding. We're told after sundown because that's the beginning of a new day in the Jewish calendar and now the people were free to move about the country. The Sabbath is over. They know where Jesus is. He's at Peter's house and they're bringing everybody into the town and Jesus is going to serve them it.

But Isn't it interesting who served Jesus first, Peter's mother in law. Do you not think that Jesus is tired? Do you think that Jesus was enjoying his time of relaxation and being served? Did she make them a meal? Probably. Fresh and cool water? Probably. She serves Jesus and Jesus then when the sun goes down, all these people come. He's refreshed. He's recharged to serve all these hurting people.

You Never Know the Impact / Children’s Ministry – Other Ministries

Christian, you never know the impact of your serving of the people that you serve. You may say, Oh, I only gave them a meal. Oh, I only gave them a loaf of bread. Oh, I only gave them a ride, and we have no idea the impact that we make in our little acts of serving as that person then goes and serves others, and we have no idea who they serve and how great their impact is for the people that they serve. I say to every one of you who serve in the children's ministry, you have no idea how great of an impact you make in or 90 minutes that you spent serving these children, the impact that you've made for their parents. To come in here to sit and hear the word of God and prayer fully with open ears and open heart and to be astonished (not by my teaching, but by the word God and speaking into their life). You'd have no idea the impact that you make of serving these children who one day will become adults themselves and serve others or serve on their campus right now or serve their siblings right now.

You have no idea the impact that you make in your act of servant just every day in this ministry here, whether in greeting, ushering, worship, a smile or conversation, you just never know.

Peter's mother, she was touched by Jesus. She immediately wants to serve Jesus and by serving Jesus she had no idea how great an impact that she made that day as he went on and served all these people that we just read.

I believe that we were saved to serve as part of our mission here on earth, part of our ministry here on earth, so I would challenge you with this thought today. Where do you serve? When do you serve? Who Do you serve?

3 Questions to Ask When Serving Opportunity Comes Before You

Here's three questions you can ask yourself when it comes to serving or should I get involved in this thing that's before me, that I'm being asked to do because we can't respond to everything, but we also shouldn't respond to nothing but three things to ask yourself as a quick rundown.

- What's in it for heaven's sake (the kingdom of God)?
- What's in it for me?
- And what's in it for them?

What's in it for the kingdom's sake of this thing? Will it matter to the kingdom and the king as we live in the Kingdom of God? If it's not going to have a kingdom impact, it does help me decide, do I really need to invest my

time in this? I'm not saying that everything must have kingdom impact, but I don't want to be doing mostly things that are not for the kingdom.

What's in it for me? And you may say, whoa, where did that come from? But let me explain. When I ask what's in it for me, it helps me determine my motives. Do I say I'm not going to serve them because there's nothing in it for me because they're nobody's or do I find myself saying, oh, I got to serve here. I got to get involved in this because there is somebody and I like to be recognized by them. It's okay to serve the somebodies as long as we also serve the so called nobody's, but we need to examine our heart in our motives for serving.

And then thirdly, what's in it for them, and that's the biggie. I can look and see there's a kingdom impact here. I can reach this person as a witness for Christ, the hands and feet for Christ to show them the love of Christ, to minister to them in the name of Jesus, to have an open door, to share the gospel, the that can really change the way we look at something that may change our no to a yes because we go, wow, what a great opportunity that is before me.

Don't Worry About Messy House

I like this. Peter's mother in law got up and served them. She didn't clean the house and go, Oh, the house is in a mess. I can't have you here. Look at this place. May we not be a people who can be hospitable because we're so worried about what people think.

Not All Were Healed

Notice that the scripture says that he healed many who were sick with diseases. He did not heal all, and that needs to be clearly understood that not all will be healed in this world. That is errant, heretical teaching to say that everyone gets healed who has enough faith, and if you don't get healed it is because your lack of faith. Jesus didn't heal every last person.

Billy Rutledge

Once a year, for the last few years, I spend 3 days away with about 30 pastor friends of mine, and this week was that tie with them. For the last two years my pastor friend Billy Rutledge has not been able to make because he is battling spinal cancer. Medicine cannot beat the cancer, just slow it down. He can't sit for long as 1.5 of his vertebrae's have been completely eaten away by the cancer, he has gone from 6.2, to 5.10, from 200 pounds of pure muscle to 160 pounds. We have prayed, and prayed, and prayed. At one of the regional pastor's conference we had 1,000 men pray over him, yet still no healing. To which Billy says, I am a nobody pastor on a small poor island in North Carolina, it anything but a tourist destination. Yet, through this disease God has given me a platform to now preach around the world (all over USA, Canada, Russia, Sudan, UK). When I preach on heaven people listen. My suffering speaks to them what I believe. Some trials, are purely "trials of glorification", where God is glorified, and the audience of the world is watching. Billy is also living faithfully for the "Audience of One", the Lord Himself, and He is being faithful. Wednesday when we finished our last session, the speaker closed in prayer, the silence was then broken by Billy, standing up, withering in pain for that is his daily life, and he said brothers, I may not be here next year, I am dying, that is a fact..... brothers my last words to you are Finish the course, finish the course, finish your course.

Acts 20:22-24 (NKJV) ²² And see, now I go bound in the spirit to Jerusalem, not knowing the things that will happen to me there, ²³ except that the Holy Spirit testifies in every city, saying that chains and tribulations await me. ²⁴ But none of these things move me; nor do I count my life dear to myself, so that I may finish my race with joy, and the ministry which I received from the Lord Jesus, to testify to the gospel of the grace of God.

2 Timothy 4:6-8 (NKJV) ⁶ For I am already being poured out as a drink offering, and the time of my departure is at hand. ⁷ I have fought the good fight, I have finished the race, I have kept the faith. ⁸ Finally, there is laid up for me the crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous Judge, will give to me on that Day, and not to me only but also to all who have loved His appearing.

Conclusion:

Hand it to Jesus

Jesus took Peter's mother in law and lifted her by the hand and that's what he wants to do to do to you. He wants you to hand that thing to him that he might lift you up. Cast all your cares upon him for he cares for you. Don't let Jesus be the last one you reach for, let Him be the first one you reach for. Give him your hand. Lift me up. Lord pull me out of this place, help me in this place that I'm at, whether it is a disease or an illness, or a hardship of a relational problem, and addiction, put your hand out. Jesus, take my hand, and He'll lift you up. Hand it to Jesus.

Bring the spiritually sick to Jesus, hand them to Jesus.

Prayer – Boldly Ask Your God

The Word of God is Living and Powerful, and is ready, and will do a mighty work in our lives.

Hebrews 4:12 (NKJV) ¹² For the word of God is living and powerful, and sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing even to the division of soul and spirit, and of joints and marrow, and is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart.

In Every Study

- Who Is God? (How Great is He?)
- What Does He Think of Me? (How Wonderful Are His Thoughts Towards Me?)
- What Does He Want Me to Do?
- What Can I Boldly Request of Him?
- What Do I Need to Be on Guard of When I Leave Here Today?

Boldly Come to Throne of Grace

Boldly come to the throne of grace, ask God to reveal Himself in a mighty way to you, and to do I might work in you, and through you.

Hebrews 4:16 (NKJV) ¹⁶ Let us therefore come boldly to the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy and find grace to help in time of need.

End of Study

Mark 1:35-45

Recap / Intro

We have come as far as verse 35 in our verse-by-verse study through this exciting, amazing, glorious, Gospel of Mark. We are about 1 to 1.5 years into Jesus public ministry. He has come on the scene and been baptized in the Jordan river by John the Baptist (1:9-11), then 40 days of the wilderness trial where He withstood everything the Devil threw at Him (1:12-13), He has called His first 4 disciples, Andrew, Peter, James, and John (1:16-20), and in our last study Jesus cast a demon out of a man while at the synagogue on the Sabbath, when to Peter's home and healed Peter's mother-in-law, and then as soon as the Sabbath was over people from all over the city they were in, which is Capernaum), brought the sick and demon possessed to Him and He healed many. Somewhere between verses 34 and 35, everyone goes home, and everyone goes to bed, and we pick it up here in verse 35.

Outline Mark 1:35-45:

- Jesus Preaches in Galilee (1:35-39)
- Jesus Cleanses a Leper (1:40-45)

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Hebrews 4:16 (NKJV) ¹⁶ Let us therefore come boldly to the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy and find grace to help in time of need.

Jesus Preaches in Galilee (1:35-39)

Mark 1:35 Now in the morning, having risen a long while before daylight, He went out and departed to a solitary place; and there He prayed.

Mark 1:36 And Simon and those who were with Him searched for Him.

Mark 1:37 When they found Him, they said to Him, "Everyone is looking for You."

Mark 1:38 But He said to them, "Let us go into the next towns, that I may preach there also, because for this purpose I have come forth."

Mark 1:39 And He was preaching in their synagogues throughout all Galilee, and casting out demons.

Sunday Morning / Sabbath Day

It's Sunday morning in this area of Israel. The Sabbath was on Saturday in our time, keeping that begins sun down on Friday all the way up to sun down on our Saturday, a new day begins in Israel to their religious calendar.

It's sundown and I liked that and that comes from Genesis as things go and start from darkness and gets brighter and brighter and that's how it is with our God, calling us out of darkness into his marvelous light that he is the light of the world and he called us and we stepped into the light.

Genesis 1:5 (NKJV) ⁵ God called the light Day, and the darkness He called Night. So the evening and the morning were the first day.

Genesis 1:8 (NKJV) ⁸ And God called the firmament Heaven. So the evening and the morning were the second day.

1 Peter 2:9–10 (NKJV) ⁹ But you are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, His own special people, that you may proclaim the praises of Him who called you out of darkness into His marvelous light; ¹⁰ who once were not a people but are now the people of God, who had not obtained mercy but now have obtained mercy.

So in Israel, the beginning of the new day would be differentiated when you could no longer tell the difference between a blue thread and a black thread, then they would say it is now the beginning of the new day, the sun has set.

A Desert Place / Something Only Learned in the Wilderness / Songbird Learns to Sing in the Darkness

Your translation may say, a solitary place. Maybe your translation says a deserted place and that is more appropriate. It's a deserted place and I find that ever so interesting that Jesus spent 40 days in the wilderness, in a deserted place, and here when he wants to get alone with the father, he heads back to a deserted place. You know Christians, there's just some things that are learned and developed only in the deserted places such as a wilderness trial experience.

We find in that place, as hard as it was, what we found more so than anything, this is where God met us in a special way and we learn from that, and then the key is to incorporate that into our daily lives of what God spoke to us in the darkness.

Now we can live in the light. What was developed in hardship. Now we bring that into our daily lives. The songbird learns to sing in the darkness. Researchers have determined that the songbird learns to sing in the darkness, and they learn to sing from their fathers. Christians, we learn many beautiful songs in our times of dark nights, and the Father in heaven teaching us a song that we will only learn in those times.

Power Examples of Jesus (Word – Baptism – Prayer)

I want to do the great works like Jesus does you may say, well, we definitely have seen now three things that apply directly to Jesus's power,

- and one is he was the God man who knew the word of God. He was studying the word of God at the age of 12 and so I speak to youth today becoming steeped and deep in the word of God. It doesn't have to happen after you get old, in fact, now is the greatest time to know this word of God and to lay the foundation of the word of God in your life so you always have a word to stand on when the enemy comes, as we saw with the devil in the wilderness, but you will have a word to give. As we saw Jesus teaching in the synagogue and may I reiterate, Jesus taught with power because he did not question that the Bible is the word of God. And Jesus taught with compassion because he knows it's the word of God that changes lives, and Luke tells us in his Gospel that Jesus taught with gracious words. That is what astonished the people was how gracious his words were. Even though they came with such power, the compassion was mixed there in the power the sheep that he was calling himself.

Luke 4:20–22 (NKJV) ²⁰ Then He closed the book, and gave it back to the attendant and sat down. And the eyes of all who were in the synagogue were fixed on Him. ²¹ And He began to say to them, "Today this Scripture is fulfilled in your hearing." ²² So all bore witness to Him, and marveled at the gracious words which proceeded out of His mouth. And they said, "Is this not Joseph's son?"

- Jesus had power on this earth, fully God, but laid down the liberties of his divinity and all that he did was always through his connection to the father. When he fed the 5,000, it was him looking to the father. Jesus had power because he was filled with the Holy Spirit and the Holy Spirit overflowed him and so all that he did when he called God into the work that he was doing, it was the overflowing of God. It was the work of God. In that situation, we must be people who don't try to do the work of the ministry, whether that's inside the church walls or trying to be a Christian outside the walls in our marriage, our school campus, and in our families. We need the baptism, that means supply of God and that when people come in contact with us and the ministry we're trying to do, which is simply ministry means to serve, that they would come in contact with God themselves. They do not meet us. They meet and have an encounter with God. My wife has this large flower-garden, and she is out there weeding, by hand, in 90-degree heat. I say to her, go buy a weed tiller, plug is into the power outlet, pull the trigger, and let it turn up the weeds, then you simply rake it out. There is a power supply available to you to do the work. She hasn't yet, one of these mornings I expect to go out to get the mail and find her passed out. But I will be the first

to admit, there are plenty of times I have done the work of the ministry in the flesh, and ready to pass out, and all the while God is holding a piece of power equipment, saying Ray use this, it works, and it works mightily, and you won't have to over burden yourself as you are right now.

Mark 1:9–11 (NKJV) ⁹ It came to pass in those days that Jesus came from Nazareth of Galilee, and was baptized by John in the Jordan. ¹⁰ And immediately, coming up from the water, He saw the heavens parting and the Spirit descending upon Him like a dove. ¹¹ Then a voice came from heaven, "You are My beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased."

- Jesus, here we see the third core of his life that he exemplified for us so that we might model it ourselves and then exemplify it for others and that is prayer. He met the father daily seeking and receiving direction for the day, getting a fresh supply of what he needed for the day because Jesus clearly every day poured himself out for others.

Isaiah 50:4 (NKJV) ⁴ "The Lord God has given Me The tongue of the learned, That I should know how to speak A word in season to him who is weary. He awakens Me morning by morning, He awakens My ear To hear as the learned."

5 Things in Bible Study & Prayer / Prayer Doesn't Have to Be Burdensome or Boring

We always say these five things in every Bible study, but what I want you to see is these five things are seamless and synonymous with prayer. So, we say, here's what we look for in every Bible study, but these five things are also guides as we pray. Our prayer life never needs to be boring and dry because how could it if when you opened up your Bible to lead you in your devotion and as you prayed, you prayed these five things, starting off with number one, who is God? And as you take that into prayer, you start with acknowledging, proclaiming reverence to who your God is, who it is that you're meeting with, who it is that will go out with you that day. And if you just get Jesus, what kind of day do you think you're going to have? You're going to have a mighty day, an awesome day because you're walking with Jesus who is God, and we pick up any passage in the Bible and we will find God in it, who he is, his greatness and the mighty works of his attributes.

Prayer – Boldly Ask Your God

The Word of God is Living and Powerful, and is ready, and will do a mighty work in our lives.

Hebrews 4:12 (NKJV) ¹² For the word of God is living and powerful, and sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing even to the division of soul and spirit, and of joints and marrow, and is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart.

In Every Study

- Who Is God? (How Great is He?)
- What Does He Think of Me? (How Wonderful Are His Thoughts Towards Me?)
- What Does He Want Me to Do?
- What Can I Boldly Request of Him?
- What Do I Need to Be on Guard of When I Leave Here Today?

Boldly Come to Throne of Grace

Boldly come to the throne of grace, ask God to reveal Himself in a mighty way to you, and to do I might work in you, and through you.

Hebrews 4:16 (NKJV) ¹⁶ Let us therefore come boldly to the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy and find grace to help in time of need.

Teach Us to Pray – Not Heal or Preach

So powerful was Jesus's ministry that when his disciples came, and they could ask him anything they want so that they too could live the effective abundant life that Jesus lived. They don't say, teach me how to preach. Teach me how to heal, they said, master, teach us to pray. They knew his power came through prayer and prayer is his connection to his father, and prayer is simply talking, and so Jesus is talking to the father.

Christianity Runs on Contact Principal / Follow Me – Copy What I Do

Christianity runs on the contact principle. That's all there is to it. It does not run on a reserve, a tank that has been filled up. It runs on the contact principal. We kind of think of it as a car. We fill up the tank and then we drive 300 miles. Then we fill the tank again, not so. It's more like that trolley cars that we see that run on the cable line.

They're continually moving because of their metal contact with the wire above them that is continually producing the power to move them down the track. Christianity runs on the contact principal, not the reserve principle.

When Jesus said to follow me, it goes way beyond just follow me, turn and obey my word. Jesus is saying, copy me. Follow my example. It's way more than we say, of follow my commandments, turn from the old life to the new life..... and all that's true, but it goes to an even greater depth of follow me in my example, and you will find life and that more abundant for I am the way, the truth and the life Jesus would say.

Prayer is Conversation (God is Not Burdensome Nor Boring)

Prayer is conversation with God, so consider that statement that if you consider your prayer life a burden or boring what you're saying because I can tell you God is anything but a burden and boring. And we have it here declared through the scriptures, 31,102 verses of just a pure, amazing, mighty, awesome, exciting God who's loving, compassionate and gracious unto thee. And that's what prayer should be. When we sit with him, he'll warm our hearts and heal, stoke the fire, and then send us fourth

Lord's Prayer

And if you ever wonder these five points how they were developed, you can see the Lord's prayer:

1. and as we say, who is God? We look at the Lord's prayer. Our Father, who art in heaven, hallowed be thy name, and just in that verse we see a God who is a father. We see a God who is in heaven, the highest of highs and he's hallowed, which means holy, He's separate, He's uncommon from anything in this world.
2. What does he think of me? He thinks enough of me that he says he's father, that means I'm son, your daughter, the God of heaven, the uncommon, none like him, calls us sons and calls his daughters even as sinners.
3. What does he want me to do? Thy kingdom come, thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven. God's will in heaven is God's will on earth. That's what he wants me to do. Live a life after his will.
4. What can I boldly ask of him? Give us this day, our daily bread, and lead us not into temptation. I can ask for provision and I can ask for spiritual protection, so he provides more than spiritually, He also provides physically, but this life is more than physical, we see that it's also spiritual.
5. And what does he want us to be on guard about? Deliver us from the evil one?

Luke 11:1-4 (NKJV) ¹ Now it came to pass, as He was praying in a certain place, when He ceased, that one of His disciples said to Him, "Lord, teach us to pray, as John also taught his disciples." ² So He said to them, "When you pray, say: Our Father in heaven, Hallowed be Your name. Your kingdom come. Your will be done On earth as it is in heaven. ³ Give us day by day our daily bread. ⁴ And forgive us our sins, For we also forgive everyone who is indebted to us. And do not lead us into temptation, But deliver us from the evil one."

You can take every one of those points and turn them in the prayers.

1. Lord, I praise you. You are my heavenly father. You're the God of Heaven. That means you speak and world's come into existence. That means you rule and reign and there's none like you, who can stop the Lord Almighty, no one can stop the Lord Almighty.
2. Lord, what do you think of me? You're willing to wake up early and pray for me. You're willing to sit on the right-hand throne of the father and intercede for me.
3. What do you want me to do? Lord? I think you're asking me to get up before I start running and gunning for the day, but to sit in a quiet place, a deserted place so that your will, will become my will, and my will, will become what your will is, and we will be seamlessly woven together.
4. What can I boldly ask of You? Lord? You know, situation that's going on in my life. Give me daily bread, daily manna from heaven right now. lord my son needs you, Lord right now my wife needs You right now. The bank account says this, my relationship says that, my ministry requires that, my friends say this, etc, etc.
5. what do I need to be on guard? Lord? A demon showed up at the church Lord I think that's the same demon I met at the workplace last week. Lead us not into temptation. Lord, I want to have victory in this area. I don't want these things to dog me. I want to be set apart for you and I want to glorify you. Lord, you know the situation, help me to see the wiles of the Devil, my flesh, and the world.

You pick up any verse, you'll be able to find these five things in your morning devotion period.

Mark 1:36 And Simon and those who were with Him searched for Him.

Teach Us to Pray – Was Not This Day

So I had said the day will come when they will say, Lord, teach us to pray, but that's not the day today. They don't know where he's at. They're all out there looking for him. They have not come to see and know the rhythm of Jesus that every morning he departed early and spent time with his father. And so you know, there are some things that just are not going to be taught but is going to have to be caught and it's something that you model day after day, month after month, year after year, and eventually those around you see it and realize it and connect with it. Parents, there's things that we have to model for our children that they have to see what's a priority? And let me tell you, priorities, speak loud and clear what you're willing to wake up early for. That's just a basic fact. What are you willing to wake up early for?

Mark 1:37 When they found Him, they said to Him, “Everyone is looking for You.”

Peter Searching – Little Annoyed / Prayer Precedes Ministry

In verse 36 the wording lends itself in that is used that they were a little put off by this, that Jesus would go and be unavailable because there was so much ministry to do and so there's a rebuke that you're actually reading here and notice that it's led by Peter. Peter's greatest foot in mouth disease we always go back to when Jesus is speaking of going to the cross and Peter goes, far be it from thee Lord, and Jesus says, get behind me Satan, and Ouch that hurt. But here we see a gentle rebuke again, because Jesus is saying Peter, you have no idea that prayer precedes ministry always. And you know Christian, we are always so busy to get to the ministry or the employment or the facebook and we think we can come back later and pick up the prayer part, but usually we don't.

Prayerlessness – My Declaration of Independence

Prayerlessness is my declaration of independence.

Jesus Found Quiet Place – Have You? / Everybody is Busy / Have to Decide What is Non-Negotiable

Jesus found a place away from the noise away from the distractions. A place that he can meet, connect for the day with the father. Christian, do you have a place you need to prepare a place. Everybody's busy. Everybody's busy. You just have to decide which activity has the greatest priority in your life. Hey, please understand the point is not that you have to wake up before the sun and pray, the point is that you find the quiet place before you go out and engage in the day.

Certain things must be non-negotiable in our lives, and a prayer time set apart with the Lord before the day begins must be one of them:

The recent winner of the all-city handball championship in Portland was unusual because, at thirty-seven years of age, he was relatively old for a handball champion. It was also unusual because he didn't start playing the game until he was thirty-five. But more unusual than his age or his newness to the sport was the fact that, having lost his right arm as a Vietnam War veteran, he played handball with only one hand. When asked how he had won, he pared his answer down to one word: decisions. “Every time the ball comes toward my opponents,” he said, “they must decide right hand or left hand. I, however, am absolutely sure which hand I'm going to use. There's no debate.”

I like that! When you simplify your life concerning certain nonnegotiable issues, you no longer ask, “Should I pray this morning? Should I go to Bible Study on Wednesday?” Should I be in church Sunday night?”—for the decision has already been made. (Courson)

Mark 1:38 But He said to them, “Let us go into the next towns, that I may preach there also, because for this purpose I have come forth.”

Mark 1:39 And He was preaching in their synagogues throughout all Galilee, and casting out demons.

Going to Next Town – Difference Between Jesus Who Prayed & Disciples that Didn't

And now notice this, that Jesus says, we're going to the next town and here's the importance of what we see as Jesus is in prayer, these disciples have not been in prayer and Jesus now has been told by the Father where to go next. He did not tell them the night before, we're going to the next town because Jesus has just now been told in his communion with the father, go to the next town, even though all wisdom so called appears to say stay here in Capernaum and touch all these people that are still coming to him, but God says, nope. Get up and move on.

The differences between those who were in prayer (Jesus), and those who were not in prayer (the disciples). Why did the father say, move on? Why did Jesus connect with the father and be in the agreement that it was time to move on? It could be that Jesus, he's telling people to be quiet about him because these people we know from reading all the accounts of the Gospel, they want to make him king or mayor over the town, and that's not what Jesus was there for, we're not here for a show, we're here to proclaim the gospel and that's what he's going to do in the next town. Here in this town people want to see healings. Whereas Jesus is, I've preached, and I brought healing. Now it's time for me to move on.

Jesus Cleanses a Leper (1:40-45)

Mark 1:40 Now a leper came to Him, imploring Him, kneeling down to Him and saying to Him, "If You are willing, You can make me clean."

Peter Vividly Remembers the Story

(1:40) There came a leper. The verb is the historic present, picturing a past event with the vividness of a present reality. "And there comes a leper." (Wuest). Peter (mostly) was the one who told John-Mark all these details, and Peter is remembering it like it was yesterday, he was saying man let me tell you the story when this leper came, it was amazing. This writing of Mark is probably 20-30 years after this event, yet Peter remembers it like it was yesterday

The Leper Comes with Urgent Appeal - Begs

(1:40) To Him, "to" is pros (προς), face to face with Jesus. The leper confronts Him. Beseeching, parakaleō (παρακαλέω), an urgent appeal, "I beg of you, please." (Wuest). The leper is tired of being tired of this rotten disease and life he is living.

Asks Based on Emotion – Not a Reason

(1:40) If thou wilt. There are two words in Greek meaning "to be willing, to desire," thelō (θέλω), "a desire that comes from one's emotions," and boulomai (βουλομαι), "a desire which comes from one's reason." The first is used here. The leper appeals to the tenderheartedness of the Messiah. (Wuest). The beggar isn't asking Jesus to heal to show off His power, to send a message to the world that He is God, but the beggar asks based on the heart of Jesus, that Jesus would do this based on an emotion of compassion, not mental reason.

Leper Doesn't Doubt Ability of Jesus to Heal

(1:40) Thou canst, dunamai (δυναμαι), "to have power, to be able." The leper does not doubt the ability of the Lord to heal. He has heard of His Capernaum ministry. But "he doubts the will," Expositors says, "naturally from the nature of the disease, especially if it be the first cure of the kind, or the first so far as the man knows." (Wuest)

Are You Sick and Tired?

Are you sick and tired of being sick and tired? Take the "lesson of the leper". Come with urgent appeal, be desperate for change, not only believing that Jesus can change things, but His heart is filled with compassion and emotion for you to make the change for you. Let me ask anyone here today, what is so good in your life, that you won't give yourself to Jesus. There are some here today, you are doing the same thing over and over and over again, and it ends that same way over and over and over again..... empty, futile, painful, sorrow, and you have no peace in your life! Literally, what do you have to lose by saying Jesus, come, please come and help me!

Mark 1:41 Then Jesus, moved with compassion, stretched out His hand and touched him, and said to him, “I am willing; be cleansed.”

Mark 1:42 As soon as He had spoken, immediately the leprosy left him, and he was cleansed.

Jesus Was Moved with Compassion / Touches not to Heal – But out of Compassion

(1:41) Jesus, moved with compassion, *splagchnizomai* (σπλαγχνίζομαι), passive voice. The pitiful state of the leper aroused in our Lord's heart the feeling of pity and love. Expositors says, “Watch carefully the portraiture of Christ's personality in this Gospel, Mark's specialty.” Luke, describing the same incident, does not have the words “moved with compassion,” but has the same construction that Mark uses “having stretched out His hand,” an aorist participle, and “touched him,” an aorist verb, but instead of using the finite verb “saith” of Mark, he uses the present participle “saying.” This gives us a wonderful truth. The rule of Greek grammar that governs this construction is that the action of the present tense participle goes on simultaneously with the action of the leading verb. That is, Jesus was saying “I will” at the time He was touching the leper. But the thought “I will,” the determination to follow out His desire to cleanse the leper, and the act of cleansing him, all preceded the spoken words and the outstretched hand. *All of which means that our Lord did not touch the leper in order to cleanse him, but to show him and the people around, that he was cleansed of his leprosy.* The Levitical law forbade a Jew to touch a leper. Our Lord lived under that law and obeyed it. The first kind touch of a human hand that leper ever experienced, was the gentle touch of the Son of God.

Verb Tense – Immediately Cleansed

Be thou clean. The verb is in the aorist passive imperative. That is, “be cleansed at once.” It was an immediate cure. (Wuest)

Leprosy Always Cleansed – Not Healed

Interestingly, nowhere in the scriptures is it ever said that leprosy was healed. It always relates and says that it was cleansed and there's a reason behind that, and it is because leprosy is a picture of sin and sin is never healed. It's cleansed. It can only be cleansed by the precious blood of Jesus Christ.

Leprosy is Under the Skin

Leprosy, by the time you see it on the skin, it's truly too late for leprosy is something that's underneath the skin and eventually works itself to the surface. Leprosy is an inward disease, not an outward disease, and hence the picture of sin. It's an inward disease. It eventually works its way outward and everybody can see it, but truly it's something underneath and even what we can see on the surface of sin pales in comparison to what's truly going on underneath the skin, in the heart of a man, in the heart of a woman,

Jesus Willing Because Wishes None Should Perish

Jesus says, I am willing, and so the picture of sin and the compassion of God, he wishes that none should perish, but that all should seek repentance. He takes no pleasure in the death of the wicked. He gave his only begotten son so that whoever, that's all any who believes shall not perish but have everlasting life. Anyone ever tells you that there's a God in heaven who chooses some for salvation and does not choose other are misguided, and if anyone tells you there's a God who chooses some for hell, they're misguided. God wishes that none should perish, all should seek repentance and therefore you, wherever you are, whatever your sin may be, whatever your past may be, there's a God who says, I am willing to cleanse you, and the antidote for your disease is my precious blood of my only son and I give him for you so that you might have life, new life, abundant life, eternal life with God.

Here we see in this man, God has compassion even on those who have been totally devoured by their flesh. God has compassion and willingness to touch person that nobody else in the world wants anything to do with the people that the world cast off and kicks out. Jesus says, come to me. Let me touch you. I am willing.

2 Peter 3:9 (NKJV)⁹ The Lord is not slack concerning His promise, as some count slackness, but is longsuffering toward us, not willing that any should perish but that all should come to repentance.

Ezekiel 33:11 (NKJV)¹¹ Say to them: ‘As I live,’ says the Lord GOD, ‘I have no pleasure in the death of the wicked, but that the wicked turn from his way and live. Turn, turn from your evil ways! For why should you die, O house of Israel?’

Jesus Came – Leper Cleansed – Because Jesus Prayed / God’s Will Always Has a Timing Associated with It

G Campbell Morgan says this sentence structure relates to Jesus saying, this is the purpose that I came, which goes beyond his ministry and mission calling, but very specific of this is the purpose that I came out here to pray this morning, to find out where God wants me to go and what he wants me to do and when he wants me to do it, and he's saying, go to another town and preach there.

Christian, God’s will always have a timing with it. Divine appointments, and not random acts, but sovereign intersections.

That's amazing. That's what Jesus got out of his morning prayer. Even in the mist of all the great success that you would say, this makes no sense to leave. A great and opened door has opened is the word is spreading like wildfire. The ministry has taken off and Jesus says, well, God says it's time to take off. So he does, obeying the father's will and his timing, which is now.

Imagine had Jesus skipped his morning devotion and not moved into this small town. How different life would have been for this leper? I believe without a doubt, because God in his great compassion, he would send Jesus out of the great, exciting ministry that was flourishing to say, go to this small town which no one's ever heard of (for Aas you see, it's not named here in our passage) and minister there because there's a leper that needs to be touched. Go touch him. The masters touch, God is so good, he'll leave the 99 to come touch you, to come and minister to you, to come and draw you to himself. He'll come to save you, and amazingly comes to serve you, and then there's a place that he wants to speak to you (as Jesus models in the quiet time before all the hustle and bustle, the pounding of the feet, the knocking at the door, the ringing of the phone, the pinging of the texts messages), It's just the time God speaks to your heart.

Mark 1:43 And He strictly warned him and sent him away at once,

Mark 1:44 and said to him, “See that you say nothing to anyone; but go your way, show yourself to the priest, and offer for your cleansing those things which Moses commanded, as a testimony to them.”

Mark 1:45 However, he went out and began to proclaim it freely, and to spread the matter, so that Jesus could no longer openly enter the city, but was outside in deserted places; and they came to Him from every direction.

Law of Moses

God established in the Law those being cleansed of leprosy to go to the priest and show themselves, and once confirmed by the priest that the person has been cleansed of the leprosy, sacrifices were made on behalf of the person, and then they were allowed back into society of the Nation. In the ministry of Jesus, there was a stream of lepers flowing into Jerusalem, testifying there was a miracle worker among them, just a prophesied the Messiah would do, mighty miracles.

Leviticus 14:1–7 (NKJV) ¹ Then the LORD spoke to Moses, saying, ² “This shall be the law of the leper for the day of his cleansing: He shall be brought to the priest. ³ And the priest shall go out of the camp, and the priest shall examine him; and indeed, if the leprosy is healed in the leper, ⁴ then the priest shall command to take for him who is to be cleansed two living and clean birds, cedar wood, scarlet, and hyssop. ⁵ And the priest shall command that one of the birds be killed in an earthen vessel over running water. ⁶ As for the living bird, he shall take it, the cedar wood and the scarlet and the hyssop, and dip them and the living bird in the blood of the bird that was killed over the running water. ⁷ And he shall sprinkle it seven times on him who is to be cleansed from the leprosy, and shall pronounce him clean, and shall let the living bird loose in the open field.

Isaiah 35:4–6 (NKJV) ⁴ Say to those *who are* fearful-hearted, “Be strong, do not fear! Behold, your God will come *with* vengeance, *With* the recompense of God; He will come and save you.” ⁵ Then the eyes of the blind shall be opened, And the ears of the deaf shall be unstopped. ⁶ Then the lame shall leap like a deer, And the tongue of the dumb sing. For waters shall burst forth in the wilderness, And streams in the desert.

Luke 7:20–23 (NKJV) ²⁰ When the men had come to Him, they said, “John the Baptist has sent us to You, saying, ‘Are You the Coming One, or do we look for another?’” ²¹ And that very hour He cured many of infirmities, afflictions, and evil spirits; and to many blind He gave sight. ²² Jesus answered and said to them, “Go and tell John the things you have seen and heard: that the blind see, the lame walk, the lepers are cleansed, the deaf hear, the dead are raised, the poor have the gospel preached to them. ²³ And blessed is he who is not offended because of Me.”

Naaman Healed

Naaman (a commander of the army of the king of Syria) was healed (aka – cleansed). He was a gentile not a Jew. He did not go to the Temple to make sacrifice for his cleansing; so no one had ever come to the Temple in

accordance to the Law, for declaration that they were indeed cleansed of leprosy, until the time of Jesus, and there was a sea of people coming, and what we see is Jesus great love for the religious leaders, priests, scribes, gate keepers, Temple workers, that the Messiah has come! What a message of love sent to them, Jesus wishes that none should perish but all seek repentance.

2 Kings 5:14 (NKJV) ¹⁴ So he went down and dipped seven times in the Jordan, according to the saying of the man of God; and his flesh was restored like the flesh of a little child, and he was clean.

Leper Healed – Religious Blinded

Here a leper gets saved but the religious won't accept, and they will not receive and enter into a relationship because of their religion.

Conclusion:

Once you have been touched by the Master, your life will never be the same.

"Twas battered and scarred, and the auctioneer,
thought it scarcely worth his while,
To spend much time with the old violin,
But he held it up with a smile.
What am I bid for the old violin?
A dollar, a dollar, who'll make it two?
Two dollars, who'll make it three?
Three dollars once, three dollars twice,
Going for three, but no,
From the back of the room came a gray haired man,
And he picked it up with the bow.
He wiped the dust from the old violin,
And tightening the loosened strings,
He played a melody as pure and sweet,
As caroling angels sing.
The music ceased, and the auctioneer
With a voice that was quiet and low,
Said, "What am I bid for the old violin,
And he held it up with the bow.
A thousand dollars, who'll make it two,
Two thousand, who'll make it three,
Three thousand once three thousand twice,
And going and gone said, he.
The people cheered, but some of them cried,
We cannot quite understand, what changed its worth,
Swift came the reply, the touch of the Masters hand.
And many a man with life out of tune,
and battered and scarred by sin,
Is auctioned cheap to the thoughtless crowd,
much like the old violin.
A mess of pottage, a glass of wine,
A game and he travels on,
He's going once, he's going twice,
He's going and almost gone,
But the Master comes, and the thoughtless,
Crowd never can quite understand,
The worth of a soul and the change
That is wrought, by the touch of the Master's hand.

Prayer – Boldly Ask Your God

The Word of God is Living and Powerful, and is ready, and will do a mighty work in our lives.

Hebrews 4:12 (NKJV) ¹² For the word of God is living and powerful, and sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing even to the division of soul and spirit, and of joints and marrow, and is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart.

In Every Study

- Who Is God? (How Great is He?)
- What Does He Think of Me? (How Wonderful Are His Thoughts Towards Me?)
- What Does He Want Me to Do?
- What Can I Boldly Request of Him?
- What Do I Need to Be on Guard of When I Leave Here Today?

Boldly Come to Throne of Grace

Boldly come to the throne of grace, ask God to reveal Himself in a mighty way to you, and to do I might work in you, and through you.

Hebrews 4:16 (NKJV) ¹⁶ Let us therefore come boldly to the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy and find grace to help in time of need.

End of Study

Mark 2

Mark 2:1-12

Intro/Recap

We are approximately 1-1.5 years into the public ministry of Jesus Christ. We have read up to this point the baptism of Jesus (the Holy Spirit upon Him), His wilderness trial for 40 days (proving His authority over the Devil and his wiles – and shows us how we can too). Jesus has called His first four disciples (Andrew, Peter, James, and John – and He has kept calling since then, and here you are today). So in our point where we pick up today, Jesus' popularity is not just growing, it is exploding, and the religious leaders in Jerusalem are taking note of that we will see in our study today. Jesus is teaching with power and authority like no one has ever done, He is healing the sick, and casting out demons (proving His authority over the demonic realm).

Jesus Great Compassion / An Instant Classic

Last study we closed with Jesus healing a man with leprosy, and we saw not just Jesus' power, but His compassion He has on man, and He is the same yesterday, today, and forever (Hebrews 13:8), and He has great compassion on you today in whatever your situation you are in. And today we read what I call, and "Instant Classic", one of the most beloved stories in all the Gospels, as in our study four friends bring a friend who is paralyzed, and the bible study Jesus is teaching is so packed they can't get their friend to Jesus through the door, so they go through the roof, for nothing is going to stop them from getting their friend to Jesus.

Hebrews 13:8 (NKJV) ⁸ Jesus Christ is the same yesterday, today, and forever.

Why Listen?

And so a powerful passage for us to see today, first as we look once again upon the love and compassion Jesus has on lost and hurting man. And, we glean practical principles and practices on getting our friends to Jesus, what obstacles we need to overcome, and how to overcome them, so that we might get our friends in need, to Jesus, that they may see the face of Jesus, hear His voice, and experience His touch.

3 Barriers encountered bringing a friend to Christ:

- The people blocked them
- Material things got in the way
- The distance was great

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Hebrews 4:16 (NKJV) ¹⁶ Let us therefore come boldly to the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy and find grace to help in time of need.

Jesus Forgives and Heals a Paralytic (2:1-12)

Mark 2:1 And again He entered Capernaum after some days, and it was heard that He was in the house.

Mark 2:2 Immediately many gathered together, so that there was no longer room to receive them, not even near the door. And He preached the word to them.

Mark 2:3 Then they came to Him, bringing a paralytic who was carried by four men.

Mark 2:4 And when they could not come near Him because of the crowd, they uncovered the roof where He was. So when they had broken through, they let down the bed on which the paralytic was lying.

Mark 2:5 When Jesus saw their faith, He said to the paralytic, "Son, your sins are forgiven you."

Mark 2:6 And some of the scribes were sitting there and reasoning in their hearts,

Mark 2:7 "Why does this Man speak blasphemies like this? Who can forgive sins but God alone?"

Mark 2:8 But immediately, when Jesus perceived in His spirit that they reasoned thus within themselves, He said to them, "Why do you reason about these things in your hearts?"

Mark 2:9 Which is easier, to say to the paralytic, 'Your sins are forgiven you,' or to say, 'Arise, take up your bed and walk'?

Mark 2:10 But that you may know that the Son of Man has power on earth to forgive sins"—He said to the paralytic,

Mark 2:11 "I say to you, arise, take up your bed, and go to your house."

Mark 2:12 Immediately he arose, took up the bed, and went out in the presence of them all, so that all were amazed and glorified God, saying, "We never saw anything like this!"

Picking up verse-by-verse

(Mark 2:1 NKJV) And again He entered Capernaum after some days, and it was heard that He was in the house.

Jesus Returns to Capernaum

The last time Jesus was in Capernaum was Mark 1, where He cast the unclean spirit out of the man. If you recall Capernaum is where Jesus began His ministry. His popularity increased so much that he had to leave Capernaum. After healing Peter's mother-in-law and ministering to the multitude, the next day he awoke early to pray, then when they came to Him he said, "Let us go into the next towns, that I may preach there also: for therefore came I forth." So now after preaching in many cities, He is returning to Capernaum.

Mark 1:35–39 (NKJV) ³⁵ Now in the morning, having risen a long while before daylight, He went out and departed to a solitary place; and there He prayed. ³⁶ And Simon and those who were with Him searched for Him. ³⁷ When they found Him, they said to Him, "Everyone is looking for You." ³⁸ But He said to them, "Let us go into the next towns, that I may preach there also, because for this purpose I have come forth." ³⁹ And He was preaching in their synagogues throughout all Galilee, and casting out demons.

Peter's House

Most likely this is Peter's house again.

Mark 1:29 (NKJV) ²⁹ Now as soon as they had come out of the synagogue, they entered the house of Simon and Andrew, with James and John.

(Mark 2:2 NKJV) Immediately many gathered together, so that there was no longer room to receive them, not even near the door. And He preached the word to them.

Notice What He Does – He Teaches

And Notice what He does when He reaches the city, He teaches them, He left to preach, he returned to preach, for that is what He does because of His compassion, He gives them manna from heaven, the Word of God.....

Mark 6:34 (NKJV) ³⁴ And Jesus, when He came out, saw a great multitude and was moved with compassion for them, because they were like sheep not having a shepherd. So He began to teach them many things.

Jesus Preached Because Word Changes Lives

Jesus preached the word. I just love that statement. Jesus preached the word because he believed the word, He knew it is the Word that's what changes lives. And may we never waiver on that. Even in the world that we live in that isn't so interested in the word. May we be a people who will continue on teaching and preaching the word

The Word Used Here is Different form of Preaching

He preached the word to them. “Preached” is *laleō* (λαλεω) not *kērussō* (κηρυσσω) here. The latter word means “to make a public proclamation in a formal, grave, and authoritative manner which must be heeded.” *Laleō* (λαλεω), used originally just of sounds like the chatter of birds, the prattling of children, is used here of the most serious kind of speech. It takes note of the sound and the manner of speaking. One thinks of the words in the song In the Garden; “He speaks, and the sound of His voice is so sweet, the birds hush their singing.” Robertson says that the word *laleō* (λαλεω) is common in the vernacular papyri examples of social intercourse. Our Lord thus spoke to the crowd assembled, in a conversational tone. The beauty of His voice, the charm of His manner, and the tenderness and love in His countenance, must have come to this weary, sick group of people as a breath from heaven. The verb is in the imperfect tense, emphasizing continuous action. Expositors’ comment on the tense of this verb is as follows; “Jesus was preaching the gospel of the kingdom when the following incident happened. Preaching always first.” (Wuest)

The idea of this word used here is that Jesus was speaking to the crowd in a conversational tone. It lends itself to a warm atmosphere. I like what an old-old commentator wrote regarding this verse and the word used here for preaching:

- *Our Lord thus spoke to the crowd assembled, in a conversational tone. The beauty of His voice, the charm of His manner, and the tenderness and love in His countenance, must have come to this weary, sick group of people as a breath from heaven. (Robertson)*

To which I say, indeed! There are times when the Lord preaches to me, a firm and direct call to make change, to repent, to turn, to obey. There are times when He instructs me, to grow me in wisdom and knowledge regarding the things of God. And there are times, where He simply talks to me, warms me, charms me with His beauty and love, which literally melts me, and I fall deeper and deeper in love with Him. As much as I love the latter and those times, I need all three to be a complete man of God.

[*2 Timothy 3:16–17 \(NKJV\)*](#) ¹⁶ *All Scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness,* ¹⁷ *that the man of God may be complete, thoroughly equipped for every good work.*

(Mark 2:3 NKJV) Then they came to Him, bringing a paralytic who was carried by four men.

(Mark 2:4 NKJV) And when they could not come near Him because of the crowd, they uncovered the roof where He was. So when they had broken through, they let down the bed on which the paralytic was lying.

Take Off Work – Pay for Damage / Nothing More Important than Getting Friend to Jesus

Look at these four men, nothing was more important in their life than them getting their friend to a Bible study. You know, maybe one of these men had to take off work. Maybe they missed their softball game, or movie night. Now you know, somebody is going to have to pay for this roof and it would most likely be these four guys right (for there were laws in Israel, it wasn’t a lawless society). But they don't care. We'll pay for it was their attitude it appears as they start hacking a hole in somebody's home. Archeological discovery and historical writings tell us these roofs were some tough stuff, they were also used as upstairs/outdoor patios that is how sturdy they were made. So it would kind of be like prying up deck boards on a backyard deck today.

Sometimes Ministry Costs You

And there's Peter watching someone hack a hole in his roof, and he says nothing about it, nothing! You know, sometimes in ministry, some of your stuff that you cherish, it gets trampled on or destroyed or misused, but we have to come to the determination of temporal versus eternal

Jesus Doesn't Address Damage / Addresses Eternal – Over Temporal / May We Fix Eyes on Eternal

Jesus doesn't address anything to do with the temporal right here. He is immediately moving into the eternal, and there is a word for us as we look at this. May we be living and fixing our eyes upon the eternal, and get free from all this temporal stuff, of our stuff, our time, our comfort and ease, our plans, and say, Lord, if you want to disrupt my day, you want to disrupt my stuff, it's okay, I'm here to serve you and your kingdom and your glory.

Imagine Difference in Everyday Life

Imagine the difference of our everyday lives, if everything that comes before us, we view it in eternal perspective rather than temporal? How free would we be from the cares of this world, and how spiritually perceptive we would be to the lost and hurting people God puts in the path of our life.

Let's Look at Barriers They Faced – That We Face

Let's take a moment here and talk about the physical barriers we see here on them getting their friend to Jesus, and how we too face the same type of barriers today.

3 Barriers / 3 Overcoming's

3 Barriers encountered bringing a friend to Christ:

- The people blocked them
- Material things got in the way
- The distance was great

3 things they did to overcome the barriers:

1. They went around the people, actually they went over the people
2. They broke through the material things
3. They reached Jesus with their friend

(People Blocked) / Imagine the Hole – Jesus Considers them Men of Faith / People & Satan Say Radical / Go Over

The people blocked them – There were so many people around the door they couldn't get to Jesus. We may say he is hanging out with the wrong people, or we may even say what will the people think of me. Can you imagine what the people thought when the dirt started falling from the roof, then a hole popped open, then here comes this man being lowered down. People probably thought they were crazy, rude, brash, ignorant, disturbing, - Yet let it be noted, Jesus in verse 4 saw their faith, Jesus considers them men of faith. You may think people will consider you crazy, but know the truth, Jesus considers you a person of faith when you minister for Him. Satan will "don't get radical or you'll turn them off. Just be cool." We become so cool that we become the frozen chosen. Saved but ineffective. If you care what people think of you, then you won't share. You will be easily more persuaded by what people think of you when you see temporal over eternal. Go over the people, for sometimes we have to lay down our pride to reach people with the gospel. Most of the time sharing the gospel is not popular - but eternity is on the line.

(Material in the Way) / Pray & Show Material is Temporal / Don't Assume All Well – Sincerely Ask How Are You

Material things got in the way - We may think material things can get in the way today. That the person loves their money, or the fine things in life too much to follow Jesus. If that is true we have to break through those things, show people that these things are only temporal, fading, and Jesus is the only thing that lasts. We must also not let those things keep us from sharing with the person. Last month 2 famous people took their lives There was Anthony Bourdain (successful food critic of CNN fame), Kate Spade (successful fashion designer). You would think they had it all, Fame, fortune, love, but in reality, they were empty, and they gave up on life. You never know what's in a person's heart, until you look in it. A simple question can change someone's life - Hey how's things, not as a greeting, but really asking them, how are you. Asking, in a tone and manner, that they can tell you genuinely care about them. It's funny how all the people who think I'm a little overboard, but when they were going through an illness or divorce, they would come to my office and pour their heart out. Establish those relationships, because someday they may come back to hear more from you. You can have it all, yet still have nothing. Don't assume everything is all right in people's life just because that is what it looks like from the outside.

(A Great Distance) / No One is Ever Too Far Gone

The distance was great - The distance is too great, they are too far gone. Ohh they would never come to the Lord. Don't give up on them, don't quit, keep praying, keep witnessing. I love hearing those stories about "the last person you ever thought would get saved - DID! Don't ever give up, work it, pour into them, no matter how far the distance is, don't give up regardless how far away they seem.

(Mark 2:5 NKJV) When Jesus saw their faith, He said to the paralytic, "Son, your sins are forgiven you."

Never Forgiven for Who You Know / Psalm 49

God won't forgive someone their sin because of who they know, he was not forgiven because of his friend's faith, but His faith. Side note, religions that say a priest can save someone because they said a prayer for them before the person died, are flat out in error, and very, very dangerous. Get away from them, and get to this Word!

Psalm 49:7 (NKJV) ⁷ None of them can by any means redeem his brother, Nor give to God a ransom for him—

Jesus Goes for the Matter that Matters Most – Sin

First thing Jesus asked, the paralytic who's been brought for healing, he gets on the discussion and the topic of sin to which most people go, how unloving is that. These people are hurting, they have needs, and he talks about sin. You people in Church, you talk about sin. I need a meal. Hey, I got a serious issue with my health. I got a serious issue with my marriage and you guys want to talk about sin. Well Jesus does. Jesus goes for the matter that matters, the eternal, as much as we focus on this life, there's a whole eternal life to follow based on is our sin dealt with period.

Power of passage – Jesus has Authority to Forgive

And here is the power of the whole passage greater than these friends, greater than the healing. It's the Jesus Christ has the authority to forgive sins. Beloved based on the word of God. Your sin can be forgiven through Jesus Christ who has the authority to forgive sin because he is God and he demonstrated it on the cross the way for the forgiveness of sin. Aren't you glad? That's why we do communion today just to celebrate. We're forgiven. We're clean, we're cleansed.

When World Broken through – And a Person Sees Face of Jesus – All that Matters is Am I Right With Him

When the world and all the things of the world are broken through, removed, a person will see the face of God, And this man that was brought to Jesus like anyone, when you finally see the face of Jesus, everything else fades away. And what comes to the surface is, am I right with Jesus? Jesus perceived what the Pharisees were thinking in their heart, you can be sure Jesus perceived what this man was thinking in his heart, this paralyzed man and for him it wasn't about paralysis anymore. It was about being right with God. And that will always be what happens when you look into the face of God. You won't care about your 401k. You won't care about your pain. You will really care only about am I right with him? If you are, and then he'll take a look at your paycheck and take a look at your pain because he loves you. He cares about you. But when we see the face of God, first thing a man will think is, am I right with God?

A few weeks prior to this paralytic man, Jesus had called Peter to follow him. And when Peter saw it, and got it, and realized who he was in the presence of, the Holy One of Israel, he said depart from me for I am a sinful man. When we get through all this world stuff, and we clearly see the face of God, the only thing that will matter at that moment will be, am I right with Him?

Luke 5:8 (NKJV) ⁸ When Simon Peter saw it, he fell down at Jesus' knees, saying, "Depart from me, for I am a sinful man, O Lord!"

Be of Good Cheer / You Can Do It – You Have Nothing to Fear

Matthew account of this story says that Jesus said, "Son, be of good cheer, your sins are forgiven you". When Jesus said, be of good cheer, notice he uses the word my child. So there's an endearment and the word that we use for good cheer in the New Testament Greek is not the one that is giving encouragement like, you can do it, but the other one for there's only two, and it means you have nothing to fear. So Jesus is saying you have nothing to fear. Your sins are forgiven, and all this in the wrapping of the endearment of a father to a child.

Matthew 9:2 (NKJV) ² Then behold, they brought to Him a paralytic lying on a bed. When Jesus saw their faith, He said to the paralytic, "Son, be of good cheer; your sins are forgiven you."

Forgiven – Most Beautiful Words Ever Heard

But you know, because you have been there, for this man, when you know that your sin separates you from the holy God, and then to hear that you're forgiven, your sins are forgiven. They would and are the most beautiful words that this man had ever heard, and you can relate to that

How About These Friends

What Beautiful Friends / If You Knew Restoration Possible _ Couldn't Anything Stop You

How beautiful this picture is to me. How precious it is to have close friends to fellowship with. This man, I wonder how old he was. 50, 40, maybe 20. How long had he been friends with the four. Their friendship was close enough that these 4 would do something as radical as cutting a hole in the roof. Could you imagine us sitting here and then a hole pops in the roof. Picture your closest friend being paralyzed, I think about my brother Rich, imagine them in this condition. I weep just at the thought of it, yet if it was true, there wouldn't be anything from stopping me, if I knew restoration was there.

I Ache When Family Aches / I Can Take Them to Jesus / Sometimes we are the Prayer Request Answer

Spiritually, my heart aches when one of my brothers or sisters are hurting. When they are terminally ill, lost alone one, going through a relationship breakup. I wish I could take the pain away for them, but I can't. But I can comfort them, I can minister to them even when the world seems to be caving in on them, I can help them materially if they need some money to get by, or cut their grass, clean their house until they are able. Best of all I can help take them to the Lord by praying with them and for them, I can read the Word to them with all of God's precious promises. It's easy to forget God's promises when going through a trial. I can help bring healing to them in times of need. Sometime we pray for God to meet a personal need in our lives, and sometimes we are the answer to someone's prayer of need; God here their prayer, and answers it by sending you. -A believer in need, needs a believer.

Radio Show – Strike “A” Note / We Can Help Bring Family Back in Tune With Lord

Ted Malone, whose radio show came on early in the morning, told of the Idaho shepherd who wrote: "Will you, on your broadcast, strike the note 'A'? I'm a shepherder way out here on a ranch, far away from a piano. The only comfort I have is my old violin. It's all out of tune. Would you strike 'A' so that I might get in tune?" Malone honored the request. Later he received a "thank you" note from the distant shepherd saying, "Now I'm in tune." One of the purposes and responsibilities of personal and public worship is to enable the aspirant to keep tuned to the Great Shepherd. One of the joys of the Christian life is to help others recapture the missing note!

(Mark 2:6 NKJV) And some of the scribes were sitting there and reasoning in their hearts,

But versus And / Sad Missing the Glory of God

KJV says "BUT" instead of "And". How sad when God does a miracle, and people still come saying But. God is doing so many great things around us, yet people are saying "But". Trying to take away from His glory. How hard a heart must be that they have to say "But" every time they see God do something mighty.

Mark 2:6 (KJV 1900) ⁶ But there were certain of the scribes sitting there, and reasoning in their hearts,

(Mark 2:7 NKJV) "Why does this Man speak blasphemies like this? Who can forgive sins but God alone?"

(Mark 2:8 NKJV) But immediately, when Jesus perceived in His spirit that they reasoned thus within themselves, He said to them, "Why do you reason about these things in your hearts?"

They Nailed It

They nailed it right on the head - this is true doctrine right here, Only God can forgive sins.

Psalms 49:7 (NKJV) ⁷ None of them can by any means redeem his brother, Nor give to God a ransom for him—

Ransom = Cover Debt / Nobody on Earth can Do That

The word for ransom here is “to cover”, it was even used in reference to dyeing something. Bitumen (as used for coating), and the henna plant (as used for dyeing). Ransom as used in financial terms was to cover a cost, or debt, to cover that which is owed. In slave trading it was used to purchase a slave. This verse is saying nobody on this earth can cover your sins. No one on earth can cover your debt.

What Debt – James 2:10

What debt? James 2:10, For whosoever shall keep the whole law, and yet offend in one point, he is guilty of all. If you broke one of the 10 commandments once, then you are guilty of them all. You have violated Gods law. I speak to the saved also today..... we were guilty, yet God stepped in.

James 2:10 (NKJV) ¹⁰ For whoever shall keep the whole law, and yet stumble in one point, he is guilty of all.

Wages were Death – Romans 6:23

Romans 6:23, the wages of sin is death. The sentence for our conviction is death. Just as if you broke man’s law you must pay a penalty, how much more so if you broke God’s law.

Romans 6:23 (NKJV) ²³ For the wages of sin is death, but the gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord.

The Blessed Hope - Romans 4:7

But there is hope for us Romans 4:7 uses the word ‘covered’ and it is talking about our sins being covered. Covered in the sense that they cannot be seen by God.

Romans 4:7 (NKJV) ⁷ “Blessed are those whose lawless deeds are forgiven, And whose sins are covered;

Perfect Eyes – Habakkuk 1:13

Our sins have to be covered before we can stand before the holy God, if not, God will see us for who we are, sinners, impure, thus He will have to put us out of His sight because He cannot look upon anything that is unholy, impure.

Habakkuk 1:13 (NKJV) ¹³ You are of purer eyes than to behold evil, And cannot look on wickedness. Why do You look on those who deal treacherously, And hold Your tongue when the wicked devours A person more righteous than he?

How Covered – the 1 Mediator

How do we cover our sin? The Mediator, the go between, Christ Jesus, who gave Himself as the ransom, he covered the debt. We owed a debt we couldn’t pay, He paid a debt He didn’t owe.

1 Timothy 2:5–6 (NKJV) ⁵ For there is one God and one Mediator between God and men, the Man Christ Jesus, ⁶ who gave Himself a ransom for all, to be testified in due time,

There is Only 1 Way – No Other way

There is only one way for the covering of our sins, and that is Jesus Christ. I spent 27 years being misled into believing there was other ways. I remember going to many a mass, a paid for a mass at the church. The mass was supposed to be an offering to God to either pray him out of hell or purgatory. I remember being told I need the priest to forgive my sins. But we have just read that none of them can give a ransom for him. There is only one ransom, and that is Jesus Christ. If we are to be covered by Jesus, then we must do here and now while we are on this earth.

1 Timothy 2:5–6 (NKJV) ⁵ For there is one God and one Mediator between God and men, the Man Christ Jesus, ⁶ who gave Himself a ransom for all, to be testified in due time,

We are Confident (Be of Good Cheer) – 2 Corinthians 5:8

2 Corinthians 5:8, We are confident (yes same word as Matthew 9, be of good cheer, you have nothing to fear), God says.....to be absent from the body, is to be present with the Lord. The scripture is clear, there is no in between point. This verse is talking to those who have put on the Lord Jesus, those who are covered, When God looks at them, He sees Jesus - And God welcomes them with open arms. If anybody went to my Mom and Dad’s house, and they looked exactly like me, Mom and Dad would throw open their arms and invite them in.

2 Corinthians 5:8 (NKJV) ⁸ We are confident, yes, well pleased rather to be absent from the body and to be present with the Lord.

Rejoice I Say - Rejoice

Glory to God - If you are saved then Rejoice in what Jesus has done for you. What an awesome God.

Philippians 4:4 (NKJV) ⁴ Rejoice in the Lord always. Again I will say, rejoice!

(Mark 2:8 NKJV) But immediately, when Jesus perceived in His spirit that they reasoned thus within themselves, He said to them, "Why do you reason about these things in your hearts?"

God Knows Your Heart – Jeremiah 17:9

God knows your heart, Jeremiah 17:9 says the heart is deceitful and desperately wicked, who can know it. Only God can! God knows your heart, so don't try to hide anything from Him, cause you cant. God knows your heart, but He still loves you. I comfort in that because sometimes my heart is pretty yucky

Jeremiah 17:9 (NKJV) ⁹ "The heart is deceitful above all things, And desperately wicked; Who can know it?"

(Mark 2:9 NKJV) "Which is easier, to say to the paralytic, 'Your sins are forgiven you,' or to say, 'Arise, take up your bed and walk'?"

(Mark 2:10 NKJV) "But that you may know that the Son of Man has power on earth to forgive sins"; He said to the paralytic,

God Meets Greatest Need 1st

Jesus always meets our greatest need first

Son Man – Jesus Declaring Deity

Son of Man: - Jesus used this title some 80 times in the gospel. To us it might not mean that much, but to the religious leaders it meant a lot. By Jesus saying "son of Man" he is declaring He is God. This would have sent the religious leaders off.

Daniel 7:13–14 (NKJV) ¹³ "I was watching in the night visions, And behold, One like the Son of Man, Coming with the clouds of heaven! He came to the Ancient of Days, And they brought Him near before Him. ¹⁴ Then to Him was given dominion and glory and a kingdom, That all peoples, nations, and languages should serve Him. His dominion is an everlasting dominion, Which shall not pass away, And His kingdom the one Which shall not be destroyed.

(Mark 2:11 NKJV) "I say to you, arise, take up your bed, and go to your house."

(Mark 2:12 NKJV) Immediately he arose, took up the bed, and went out in the presence of them all, so that all were amazed and glorified God, saying, "We never saw anything like this!"

Jesus Backs His Claim of Deity Up

Jesus backs up his claim right before their very eyes. Jesus used this miracle to prove His deity.

Jesus Changed Your Life – Go Back Home and Live Like He Did

Verse eleven, Jesus tells him, go back to his house and I think there's a word for all of us. Make it real in your house. Walk into the house, show them a changed life. Can I just implore each and every one of you? You're filled with the Spirit of God. You have given your life to Jesus Christ,walk back into your house and live like it. Make it known, and not with your words, with your actions. Do some dishes, wash some feet, give kind words, be kind to others in your home, love them with a love that speaks volumes of a changed life. Jesus has touched you, Jesus raised you from the dead, you have seen the face of God. Jesus, healed your paralysis. Jesus, made you whole. Jesus, forgave your sin..... Take it back home and live like He did those things.

Man had 2 Choices / So Too Do We

Jesus initiated, the paralytic respond. He had 2 choices, to believe and get up, or to sit there and question and doubt Jesus. Sounds ridiculous but don't we sometimes do that. Oh God I really blew it this time, you'll never forgive me for this one. You'll never use me.

Immediately he Arose / Beloved You Are Forgiven – Don't Carry Your Sins Around

Verse 12. Immediately he arose. Brethren, believe your sins are forgiven. Today, tomorrow, when you sin, one of those BIGGIEs. Confess it, repent of it, and believe your sins are forgiven. After you fall, you can lay there and be

defeated by it, you can be miserable about. I had sins I carried around for years, years. You carry old sins around, you cannot serve God fully, your ministry will be hampered. To carry your sins around with you, is sin, it is the sin of unbelief, unbelief that the blood of Jesus didn't wash that one away, or of unbelief that God doesn't keep His word. He said your sins I will remember no more. Arise and Walk. God says to you, your sins are forgiven, Arise and walk.

They Glorified God

Verse 12 - so that all were amazed and glorified God, saying, "We never saw anything like this!" - It's glorious! Now, "they were all amazed and they glorified God." Jesus had said in the Sermon on the Mount, "Let your light so shine before men, that when they see your good works, they glorify your Father which is in heaven." There are two ways to let your light shine. There are two ways by which you can do your works. You can let your light shine in such a way that when men see your good works, they say, "Oh, what a glorious person he is! Isn't he marvelous? My, he is so great!"Drawing attention and praise to yourself. Or, you can let your light so shine that when men see the good works, they say, "Oh, isn't God great? Isn't God good?" And so, Jesus was doing the work in such a way that people were glorifying God

Conclusion

Prayer – Boldly Ask Your God

The Word of God is Living and Powerful, and is ready, and will do a mighty work in our lives.

Hebrews 4:12 (NKJV) ¹² For the word of God is living and powerful, and sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing even to the division of soul and spirit, and of joints and marrow, and is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart.

In Every Study

- Who Is God? (How Great is He?)
- What Does He Think of Me? (How Wonderful Are His Thoughts Towards Me?)
- What Does He Want Me to Do?
- What Can I Boldly Request of Him?
- What Do I Need to Be on Guard of When I Leave Here Today?

Boldly Come to Throne of Grace

Boldly come to the throne of grace, ask God to reveal Himself in a mighty way to you, and to do I might work in you, and through you.

Hebrews 4:16 (NKJV) ¹⁶ Let us therefore come boldly to the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy and find grace to help in time of need.

End of Study

Mark 2:13-17

Recap / Intro

Jesus is about 1.5 years into His public ministry since His baptism. He is about 2 years from the cross. Jesus' popularity is exploding, people are pressing in to get to hear His teaching and see His miracles. The religious leaders are taking notice, and are starting to come out see for themselves, and so begins the critics and challenges to His ministry by them, and today's passage will be more of the same.

Today:

- Jesus Calls Matthew (2:13-14)
- Jesus Eats with Sinners (2:15-17)

Why Listen/Why Study? / Let Passage Speak for Itself

What does God want to share with us today? What does He want to impart from His heart, unto ours through His Word? Well, again before us is another amazing and deep passage of Scripture that reveals the heart of God to us, and the depth of His passion for us. Let's get into the passage and let it speak for itself.

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Jesus Calls Matthew (2:13-14) – (Cross-reference - Matt. 9:9–13; Luke 5:27–32)

Mark 2:13 Then He went out again by the sea; and all the multitude came to Him, and He taught them.

By the Sea

By the seaside. "By" is para (παρά), "alongside." It suggests the idea that our Lord did not only go to the seashore, but that He loved to walk along the shore, perhaps for rest and quiet, and for the opportunity to be alone with God His Father. The freshness of the air, the quieting influence of the sound of the waves, and the long view over the sea which met His eyes, all would be a tonic to the Man Christ Jesus, whose human nature with its limitations, needed recreation and rest just as our bodies need these things. (Wuest)

Jesus Taught

Here again, and again, and again, Jesus teaches. What does He teach, the Word of God. He is tying the Old Testament, into the soon to be New Testament. One pointing to Christ, the other fulfilled by Christ.

Some Only Came to See the Show

So some people came to see the show. They only came for the entertainment to watch some healing or some miracle, but then there were those who they came from meat that mattered the word of God. Jesus never let the show, the healings supersede the word because it was only the word that could change eternity. The show and entertainment could change the temporal, but it was never going to change the eternal. Only the teaching and

Jesus taught the word, and too much credit to many, they stayed for the word over the entertainment. They wanted the word. They wanted to hear the heart of God.

- They wanted to hear who God was.
- They wanted to hear what he thought of them.
- They wanted to hear what does he want me to do?
- What can I boldly ask of him?
- What do I need to be on guard in this evil and adulterous world, this wicked world that's around me

There are many who followed only to see the show, but I think there was much more who came to hear the word of God?

Simply Church

We had missionaries visiting from Cambodia last week, who are back in the States for visiting family and doctors' appointments. I like what the one missionary said after our service, she said it was nice to simply do church. Your worship is simple worship, no lights and thrills. And your teaching is simply the Word of God, not entertainment, just the Word of God, verse-by-verse.

Mark 2:14 As He passed by, He saw Levi the son of Alphaeus sitting at the tax office. And He said to him, "Follow Me." So he arose and followed Him.

Follow Me – Walk the Same Road as Me

Follow Me. The word is *akoloutheō* (ἀκολουθεω). It comes from a word meaning "to walk the same road." It means, "to follow one who precedes, to join him as his attendant, to join one as his disciple, to side with his party." All these things were involved in our Lord's command. This was more than an invitation. The word is in the imperative mode, issuing a command. It is not, "Would you like to follow Me? I extend this invitation to you." Here was a King, sovereign in His demands. Levi recognized the imperative tone of our Lord's voice. This was an effectual call, like the call to salvation. The one called is rendered willing to respond. Levi left his tax collector's desk in the power of a compulsion which he did not understand. It meant poverty for him, instead of the affluence and luxury to which he had been accustomed. The verb is in the present tense, commanding the beginning of an action and its habitual continuance. It is, "Start following Me, and continue as a habit of life to follow Me." This meant for Levi, that henceforth he would walk the same road that Jesus walked, a road of self-sacrifice, a road of separation, a road of altruism, a road of suffering, a road of holiness. But the command was not merely, "Follow Me." It was "Follow with Me." The pronoun is in the associative-instrumental case. The person indicated by the pronoun is the instrument which completes the association between the two individuals. Our Lord did not therefore merely command Levi to become His follower. He welcomed him to a participation in His companionship. And this "with Me" companionship, was not one of an Indian-file nature, one following after another. It was a side by side walk down the same road. And this blessed fellowship is for every believer in the Lord Jesus. (Wuest)

Lucrative Job was Tax Collector

Tax collector was one of the sweetest jobs in those days, yet Matthew left it.

Background on Tax Collector

He saw Levi ... sitting at the tax office: Levi (also known as Matthew in Matthew 9:9) was a tax collector. In that day, tax collectors were despised as traitors and extortioners.

- The Jewish people rightly considered them traitors because they worked for the Roman government and had the force of Roman soldiers behind them to make people pay taxes. They were the most visible Jewish collaborators with Rome.
- The Jewish people rightly considered them extortioners because they could keep whatever they over-collected. A tax collector bid among others for the tax collecting "contract." For example, many tax collectors might want to have the "tax contract" for a city like Capernaum. The Romans awarded the contract to the highest bidder. The man collected the taxes, paid the Romans what he promised, and kept

the remainder. Therefore, there was a lot of incentive for tax collectors to over-charge and cheat any way they could. It was pure profit for them.

- “When a Jew entered the customs service he was regarded as an outcast from society: he was disqualified as a judge or a witness in a court session, was excommunicated from the synagogue, and in the eyes of the community his disgrace extended to his family.” (Lane)

Guzik, D. (2013). *Mark (Mk 2:13–14)*. Santa Barbara, CA: David Guzik.

Matthew Had Roman Soldiers Help Tax the Offering

Matthew would have some Roman soldiers assigned to him, so it wasn't like people could just walk by and go, yeah, right buddy. They were men with swords and shields and spears with full body armor on who were ready to help take the offering, because those soldiers got a cut from the whole operation themselves.

When Everyone Hated Matthew – Jesus Loved Him

Look at this love of Jesus, for when everyone hated Matthew, Jesus loved him, Jesus came to him personally and directly, and invited him into a personal relationship. Beloved, regardless what world, family, thinks of you, Jesus loves you!

Jesus Eats with Sinners (2:15-17) – (Cross-reference - Matt. 9:9–13; Luke 5:27–32)

Mark 2:15 Now it happened, as He was dining in Levi's house, that many tax collectors and sinners also sat together with Jesus and His disciples; for there were many, and they followed Him.

There are four F's in Chapter 2:

1. Faith – as we saw in the 4 men getting their friend to Jesus who was paralyzed.
2. Forgiveness – as Jesus would say to the paralytic, your sins are forgiven.
3. Fulfillment - and here we fulfillment.
4. Freedom – the freedom from religion and freedom to an intimate relationship with God

Fullness – Lacking Nothing / Only Find it in Presence of Jesus

F #3 – Fulfillment: Full means lacking in nothing. Faith to forgiveness to being full. How were they full? They were fellowshiping with Jesus, they were in His presence. You want fullness in your life, you won't find it anywhere else but in the presence of Jesus;

Psalm 16:11 (NKJV) ¹¹ You will show me the path of life; In Your presence is fullness of joy; At Your right hand are pleasures forevermore.

Acts 2:28 (NKJV) ²⁸ You have made known to me the ways of life; You will make me full of joy in Your presence.'

1 Thessalonians 2:19 (NKJV) ¹⁹ For what is our hope, or joy, or crown of rejoicing? Is it not even you in the presence of our Lord Jesus Christ at His coming?

Jude 24 (NKJV) ²⁴ Now to Him who is able to keep you from stumbling, And to present you faultless Before the presence of His glory with exceeding joy,

Tale of Two Rich Men

Matthew was rich, he was probably young based on most of the accounts and was very much in a ruler position, and here he is, he's filled with joy, but I'm reminded of the comparison of another rich young ruler who had very many things and when Jesus said to follow him, he went away sad because he was so rich. His material possessions kept grip on him. What might it be today that could keep you fully and completely from following after Jesus? You will see the difference in the comparison of those that follow life and that more abundant, but those who are afraid to fully let go and trust you see a sadness and a continual struggle for joy and peace and meaning of life.

Luke 18:22–25 (NKJV) ²² So when Jesus heard these things, He said to him, "You still lack one thing. Sell all that you have and distribute to the poor, and you will have treasure in heaven; and come, follow Me." ²³ But when he heard this, he became very sorrowful, for he was very rich. ²⁴ And when Jesus saw that he became very sorrowful, He said, "How hard it is for those who have riches to enter the kingdom of God! ²⁵ For it is easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle than for a rich man to enter the kingdom of God."

Matthew Gifted / Some of You are Not Fulfilled Because Not Using Your Gifts

Just an interesting note because Matthew was on a trade route. He's hitting up everybody coming through this trade route. Not just Jewish people, but Grecians and Sidonia, and the liking, and he would have to communicate with them. So what we're seeing here is this is the guy who spoke several languages, the boot, so he's highly intelligent. Probably educated to get that intelligence and I just make a point of I wonder how much the Lord used those special gifts of Matthew after the resurrection for the furtherance of the Gospel, and a lot of you are sitting on some amazing gifts right now and you're making a living doing them and that's okay. That was God's intent, but now there's gifts that you're sitting on and God says, pull them out. I want you to use them in the ministry and we always speak that to anyone, you come, lets chat, we'll help you find where to use your gifts because you surely have gifts, God gives them to everyone.

Gifts Missed Used for Years – God will Revive

Matthew, being in the tribe of Levi, he most likely would have been raised as a child in the ways of the Lord because that was his lineage. He was to be a priest in the house of God forever. He was to serve the people, but somewhere along the way, he lost his way and the treasures of the world were greater than what God had purposed for him to be. So he's well aware of the law of God being raised in the lineage of the Tribe of Levi. No doubt God will use that as Matthew will become a disciple then an Apostle. Even the things that we think are wasted, God will use them, revive them, take things that are 20, 30 years old that were never used for the Lord, and breathed life into them, and like Matthew, would be used greatly with that gifting

We Are God's Vessels in the Workplace-Campus-Home

You, we are the vessels that God places in the workplace, campus, homes, spokesman witnesses to testify that God loves people, even the most wretched sinner, and so I ask of you, the way that you treat people, would they believe it, that God forgives? Did they see a God of love or would they see a God who is indifferent, just doesn't care about humans or worse would they see a God who is angry, a God who is judgmental, a God that is very harsh.

I've had no problem speaking with people, believers and saying to them, if I was unsaved and I worked with you, and just by the way that you act, if you told me that God loves me, I would not believe you. I would not believe that he's a God of love based on your representation of him.

Word of Warning Trying to Witness to Friends

Let me give a warning to everyone. Youth to adult. You must be careful about being seduced back in to the life that God rescued you from, delivered you from, forgave your sins of. You must be careful that in your attempt to win your crowd that you once walked with that you don't find that they win you back to their life, rather than you to Christ's life.

Look here at the example that we see in Matthew. If you're going to try to rescue your old friends, Matthew doesn't go to their environment, their stronghold. He brings them to his, as they are at Matthew's house. Matthew didn't go to their house or some local tavern or nightclub or living room or bedroom to try to witness to them.

And notice Matthew is surrounded by followers of Christ. He's not trying to stand on his own, and of course, above all, he has Jesus Christ in the middle of his witness to these friends.

And he has brought his friends with a very clear understanding of the purpose is to introduce them to Christ. Matthew doesn't invite them over for a barbecue and then hope that somehow, they'll get on the topic of Jesus. Matthew has a purpose. He's told them, I've left the lucrative world of tax collecting to follow Jesus. They had to go, are you crazy? He goes, yes, about Jesus. Come over tonight and I'll introduce you to the one who said, follow me, and then you can make your choice if you want to follow him or to continue following after the world that's perishing and empty.

You must be careful that you are not seduced back into their environment all alone with no covering, and in a place that if you're honest, Jesus isn't in the midst of. How can I expect him to break through, if I am in a place that is dishonoring to Him?

Mark 2:16 And when the scribes and Pharisees saw Him eating with the tax collectors and sinners, they said to His disciples, "How is it that He eats and drinks with tax collectors and sinners?"

Eating – Becoming One

They had a very unique perspective when you ate together in the Middle East because the main meal was mixed into a bowl and then you were given a piece of bread, yummy bread at that and then you would dip into the bowl and there was no rule of double dipping either. It was very much a common and as you dipped into the bowl, And then their perception was they we're becoming one with the person that you ate with. And so the Pharisees have a serious problem with Jesus. You're becoming one with the sinners and to which Jesus would have no problem, that's right, that's what I came for.

And so too today, Jesus speaks to every one of you. I have no problem being one with you, even in your sin. I'll be one with you. I love you, it is why I came, to become one with you. And he's calling you away to a special relation, a special oneness with him. I pray you come onto him today. All you who labor heavy laden, come onto him today and become one with him and enjoy the oneness, the beauty of Him.

Mark 2:17 When Jesus heard it, He said to them, "Those who are well have no need of a physician, but those who are sick. I did not come to call the righteous, but sinners, to repentance."

Jesus Comfortable with Sinners / Hates Sin – Loves Sinner / You – When Love the Savior will Hate Sin

Jesus is comfortable with sinners, he wants to be with them. He hates the sin, but he loves the sinner. And when you come to love the Savior, you will then hate the sin.

Nobody Pays Doctor to say Hi / Jesus is Making Analogy (Sin is Sickness)

I've never gone to the doctors when I felt great to give him money to say, hey I just wanted to say hi. See how you were doing. No one goes to a doctor unless they think they're sick or they're doing a checkup to make sure that there's not a sickness that's been undetected. See how Jesus is again making an analogy. First, we saw how sin was like a sickness. The lame man was brought, yet Jesus addressed his sin first, and then forgiveness is like healing as the man received both. Now again Jesus is saying the sick needs a doctor, Jesus is the great physician. He heals our sin, and he heals our body. This relationship is backed by the old testament

Sin Needs Cured / Some Don't Feel Sick – But Still are Sick / Forgiveness is Like Health Restored

Sin is a sickness, and it needs to be cured. People so often see no need for a cure for sin, because they don't feel sick - but the fact is they are. Forgiveness is like having your health restored.

Psalm 103:title-5 (NKJV) A Psalm Of David. ¹ Bless the LORD, O my soul; And all that is within me, bless His holy name! ² Bless the LORD, O my soul, And forget not all His benefits: ³ Who forgives all your iniquities, Who heals all your diseases, ⁴ Who redeems your life from destruction, Who crowns you with lovingkindness and tender mercies, ⁵ Who satisfies your mouth with good things, So that your youth is renewed like the eagle's.

When See Sick – You will Repent

When you realize that you have a sickness and our sicknesses called sin and that's not just the sin nature, but individual acts of sin. We need the Great Physician and we need to say, I need healing, and I'm going to repent, turn, I'm changing my mind and I'm asking you to help me to overcome and to heal me and the cleanse me.

Religious People can be Extremely Critical

How sad to see a group of religious people, and it does always seem that religious people are the most critical people. Rather than looking at Jesus and look at this love and compassion he has on people who have been deceived and devoured by the evil one, the world, their flesh, and look how he loves them, look how he is making

an opening opportunity for them to come and be set free, but rather they come, and they judge Jesus. They become critical of Jesus. They don't care about the person and the people who He is trying to reach.

Come Across as Spiritual – But are Carnal

Critical people come across as spiritual, but in actuality they are the most carnal people, for they don't care about other people's needs, just their own little box they live in and want everyone else to live in.

Are You Critical? / Seek Unity & Beauty

And it's a sad statement of these religious people. Can I ask you, could you be this person who's critical and so critical about other people, critical about a ministry, of other workers in the ministry, that you don't look and see the good that they're doing? But you are critical about them. I pray the Lord would speak to anyone today. I pray for beauty and unity among the body,

Critical People Want to Bind (that is What Religion Does)

May I ask you, how unpleasant is that critical person in your life? Just their example and presence should make us go, I never want to be like that. Oh may I never be like that. But I want you to know this and the importance of this,

- they want to be critical of you because they have no heart or compassion for the lost or the hurting (as we see with these Pharisees),
- and secondly, they want to keep you bound up in their little religious package so that you don't expand outward and disrupt what they believe religion should be and how it should be handled. You we need to recognize that there is a ultimate goal that's going on and that is to bind you, because that's what religion always does, it binds so that Christ can't move, that you can't be free.

Don't Let Them Bind You / And You Will be Unstoppable

You may have to respond, you may have to confront them (in the prescribed way the Lord shows us in Matthew 18), and say you've offended me, and we need to talk this out. But secondly you have to in the quietness of your heart, between you and the Lord, maybe it's the prayer closet or maybe it's going for a walk and a talk, and you come to and say, Lord, I'm not going to let them bind me. I'm not going to let their criticality snuff out the freedom that I have in my relationship with you and the ministry that you've called me to be. I'm going to keep moving with you regardless how critical they become. And you'll see Jesus who faced all this criticality, that nobody could stop Him. And the same will be for you, because you know the heart of God because you spend time with Him, and you know His word.

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End of Study

Mark 2:18 – 22

Recap/Intro

We are at about the 1.5-year mark of the ministry of Jesus. His popularity is exploding, everywhere He goes crowds gather, and the religious leaders are taking notice, and feel threatened to their little religious world they have created and control.

Why Listen?

In our passage today (see outline below), Jesus will be questioned and challenged, regarding fasting and the Sabbath. And what the Word of God, the heart of God, the passion of God will speak to us today is freedom from religion, trying to keep rules in hopes to please God, to find His favor, and to enjoy His presence, to rest in Him (that is what the Sabbath ties to – rest in God). Today Jesus would say to you, say to me, come away with Me My bride, enjoy Me, enjoy our relationship, stop trying to earn My favor, stop spending more time focusing on you and your flaws, and simply come away with Me and watch how all those things fade away. And then you really will start living in the freedom and power you so desperately desire. It's an amazing dynamic, focus on ourselves and we fail and falter, focus on Jesus and we are free and overcome.

Leviticus 23:3 (NKJV) ³ *'Six days shall work be done, but the seventh day is a Sabbath of solemn rest, a holy convocation. You shall do no work on it; it is the Sabbath of the LORD in all your dwellings.*

Outline:

- Jesus is Challenged About Fasting (2:18-22)
- Jesus is the Lord of the Sabbath (2:23-28)
- Jesus Heals the Man with a Withered Hand on the Sabbath (3:1-6)

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Jesus is Challenged About Fasting (2:18-22) – (Matt. 9:14–17; Luke 5:33–39)

Mark 2:18 The disciples of John and of the Pharisees were fasting. Then they came and said to Him, “Why do the disciples of John and of the Pharisees fast, but Your disciples do not fast?”

Self-Righteousness

In the law, only the Day of Atonement was a day of fasting, but with the religious leaders did was add to that, that if one day was good than 100 must be great and they set up days for fasting as a form of proving oneself religious and devoted to God, twice a week historical writing indicates, and what we read in Luke 18. Fasting is to attach us to God by the denial of the flesh a day of focusing on God, as we will see as the sabbath is set apart to rest with the Lord; but these guys, they added to it to make themselves more religious, but they lost the point of making it to God and relational. It was a badge of righteousness in their minds, which very much tended to turn to self-righteousness.

Leviticus 16:29–30 (NKJV) ²⁹ “This shall be a statute forever for you: In the seventh month, on the tenth *day* of the month, you shall afflict your souls, and do no work at all, *whether* a native of your own country or a stranger who dwells among you. ³⁰ For on that day *the priest* shall make atonement for you, to cleanse you, *that* you may be clean from all your sins before the LORD.

Jeremiah 36:6 (NKJV) ⁶ You go, therefore, and read from the scroll which you have written at my instruction, the words of the LORD, in the hearing of the people in the LORD’s house on the day of fasting. And you shall also read them in the hearing of all Judah who come from their cities.

Acts 27:9 (NKJV) ⁹ Now when much time had been spent, and sailing was now dangerous because the Fast was already over, Paul advised them,

Luke 18:9–14 (NKJV) ⁹ Also He spoke this parable to some who trusted in themselves that they were righteous, and despised others: ¹⁰ “Two men went up to the temple to pray, one a Pharisee and the other a tax collector. ¹¹ The Pharisee stood and prayed thus with himself, ‘God, I thank You that I am not like other men—extortioners, unjust, adulterers, or even as this tax collector. ¹² I fast twice a week; I give tithes of all that I possess.’ ¹³ And the tax collector, standing afar off, would not so much as raise *his* eyes to heaven, but beat his breast, saying, ‘God, be merciful to me a sinner!’ ¹⁴ I tell you, this man went down to his house justified *rather* than the other; for everyone who exalts himself will be humbled, and he who humbles himself will be exalted.”

John’s Disciples / Power of Asking the Lord for Clarity

Now John the Baptist’s disciples are part of this question, and they fasted because John fasted, because John knew the power of fasting and exercised it. See mandated fasting never works, it becomes a burden and a bondage. But fasting that is purposed to reach the Lord, that has power. I try to maintain a routine of a time set apart during the week dedicated for fasting, and when I feel I am merely doing it out ritual, and missing the point of a dedicated time with the Lord, or it feels like a burden, I seek the Lord and often times I feel the Lord saying break the fast, this just isn’t your day to fast. So John’s disciples haven’t figured this out yet. So to their credit they ask. Oh the power in asking the Lord to clarify, and He will, and you can go on to live in power. It is ok to not have all the answers, we don’t have to act like we do, and therefore we can be free to seek clarity, understanding, on the matters of the Lord, and not feel like we are not spiritually mature. Hey, these guys hung out with John the Baptist, the greatest prophet, yet they still have to grow in their knowledge of the things of God and the matters of the heart

Mark 2:19 And Jesus said to them, “Can the friends of the bridegroom fast while the bridegroom is with them? As long as they have the bridegroom with them they cannot fast.

Freedom from Religion – Into a Relationship

There are four F’s in Chapter 2:

1. Faith – as we saw in the 4 men getting their friend to Jesus who was paralyzed.
2. Forgiveness – as Jesus would say to the paralytic, your sins are forgiven.
3. Fulfillment – Matthew’s dinner party with Jesus (in His presence is fullness of joy)
4. Freedom – the freedom from religion and freedom to an intimate relationship with God

The 4th F - Freedom. We are free from religiosity and rules and regulations, we are free to enjoy our relationship with God. These guys were trying to fast, to so-call get to God, and God was right there in front of them. Jesus uses a wedding analogy, a marriage analogy, of the bride and groom.

Been to a Depressed Wedding Lately? / Rules for Righteousness

Rules and trying to keep them to be spiritual, to be religious, can rob us and blind us to God with us (Emmanuel). I call it “rules for righteousness”, and people think keeping all the rules will make them righteous, but we see the Pharisees kept all the rules, but they were by no means righteous. So focused on the rules, they missed God in their midst.

Been to any bad weddings lately? A wedding where everybody is depressed and sad. Ever been to a wedding where a smile cannot be seen in the room. Ever been to a wedding where the reception was a fasting reception? No? I didn’t think so. Jesus has already just told the religious people that he came to save sinners, not compliment the self-righteous.

- Now he is telling them he has come to bring gladness, not sadness.
- Walking with God is not a funeral, it is a celebration.

- Jesus is the Bridegroom, and his friends are His wedding guest.

Are not wedding guest supposed to have a good time?

The Atmosphere of a Wedding is Love – the Source is the Bride & Groom

You know there is something special about weddings. The whole atmosphere is just filled with love and excitement. There is a source that starts emitting that love and excitement, and from that source, everybody gets excited, and that source is the Bride and Groom. The Bride and Groom want everybody to join in and be a part of their celebration. They have so much love for each other that it is overflowing, they have so much they want to give it away.

Jesus Saying – We Love Each Other So Much – We Can't Help but Celebrate

Jesus is saying here, we love each other so much we can't help but to celebrate. Oh my how Jesus loves his Bride. For the Bible tells us we are the Bride of Christ.

2 Corinthians 11:2 (NKJV) ² For I am jealous for you with godly jealousy. For I have betrothed you to one husband, that I may present you as a chaste virgin to Christ.

Ephesians 5:31–32 (NKJV) ³¹ "For this reason a man shall leave his father and mother and be joined to his wife, and the two shall become one flesh." ³² This is a great mystery, but I speak concerning Christ and the church.

You May Find This Hard to Believe – You Ravish God's Heart / Song Solomon 4:9

This may be hard to believe, but you take Jesus' breath away. Can you believe it? Me, you. My how this blows me away. You got to remember, we have put on the Lord Jesus, God sees us as perfect, spotless. The Song of Solomon is a love story, and it is a spiritual story of Jesus' love for his bride - you and I. The Beloved speaking (Jesus) to his bride (You):

Song of Solomon 4:9 (NKJV) ⁹ You have ravished my heart, My sister, my spouse; You have ravished my heart With one look of your eyes, With one link of your necklace.

Do I Have Proof to Back This? / Look no Further than the Cross

Do I have proof to back this statement up, you bet? How much does God love you? Look to the cross. For no greater love has he than this, to lay down one's life for a friend (John 15:13)

John 15:13 (NKJV) ¹³ Greater love has no one than this, than to lay down one's life for his friends.

1 Corinthians 11:23–26 (NKJV) ²³ For I received from the Lord that which I also delivered to you: that the Lord Jesus on the same night in which He was betrayed took bread; ²⁴ and when He had given thanks, He broke it and said, "Take, eat; this is My body which is broken for you; do this in remembrance of Me." ²⁵ In the same manner He also took the cup after supper, saying, "This cup is the new covenant in My blood. This do, as often as you drink it, in remembrance of Me." ²⁶ For as often as you eat this bread and drink this cup, you proclaim the Lord's death till He comes.

Bruce & Susan Wedding – Groom Only Say the Bride

I went to the wedding of one of my best friends many years ago, and something stood out that I will never forget. I remember when the Bride (Susan) started her walk down the aisle, I remember looking over at Bruce (the groom), and I remember the look on his face, it was a look that I don't think I can explain in human terms. The love he has for his bride is indescribable. One thing I can describe is that Bruce couldn't see anything or anybody else around him, his eyes were fixed on Susan - his bride. It was like the whole world disappeared around him, it was just him and his bride. I believe I saw a glimpse of heaven that day, as God spoke to my heart that is how He is with His bride - you and I.

Me & Renee Wedding Day

A few weeks ago, I celebrated 16 years of marriage to my precious bride Renee. I remember her walking down the aisle, literally like it was yesterday. But what I remember most, is when her hands were passed to my hands, as we faced one another, and as she looked into my eyes, and the way she looked into my eyes, she spoke without words "I love you", and for that moment, all the world faded away, it was if I was the only man on the planet, and at that moment, I had never known love so deep, I had not known that someone could love me as such, my heart was ravished. A small glimpse of what Jesus says we do to His heart.

Song of Solomon 4:9 (NKJV) ⁹ You have ravished my heart, My sister, my spouse; You have ravished my heart With one look of your eyes, With one link of your necklace.

Mark 2:20 But the days will come when the bridegroom will be taken away from them, and then they will fast in those days.

Fasting Separates from World – And Gets into Heaven

Fasting is to separate us from this world and draws (attaches) us closer to God. I like to say, Fasting “Separates and Attaches”. It is the getting into the heavenlies. Well, Jesus has come from heaven to earth. He's saying there's nothing closer to getting to me than this moment in time, but there will be a time when I ascend to my Father that you will need the discipline of fasting to separate from this world and all the distractions and cares of it to draw near to me. But He is saying, today I not the day, for we are celebrating our love today as I am here and near.

Love Separated Will Cause Heart to Want/Ache

Jesus is not saying that when he is gone we are to be in mourning, but pointing out that love separated at times can cause the heart to want and ache. Jesus was pointing out that occasional fasting would be proper at a future time, but the joyful celebration should be the normal.

Bruce & Susan – 15 Minutes Before Opened Box / So thrilled to be his Wife – Ring Wasn't on Her Mind

To add just a little more about the newlyweds, Bruce and Susan. He said he learned something wonderful about his wife the day he proposed to her, he knew how much she loved him. You see when he proposed to her, she jumped in his arms and hugged and squeezed on him. She was so thrilled that she was going to be his wife. He said she was so thrilled that it was 15 minutes before she ever opened the ring box to see what the ring looked like. When you're in love with Jesus, just being His bride is good enough, nothing else matters.

Psalm 16:11 (NKJV) ¹¹ You will show me the path of life; In Your presence is fullness of joy; At Your right hand are pleasures forevermore.

Renee & 5 Guys / Just Happy to be Together

I know it may seem trite to many, but several years, I wanted to do something special for our wedding anniversary (maybe it was the 10-year mark), and I saved and saved credit card points, and got a hotel room I could never afford right in the heart of Washington DC, right across from the White House, a stone throw from the water, walking the museums and National Park. The only big expense was going to be dinner. But I said to Renee, as we pass these restaurants today, take note of them, and pick whichever one you want, yes whichever one you want. So after a day of walking and touring the sights, cleaned up and got ready for dinner. We then left the hotel and started our walk to decide which restaurant to eat in. So we see a 5-star steakhouse, yeah maybe, let's keep walking, we see a 5-star seafood restaurant, yeah maybe but let's keep walking. And then in my mind I say, man I could just really go for 5-Guys, but if I say that to her I don't think that will go very well, this is supposed to be special. And then just then Renee says, you know, I would just be happy to eat at 5-Guys. To which I said, truly made for each other, a match made in heaven. We were just happy to be together, don't need anything fancy, just each other.

So it is In Heaven – Happy to be Together / Absence Creates a Longing

And so it is in our relationship with the Lord, just happy to be together, and when we are apart, there is a longing in our hearts for a closer intimacy, a separating from the world and its distractions, to have that sweetness of undistracted intimacy together.

Mark 2:21 No one sews a piece of unshrunk cloth on an old garment; or else the new piece pulls away from the old, and the tear is made worse.

Mark 2:22 And no one puts new wine into old wineskins; or else the new wine bursts the wineskins, the wine is spilled, and the wineskins are ruined. But new wine must be put into new wineskins.”

Setting Up Rest of Ministry

Jesus is making a very clear and definitive statement here, and it is vital for everyone's understanding then, and now, and that is that He is not merging two religions (Judaism and Christianity), but bridging the Old to the New, with Him literally being the bridge. The Old Testament could not get you into the presence of the Father (the fullness of joy I might add), only Jesus can. Let me explain.

John 1:16–17 (NKJV) ¹⁶ And of His fullness we have all received, and grace for grace. ¹⁷ For the law was given through Moses, but grace and truth came through Jesus Christ.

John 14:6 (NKJV) ⁶ Jesus said to him, "I am the way, the truth, and the life. No one comes to the Father except through Me.

1 Timothy 2:5–6 (NKJV) ⁵ For there is one God and one Mediator between God and men, the Man Christ Jesus, ⁶ who gave Himself a ransom for all, to be testified in due time,

Sewing Brings 2 Pieces Together

In the first illustration - sewing is the bringing together of 2 or more items. Jesus is saying in this case, no you don't, do not even consider it. If you try to sew a new piece of cloth into an old, when that new piece of cloth shrinks it is going to tear away from the old, and the garment will be made worse.

Wineskins

The second illustration involved new wine in old wineskins. The leather wineskins lost their power to stretch. If new wine was put into them, the pressure built up by the fermentation would burst the skins

Not Here to Patch Up Old System

There are those who suggest that Jesus came to reform or add on to Judaism. Jesus, however, says "I'm not talking about patching up the old system or refilling old wineskins. Something new is happening."

You Must Be Born Again – Can't Get Any Newer than That

John 3:3, Jesus says, unless a man be born again, he cannot enter the Kingdom of God. Being born is as new as it gets and that's the point that he's making. The old things are not going to birth you into salvation, nor empower you after you are saved. You must be born again and it's true what Jesus Christ is doing.

John 3:3 (NKJV) ³ Jesus answered and said to him, "Most assuredly, I say to you, unless one is born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God."

1 Corinthians 3:16 (NKJV) ¹⁶ Do you not know that you are the temple of God and that the Spirit of God dwells in you?

Colossians 1:27 (NKJV) ²⁷ To them God willed to make known what are the riches of the glory of this mystery among the Gentiles: which is Christ in you, the hope of glory.

Book Hebrews – Shadows

And the Book of Hebrews makes it very clear that these old testament things are shadows of things that come. The law was to show us, that we needed a savior, that we couldn't do it on our own and as Jesus will speak of the sabbath rest, he's making the point that trying to keep the law will never bring you rest. It will exhaust you and for those today who try to keep the law in their own power, it becomes exhausting and burdensome. Whereas the Lord gives us his spirit that we are able then to fulfill the law and obey his commandments and enter into his rest.

Hebrews 10:1–4 (NKJV) ¹ For the law, having a shadow of the good things to come, and not the very image of the things, can never with these same sacrifices, which they offer continually year by year, make those who approach perfect. ² For then would they not have ceased to be offered? For the worshipers, once purified, would have had no more consciousness of sins. ³ But in those sacrifices there is a reminder of sins every year. ⁴ For it is not possible that the blood of bulls and goats could take away sins.

Galatians 3:24–25 (NKJV) ²⁴ Therefore the law was our tutor to bring us to Christ, that we might be justified by faith. ²⁵ But after faith has come, we are no longer under a tutor.

New Covenant & Old Covenant

Jesus is talking about the 2 covenants. The Old covenant as we know it from the Old Testament is based on the law - the 10 commandments. It was up to man to keep the law. If man could keep the law, then he could fellowship with God. If not, then his fellowship was broken. The old covenant was predicated on man's ability to maintain the covenant.

The New covenant, as we know it from the New Testament is based on the finished work of Jesus Christ. Its not what man can do, but what Jesus Christ did on the cross. The blood of Jesus, and nothing else. Thus the New Covenant is predicated on God's ability to keep the covenant. We are Free!

Notice in verse 21 it says the new piece pulls away. The Old is not even close to the New. In (Gal 3:24 KJV) *Wherefore the law was our schoolmaster to bring us unto Christ, that we might be justified by faith.* The Old covenant was to show us our need for Jesus, a Savior, because we failed so miserably at keeping the Old Covenant. And close isn't good enough for God, His standard is perfection.

Galatians 3:24–25 (NKJV) ²⁴ *Therefore the law was our tutor to bring us to Christ, that we might be justified by faith.* ²⁵ *But after faith has come, we are no longer under a tutor.*

If Keep the Law – Have to Keep All the Law

For these religious people, their rituals were keeping them from coming to Christ. They thought they could come to God because of their rituals, which they could not completely keep, never seeing that. God's point of the law was that perfection is the standard of God, as he says in the sermon on the mount, over and over, he's given the point of perfection. It's these rituals that are keeping these religious people from God, the very thing that they were striving to do with their rituals.

Galatians 5:1–4 (NKJV) ¹ *Stand fast therefore in the liberty by which Christ has made us free, and do not be entangled again with a yoke of bondage.* ² *Indeed I, Paul, say to you that if you become circumcised, Christ will profit you nothing.* ³ *And I testify again to every man who becomes circumcised that he is a debtor to keep the whole law.* ⁴ *You have become estranged from Christ, you who attempt to be justified by law; you have fallen from grace.*

Don't Try to Patch Up Your Life

Can I say to you, don't try to patch up your life. Don't try religion or the wisdom of the world or some self-help. Don't try to patch up your life. It's eventually going to rip and be worse. Come to Jesus, ask him, let him do something totally new in your life. For that is why he came. The word of God says, behold I make all things new. The flesh will never overcome the flesh – you must be spiritual, you must connect to the Spirit of God.

2 Corinthians 5:17 (NKJV) ¹⁷ *Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation; old things have passed away; behold, all things have become new.*

If you need to repent, repent, turn from those things that need to be turned from. Ask him to forgive you. Then by faith, let him work in you. Yield to him by faith, trusting him to do something new, for only he has the ability and the power to do something new in your life. All that you have the ability to do is patch it up and eventually it's going to tear apart. The best religion can do for you is patch you up, it can't make you new. Only Jesus can give you new life. Give yourself fully to him. Let him work something new.

So new is this work that once a man is born again, the Spirit of God comes and takes up residence within him. God the Holy Spirit needs a new vessel. God himself, the third person of the Trinity, He is God and he's not going to fill an old, broken vessel. He comes into something new.

Get rid of the old in your life and let God do something totally new. If you've never given your life to Christ, then today is the day of salvation. The scriptures declare it's a day for something new. It's a day for new life. It's a day to be born again.

2 Corinthians 6:2 (NKJV) ² *For He says: "In an acceptable time I have heard you, And in the day of salvation I have helped you." Behold, now is the accepted time; behold, now is the day of salvation.*

John 3:3 (NKJV) ³ *Jesus answered and said to him, "Most assuredly, I say to you, unless one is born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God."*

And maybe you've been saved for years, but you've put yourself into some old habits again. Maybe you've become critical. Maybe you've become rigid and inflexible. Maybe you won't trust the Lord. Maybe you won't believe that he'll do what he promises to do and today God would cry out to you, allow me to work something fresh and new and your life today.

Beloved, you can ask God for a fresh filling of His spirit today, ask him, believe that he will do something new in your life and let the old things pass away. Imagine a life of Jesus living inside of you free to be Jesus, free to live through you, free to have his way with you. That will be the abundant life. It will be fullness of joy.

No greater love has He than thisand imagine the joy of a life that loves at that capacity, the capacity of God for God is love. Imagine the capacity of a life of God having free reign in your life to do something totally new,

imagined the life of love that you would live because God is love. Your whole life would be love as you love God and you love your neighbor and imagine what that looks like in the capacity of that life to live. Jesus is calling you to something new today.

Imagine letting God, letting Jesus rule your life. Imagine giving him that reign. He's overcome the world through the work, so the cross and he will overcome the world in your life. He will overcome the flesh in your life and he will come. The devil in your life. You can say, I can't, but God will always say, but I will because I have the power and the capacity to do it.

Why not, before this service is over say, Lord, I want something new. Lord, I don't want to live this patched up life anymore. I want to live a life that's new in the spirit of God doing something new in my life.

You can believe that the promise is available to you today because of this bread and cup that you hold in your hand, demonstrating God's love for you.

This Passage Refutes "A World Religion" / Since 2000 – One World Religion Gaining Speed

By the way, these verses refute any idea of a "world religion". People today want to blend in different religions with Christianity, so we can all be at peace, and agreement. Forget the "we are the world song", there is Christianity, and then there is not. Christian you need to stand firm on this one. The year 2000 on the Western Wall in Jerusalem there will be a giant party on New Year's Eve there. They are going to have a spectacular light show displayed on the wall. They will show the Star of David, the Cross, and Moslem symbols - and the whole idea is that man is at peace and the new millennium will usher world peace. But I believe we are seeing before our very eyes the "one World Religion" and One World Government. We will save the depth of that topic until our prophecy update at the beginning of the new year.

Jesus Starting Something New – Invites You

Jesus is not merging, but bridging. Not dusting off the old, but something totally new, and invites you to come and follow Him, to walk side-by-side with Him. And we will find, in His presence is fullness of joy, and life evermore.

Conclusion

Prayer – Boldly Ask Your God

The Word of God is Living and Powerful, and is ready, and will do a mighty work in our lives.

Hebrews 4:12 (NKJV) ¹² For the word of God is living and powerful, and sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing even to the division of soul and spirit, and of joints and marrow, and is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart.

In Every Study

- Who Is God? (How Great is He?)
- What Does He Think of Me? (How Wonderful Are His Thoughts Towards Me?)
- What Does He Want Me to Do?
- What Can I Boldly Request of Him?
- What Do I Need to Be on Guard of When I Leave Here Today?

Boldly Come to Throne of Grace

Boldly come to the throne of grace, ask God to reveal Himself in a mighty way to you, and to do I might work in you, and through you.

Hebrews 4:16 (NKJV) ¹⁶ Let us therefore come boldly to the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy and find grace to help in time of need.

End of Study

Mark 2:23 – 3:6

Recap/Intro

We are at about the 1.5-year mark of the ministry of Jesus. His popularity is exploding, everywhere He goes crowds gather, and the religious leaders are taking notice, and feel threatened to their little religious world they have created and control. Jesus is up in the northern part of the Sea of Galilee, His ministry headquarters, He is in the area of the town of Capernaum, which means “house of rest” or “village of comfort”, but there will be little rest or comfort in our passage today as the religious leaders challenge and debate Jesus over the Sabbath, which means to “cease, desist, rest”.

Why Listen?

In our passage today (see outline below), Jesus will be questioned and challenged, regarding fasting and the Sabbath. And what the Word of God, the heart of God, the passion of God will speak to us today is freedom from religion, trying to keep rules in hopes to please God, to find His favor, and to enjoy His presence, to rest in Him (that is what the Sabbath ties to – rest in God). Today Jesus would say to you, say to me, come away with Me My bride, enjoy Me, enjoy our relationship, stop trying to earn My favor, stop spending more time focusing on you and your flaws, and simply come away with Me and watch how all those things fade away. And then you really will start living in the freedom and power you so desperately desire. It’s an amazing dynamic, focus on ourselves and we fail and falter, focus on Jesus and we are free and overcome.

Song of Solomon 2:10 (NKJV) ¹⁰ My beloved spoke, and said to me: “Rise up, my love, my fair one, And come away.

Outline:

- Jesus is Challenged About Fasting (2:18-22)
- Jesus is the Lord of the Sabbath (2:23-28)
- Jesus Heals the Man with a Withered Hand on the Sabbath (3:1-6)

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Jesus is the Lord of the Sabbath (2:23-28) – (Matthew 12:1-8; Luke 6:1-5)

Mark 2:23 Now it happened that He went through the grainfields on the Sabbath; and as they went His disciples began to pluck the heads of grain.

Mark 2:24 And the Pharisees said to Him, “Look, why do they do what is not lawful on the Sabbath?”

10 Commandments

Referencing to the 10 Commandments, known as “the Law”, the 4th Commandment to keep the Sabbath, the day of rest.

Exodus 20:8–11 (NKJV) ⁸ “Remember the Sabbath day, to keep it holy. ⁹ Six days you shall labor and do all your work, ¹⁰ but the seventh day is the Sabbath of the LORD your God. In it you shall do no work: you, nor your son, nor your daughter, nor your male servant, nor your female

servant, nor your cattle, nor your stranger who is within your gates. ¹¹ For in six days the LORD made the heavens and the earth, the sea, and all that is in them, and rested the seventh day. Therefore the LORD blessed the Sabbath day and hallowed it.

Law of Gleaning

First off, eating this grain in a field that was not theirs was not stealing. The Law of Gleaning, Deuteronomy 23:24-25, the law allowed the poor to go through the corners of the field and pick what was left for them as provided for them by God. We saw that story in the book of Ruth, so they're not stealing, nor are they breaking the sabbath because the Sabbath was no work on that day to make money, but the law provides that if you're hungry, you can sustain yourself, even on the Sabbath.

Deuteronomy 23:24–25 (NKJV) ²⁴ "When you come into your neighbor's vineyard, you may eat your fill of grapes at your pleasure, but you shall not put any in your container. ²⁵ When you come into your neighbor's standing grain, you may pluck the heads with your hand, but you shall not use a sickle on your neighbor's standing grain.

God Always Looking out for Needy

God's concerned about those in need. Aren't you glad? He is concerned with your need today, whatever it may be. Also, with this law of gleaning, he always wants to provide for the needy and those who are less fortunate, and we should look at this and we should apply it to our life. We should be looking for those who are in need and those who are poor or just suffering and say, Lord, how do you want me to meet this need? Do you want me to meet this need? If so, how do I meet this need?

People Eat on the Sabbath

People were eating food on the Sabbath and here are these disciples are eating food on the sabbath. They're not working and they're not going down to the market to sale it, so it was the misunderstanding of what the Sabbath was and is for according to God.

Some Sabbath Laws

Some of the Sabbath laws were absolutely ridiculous that the Pharisees made

- A woman wasn't allowed to look into the mirror because if she saw a gray hair, she would be tempted to pluck it and therefore that would be what they considered harvesting.
- Man was not allowed the spit on anything but a rock because of you spit into dirt and it rolled into mud that would be tilling which no work was allowed.
- When I was in Israel, they had what they called the Shabbat elevator and pushing the button for the elevator floor would be considered work and so they had it programmed that on Shabbat day the elevator stops on every floor they can make for some long rides, but of course you can't walk the stairs because that would be work too.
- You couldn't kindle a fire, so even still today, they won't allow fires to be kindled. You can't fire up your oven or your car because that would be considered work on the sabbath.
- I remember riding through Jerusalem and the crowd at 20 or 30 orthodox Jews dressed in their orthodox garbs, standing at the road shaking their fists, screaming at us, yelling, Shabbat, Shabbat, and they were considering us being sabbath breakers because we kindled the engine of the bus. I can tell you there was way more work with their anger and they're yelling going on than from us driving through the city.

So even today, the Orthodox Jewish people, they put the food, they prepare the food the day before, they put it in the crock pot and they have a timer set that it would cook so that they weren't working on the Sabbath. They just bring the food out and eat it, which is interesting because that's not too far off of what these disciples are doing. Everybody's going to eat on the Sabbath Day. These Pharisees included and they're going to reach out their hand and they're going to take food and put it into their mouth and that's what these disciples are doing. They're taking food and they're putting in their mouth and they're eating it hardly any difference from these Pharisees, but the hypocrisy of the Pharisee's were looking for a reason to criticize Jesus. Amazing how man can justify his actions, but criticize others doing the exact same thing they are doing.

Strings Attached

Now there are always strings attached to all their rules. They rabbis said you could walk more than 2,000 cubits, which is less than 2/3 of a mile from your home. But they realized how limiting that was, so they said you could attach a string from your house, and that string would be an extension of your house, and therefore you could walk a 2/3 mile beyond wherever your string ended. Today if you go to Jerusalem, New York, Miami, and right here all around Baltimore and Washington DC, in cities that are largely populated by Orthodox Jews, you will see strings running above your head, and that is to extend everyone's home, so they can move freely about the city on the Sabbath, but feel justified that they are not breaking the Sabbath law. They call the string network, ERUV boundaries.

Mark 2:25 But He said to them, "Have you never read what David did when he was in need and hungry, he and those with him:

Mark 2:26 how he went into the house of God in the days of Abiathar the high priest, and ate the showbread, which is not lawful to eat except for the priests, and also gave some to those who were with him?"

Cross Reference of this Account

Matthew 12:1-8 (NKJV) ¹ At that time Jesus went through the grainfields on the Sabbath. And His disciples were hungry, and began to pluck heads of grain and to eat. ² And when the Pharisees saw it, they said to Him, "Look, Your disciples are doing what is not lawful to do on the Sabbath!" ³ But He said to them, "Have you not read what David did when he was hungry, he and those who were with him: ⁴ how he entered the house of God and ate the showbread which was not lawful for him to eat, nor for those who were with him, but only for the priests? ⁵ Or have you not read in the law that on the Sabbath the priests in the temple profane the Sabbath, and are blameless? ⁶ Yet I say to you that in this place there is One greater than the temple. ⁷ But if you had known what this means, 'I desire mercy and not sacrifice,' you would not have condemned the guiltless. ⁸ For the Son of Man is Lord even of the Sabbath."

1 Samuel 21:1-6 (NKJV) ¹ Now David came to Nob, to Ahimelech the priest. And Ahimelech was afraid when he met David, and said to him, "Why are you alone, and no one is with you?" ² So David said to Ahimelech the priest, "The king has ordered me on some business, and said to me, 'Do not let anyone know anything about the business on which I send you, or what I have commanded you.' And I have directed my young men to such and such a place. ³ Now therefore, what have you on hand? Give me five loaves of bread in my hand, or whatever can be found." ⁴ And the priest answered David and said, "There is no common bread on hand; but there is holy bread, if the young men have at least kept themselves from women." ⁵ Then David answered the priest, and said to him, "Truly, women have been kept from us about three days since I came out. And the vessels of the young men are holy, and the bread is in effect common, even though it was consecrated in the vessel this day." ⁶ So the priest gave him holy bread; for there was no bread there but the showbread which had been taken from before the LORD, in order to put hot bread in its place on the day when it was taken away.

Mercy – Not Sacrifice

In Matthew account of this same event, Jesus says He desires mercy not sacrifice.

Have you never read what David did: In referring to David's use of the "holy bread" in 1 Samuel 21:1-6, Jesus showed an important principle—human need is more important than religious ritual. The Sabbath was meant to serve man (the Sabbath was made for man, and not man for the Sabbath). - Guzik

- This is exactly what many people, steeped in tradition, simply cannot accept: that what God really wants is mercy before sacrifice (Hosea 6:6); that love to others is more important than religious rituals (Isaiah 58:1-9); that the sacrifices of God are a broken spirit, a broken and a contrite heart; these, O God, You will not despise (Psalm 51:17).
- "Any application of the Sabbath Law which operates to the detriment of man is out of harmony with God's purpose." (Morgan)

Textual Criticism

In the days of Abiathar the high priest: Some find a problem here because according to 1 Samuel 21:1, it says that Ahimelech was the high priest at that time, and that his son Abiathar served as high priest after him (1 Samuel 22:20 and 1 Chronicles 18:16). Most people reconcile 1 Samuel 21:1 with Jesus' statement here by saying that both father and son together served as co-high priests at that time, or by saying that Jesus simply said this happened in the days of Abiathar, that is while he was alive, not while he held the office of high priest.

**Mark 2:27 And He said to them, “The Sabbath was made for man, and not man for the Sabbath.
Mark 2:28 Therefore the Son of Man is also Lord of the Sabbath.”**

Son of Man

Here again Jesus calls Himself the Son of Man, which identifies Himself as God, and these religious leaders would know that as they are well aware of Daniel 7:

Daniel 7:13–14 (NKJV) ¹³ “I was watching in the night visions, And behold, One like the Son of Man, Coming with the clouds of heaven! He came to the Ancient of Days, And they brought Him near before Him. ¹⁴ Then to Him was given dominion and glory and a kingdom, That all peoples, nations, and languages should serve Him. His dominion is an everlasting dominion, Which shall not pass away, And His kingdom the one Which shall not be destroyed.

Jesus Is Lord of Sabbath – and Not Offended by Disciples

Verse 28 - Therefore the Son of Man is also Lord of the Sabbath: The second principle was even more dramatic regarding this statement, Jesus declared that He was the Lord of the Sabbath. If He, the very Lord of the Sabbath, was not offended by His disciple’s actions, then these sideline critics should not have been offended either.

Sabbath was Made for Man

Sabbath means rest. When you get down to it, that's the point of it was made for man to have a day of rest for their body and a day of rest with the Lord. It was not made so that man would keep the rules. The man would have a day of mental work trying to keep all the rules and think of all the rules because that then rob's the whole point of the rest and the connection with the Lord because you'll spend all the time thinking about keeping the rules and won't be thinking of. The whole purpose was to rest in the Lord and enjoy a day with him.

So you can see how the fasting and Sabbath ties together in our conversations because fasting was to detach us from the world and attach us to the Lord.

Sabbath Made Back in Garden – With No Rules – Just Fellowship

The Sabbath was designed to detach man from the world and to attach man to the Lord. And it's interesting to note that Genesis, day seven was a day of rest. Not that the Lord rested from his work. He can speak, and worlds come into existence, but it was a day for Adam, the creation, to fellowship with his creator, and if you noticed there were no rules, it was simply God and Adam enjoying the garden. I believe that's what the Lord wants to declare to us. It's the come to me, enjoy walking the garden with me. Enjoy the relationship with me and the joy of our time together. There is in Bible interpretation, and you have to bound it in the whole context of all 31,102 verses still, but it is called “Law of First Mention”, and you go and examine closely the first time a concept or doctrine is first mentioned in the Bible, and that helps you with the interpretation. So Sabbath we see, a day set apart, goes all the way back to Genesis as we have just discussed. Imagine, that first Sabbath, day 7 for creation, but Sabbath 1 for man (Adam). Imagine him and God, simply walking and talking all day. God explaining all that had taken place in the last 6 days. Imagine the sweetness of walking together in the “cool of the day” – Genesis 3:8. Imagine Adam, seeing all, hearing all this from God, looking at God, knowing that all this was created for him and God to walk in fellowship, that Adam was the crowing jewel of God’s creation. How big was God to Adam on that first day? Imagine Adam knowing He is the apple of God’s eye, precious in His sight. Imagine that first Sabbath, this Law of First Mention, and you can get a good idea what the Sabbath was intended for. Not a bunch rules and burdens, but sweet fellowship with the One who has created us.

Genesis 2:1–3 (NKJV) ¹ Thus the heavens and the earth, and all the host of them, were finished. ² And on the seventh day God ended His work which He had done, and He rested on the seventh day from all His work which He had done. ³ Then God blessed the seventh day and sanctified it, because in it He rested from all His work which God had created and made.

Song of Solomon 2:10 (NKJV) ¹⁰ My beloved spoke, and said to me: “Rise up, my love, my fair one, And come away.

Genesis 3:8 (NKJV) ⁸ And they heard the sound of the LORD God walking in the garden in the cool of the day, and Adam and his wife hid themselves from the presence of the LORD God among the trees of the garden.

Not a Bad Idea Today – a Day of Rest

Having a day to power down is still a good idea, even if not a mandate. You just powered down from all these things of the world. Imagine if we just turned off all the cell phones and imagine if we just went home and we sat

in chairs out on our porch or in our living room and just rested and just talked and took naps and talk about the word of God. Imagine how sweet that would be in our families if we did that every week. Basically, we fight and strive to get these one-week vacations. When we have the vacation of our dream, it's two weeks. God's was giving them 52 days of vacation every year.

The Lion Tamer at the Circus

Ever go to the circus? I have mixed feelings about it. I like the high-flying trapeze artist, I am a little weird out by the clowns on those little bicycles. My favorite act is the lion tamer. He struts in among hungry lions, flicks his whip and holds his stool. I'd like to be a lion tamer! It's obvious why a lion tamer uses a whip. Its crack and sting let the lion know he means business. Yet until recently I never knew why a lion tamer holds a stool. Why stick a stool in the face of a man-eating lion? Here's why... The stool's legs confuse and disorient. The lion tries to focus on all four legs at once and gets overwhelmed. A mental paralysis sets in and fragments his attention. The lion is disabled. The lion acts tame. And psychologists say the same phenomenon occurs with humans. When too many tasks jockey for our attention a paralysis takes over. We can freeze-up. The relentless demands of modern life fragment our attention. They sap us of our strength and resolve. We succumb to someone's whip. We act weak and tame. Rather than roar into life - our roar becomes a meow.

We need a Sabbath, a time to get away from all the multiple-legs of the world we have to face and get back to the focus on the one singular things, our Jesus. We need times to just power down and sit in quietness with the Lord. I met with some pastors and we have a lengthy discussion on whether pastors should take a sabbatical (weeks or months off in a row) to recharge. Which to me, my input was real simple, I need a daily sabbatical, a daily sabbath, to singularly focus on the Lord, to find my rest, and my revival, in His presence, and then from there I can face anything. But if I have to store it up and wait to get my time with the Lord after days of rushing and running, I will find myself empty and overloaded long before I ever get that time away. In His presence is fullness of joy, why wouldn't I want to get to that every day, and then carry that through my day?

Psalm 16:11 (NKJV) ¹¹ You will show me the path of life; In Your presence is fullness of joy; At Your right hand are pleasures forevermore.

Today – There is Still Debate

Even today there are debates and disputes in the church on whether New Testament saints should keep the Sabbath Law. I personally do not see that in the scriptures, Jesus has fulfilled the Sabbath. However.....

Sabbath Doesn't Save

If anyone comes and they said that you have to keep the law to be saved. What they're doing is they're adding to the work of Jesus Christ. Salvation is Jesus Christ, Him Crucified, not Jesus Christ, plus keeping these rules or Jesus Christ and you doing this. It's Jesus Christ, him crucified, period!

Galatians 3:1–4 (NKJV) ¹ O foolish Galatians! Who has bewitched you that you should not obey the truth, before whose eyes Jesus Christ was clearly portrayed among you as crucified? ² This only I want to learn from you: Did you receive the Spirit by the works of the law, or by the hearing of faith?—³ Are you so foolish? Having begun in the Spirit, are you now being made perfect by the flesh? ⁴ Have you suffered so many things in vain—if indeed it was in vain?

Do Not Judge Another Man's Conscience / Not Make Your Conscience Someone Else's Law

The scriptures tells us, do not judge according to new moons and Sabbaths (Colossians 2). Nor are we to judge another person's conscience. We are to let their conscience be their conscience; and that goes both ways too, that if someone doesn't agree with your conscience that you have to let them go with their conscience in these areas that we can debate and dispute. There are certain areas that are black and white regarding sin and there is no debate on those things, but these type of things where people can get in arguments over new moons and Sabbaths, we're just told to respect their conscience and again, I might add.....but don't turn your conscience into someone else's law that you think they should obey.

Colossians 2:16–17 (NKJV) ¹⁶ So let no one judge you in food or in drink, or regarding a festival or a new moon or sabbaths, ¹⁷ which are a shadow of things to come, but the substance is of Christ.

Romans 14:1–23 (NKJV) ¹ Receive one who is weak in the faith, but not to disputes over doubtful things. ² For one believes he may eat all things, but he who is weak eats only vegetables. ³ Let not him who eats despise him who does not eat, and let not him who does not eat judge him who eats; for God has received him. ⁴ Who are you to judge another's servant? To his own master he stands or falls. Indeed, he will be made to stand, for God is able to make him stand. ⁵ One person esteems one day above another; another esteems every day alike. Let each be

fully convinced in his own mind. ⁶ He who observes the day, observes *it* to the Lord; and he who does not observe the day, to the Lord he does not observe *it*. He who eats, eats to the Lord, for he gives God thanks; and he who does not eat, to the Lord he does not eat, and gives God thanks. ⁷ For none of us lives to himself, and no one dies to himself. ⁸ For if we live, we live to the Lord; and if we die, we die to the Lord. Therefore, whether we live or die, we are the Lord's. ⁹ For to this end Christ died and rose and lived again, that He might be Lord of both the dead and the living. ¹⁰ But why do you judge your brother? Or why do you show contempt for your brother? For we shall all stand before the judgment seat of Christ. ¹¹ For it is written: "*As I live, says the LORD, Every knee shall bow to Me, And every tongue shall confess to God.*" ¹² So then each of us shall give account of himself to God. ¹³ Therefore let us not judge one another anymore, but rather resolve this, not to put a stumbling block or a cause to fall in our brother's way. ¹⁴ I know and am convinced by the Lord Jesus that *there is* nothing unclean of itself; but to him who considers anything to be unclean, to him *it is* unclean. ¹⁵ Yet if your brother is grieved because of *your* food, you are no longer walking in love. Do not destroy with your food the one for whom Christ died. ¹⁶ Therefore do not let your good be spoken of as evil; ¹⁷ for the kingdom of God is not eating and drinking, but righteousness and peace and joy in the Holy Spirit. ¹⁸ For he who serves Christ in these things *is* acceptable to God and approved by men. ¹⁹ Therefore let us pursue the things *which make* for peace and the things by which one may edify another. ²⁰ Do not destroy the work of God for the sake of food. All things indeed *are* pure, but *it is* evil for the man who eats with offense. ²¹ It is good neither to eat meat nor drink wine nor *do anything* by which your brother stumbles or is offended or is made weak. ²² Do you have faith? Have *it* to yourself before God. Happy *is* he who does not condemn himself in what he approves. ²³ But he who doubts is condemned if he eats, because *he does* not *eat* from faith; for whatever *is* not from faith is sin.

1 Corinthians 10:23–33 (NKJV) ²³ All things are lawful for me, but not all things are helpful; all things are lawful for me, but not all things edify. ²⁴ Let no one seek his own, but each one the other's well-being. ²⁵ Eat whatever is sold in the meat market, asking no questions for conscience' sake; ²⁶ for "*the earth is the LORD's, and all its fullness.*" ²⁷ If any of those who do not believe invites you to *dinner*, and you desire to go, eat whatever is set before you, asking no question for conscience' sake. ²⁸ But if anyone says to you, "This was offered to idols," do not eat it for the sake of the one who told you, and for conscience' sake; for "*the earth is the LORD's, and all its fullness.*" ²⁹ "Conscience," I say, not your own, but that of the other. For why is my liberty judged by another *man's* conscience? ³⁰ But if I partake with thanks, why am I evil spoken of for *the food* over which I give thanks? ³¹ Therefore, whether you eat or drink, or whatever you do, do all to the glory of God. ³² Give no offense, either to the Jews or to the Greeks or to the church of God, ³³ just as I also please all *men* in all *things*, not seeking my own profit, but the *profit* of many, that they may be saved.

Don't Cause them to Stumble

And, don't let your freedom cause another brother or sister to stumble. If you feel you have Christian liberty, then that is between you and the Lord. However, I see too many people with their Christian liberty causing a weaker brother or sister to stumble into sin. I speak very specifically on drinking alcohol. If you feel the liberty to drink alcohol, that is between you and the Lord. But with a world that is addicted and depressed, lives, marriages, homes destroyed by alcohol..... is it really worth posting those pictures on social media, or inviting people over and serving alcohol and you have no idea what their past (or present) may be regarding a struggle with alcohol. The scripture is clear not to cause a brother/sister to stumble. It is not legalism, it is wisdom, and it is a command of God!

1 Corinthians 8:9–13 (NKJV) ⁹ But beware lest somehow this liberty of yours become a stumbling block to those who are weak. ¹⁰ For if anyone sees you who have knowledge eating in an idol's temple, will not the conscience of him who is weak be emboldened to eat those things offered to idols? ¹¹ And because of your knowledge shall the weak brother perish, for whom Christ died? ¹² But when you thus sin against the brethren, and wound their weak conscience, you sin against Christ. ¹³ Therefore, if food makes my brother stumble, I will never again eat meat, lest I make my brother stumble.

Jesus Heals the Man with a Withered Hand on the Sabbath (3:1-6) – (Matt 12:9-13; Luke 6:6-10)

Mark 3:1 And He entered the synagogue again, and a man was there who had a withered hand.

This Man Did Not Forsake the Assembly / Jesus Meets Him

This man has a withered hand, but he's in the synagogue. He's not staying home, feeling sorry for himself, keeping self-pity upon himself or criticizing God, asking God where he's at. Why has he allowed this? But he's accepting this is his life, and yet he continues to attend the synagogue and Jesus shows up. Jesus will show up in your life today in the midst of your pain, in the midst of sorrow, healing will be based upon his determinant will, but meeting you is always his will and loving you is his nature and I pray he meets you today, ministers to you and loves upon you for making the trip to meet with him.

Don't Forsake Assembly

Hebrews 10:25 says not to forsake the assembly of the brethren and people can take that as a command, or they can see it as a call for blessing. Jesus shows up. We're told in Hebrews, that Jesus worships in our midst. That should be enough for us that come. And we are told in Psalm 138, that God exalts his word above his name and here we come, we open his word which he says is greater than his name and his name, which at His name every knee will bow and tongue will confess that he is the Lord. So Hebrews gives us a calling to not forsake the

assembly of the brethren, and he is given that calling in the context, when you read the passage in Hebrews, of that being in the day, approaching his soon return. We know in other passages there will be a falling away. Yes, even the elect will fall away and here the warning the stir don't neglect the assembly of the brethren in that guard you from the falling away. And it doesn't necessarily have to just be the falling away into apostasy. It could just be the fallen away into anything less than the abundant life, into the seduction of the world.

Hebrews 10:24–25 (NKJV) ²⁴ And let us consider one another in order to stir up love and good works, ²⁵ not forsaking the assembling of ourselves together, as is the manner of some, but exhorting one another, and so much the more as you see the Day approaching.

Psalms 138:2 (NKJV) ² I will worship toward Your holy temple, And praise Your name For Your lovingkindness and Your truth; For You have magnified Your word above all Your name.

Philippians 2:9–11 (NKJV) ⁹ Therefore God also has highly exalted Him and given Him the name which is above every name, ¹⁰ that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of those in heaven, and of those on earth, and of those under the earth, ¹¹ and that every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father.

2 Thessalonians 2:1–4 (NKJV) ¹ Now, brethren, concerning the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ and our gathering together to Him, we ask you, ² not to be soon shaken in mind or troubled, either by spirit or by word or by letter, as if from us, as though the day of Christ had come. ³ Let no one deceive you by any means; for that Day will not come unless the falling away comes first, and the man of sin is revealed, the son of perdition, ⁴ who opposes and exalts himself above all that is called God or that is worshiped, so that he sits as God in the temple of God, showing himself that he is God.

1 Timothy 4:1–3 (NKJV) ¹ Now the Spirit expressly says that in latter times some will depart from the faith, giving heed to deceiving spirits and doctrines of demons, ² speaking lies in hypocrisy, having their own conscience seared with a hot iron, ³ forbidding to marry, and commanding to abstain from foods which God created to be received with thanksgiving by those who believe and know the truth.

This Man Didn't Forsake – And Thus Didn't Miss

This man didn't forsake the assembly of the brethren, and Jesus shows up and had he forsaken, he would have missed meeting Jesus. And then everybody else that had forsaken the assembly of the brethren, they would have missed this day. They could've seen a miracle. They could have heard the word of the Lord and seeing God do something mightily, but they missed it because they chose to forsake the assembly of the brethren.

Mark 3:2 So they watched Him closely, whether He would heal him on the Sabbath, so that they might accuse Him.

Following to Criticize / Cristian Don't Let them Bind You – Be Unstoppable like Jesus

Verse two, they're always watching Jesus to criticize, what critical hearts. All they want to do is follow Jesus and watching so they can hope that he's going to do something in their mind that he's wrong and they can attack him. I don't know how he did it. He is so gracious and patient. You realize they're hiding in the field behind cornstalks, following him just to be critical and he knows it. His every move is under critique and cross examination and people still do that today. They just want to be a critic. They're so sad. They don't care about how much good that you do there. Just looking and hiding behind the pillars, looking of how they can criticize you for what you do and you know what? You just have to look past it and be like Jesus and be unstoppable. Don't let them bind you up as we have discussed or else you will become like them and that's what they want. They want to put you into their little box because they don't want to step out of their box and they don't want to love unconditionally. They don't want to serve unconditionally. They want to have bounds of who they serve and who they love. Don't let them do it. Christian don't let them bind you. Be Set free and just love unconditionally, and as we closed last week, just imagine new wine into new wineskin, the spirit of God, the power of God, the love of God for God is love, freely flowing through you. Imagine what that life would look like in your life to live that way.

Some think this was Setup / Jesus Always Looks for the Person in Need

Some say this is a setup to which I don't think so. I think this man was there because that's what he did, but there is the expectation that Jesus will heal him, and so in either case how beautiful it is. They expected Jesus to reach out and touch this man and you know they knew the heart of Jesus even after such a short time in the ministry, the Public Ministry of Jesus Christ, that when he walks into a room and there was somebody in need, he always went and met the need, the greatest need.

The people of this day believed that if a person had a withered body part, or leprosy, or paralysis, or blindness, some type of “withered” body part, it was because of their own personal sin, something they had done. And in some cases that could be true as sin does have a consequence. But even if that is true, the heart of God, the nature of Jesus, the spiritual truth is declared, God wants to meet your need, He wants to restore that which is withered in your life, to make life whole. He doesn’t walk by and say you brought this upon yourself, you deserve this suffering, but rather He seeks you out, specifically, He meets you, your marriage, your relationship, your depressed heart, your heard heart, and He will say “step forth”, let me heal this.

And if that is you today just know when Jesus walks into a room, he's looking for the person who's in need and if you simply say, here I am, Lord, I'm in need, He comes to you. He knows your need already, but your invitation invites him to come and join you and he wants to minister to you. He wants to meet your need and you can call out to him right here, right now today and say, Lord, I'm in need. I have this withered thing, and he will seek you out and he will minister to you and you can be sure every time you walk in this place that he's going to meet you and minister to you.

Mark 3:3 And He said to the man who had the withered hand, “Step forward.”

Mark 3:4 Then He said to them, “Is it lawful on the Sabbath to do good or to do evil, to save life or to kill?” But they kept silent.

Evil never Takes Day Off – Why Would Good?

Jesus is asking, “What’s more important, keeping rules that make you feel self-righteous - or doing good, and helping people?” The answer was obvious, “Evil never takes a day off, why should doing good!”

Mark 3:5 And when He had looked around at them with anger, being grieved by the hardness of their hearts, He said to the man, “Stretch out your hand.” And he stretched it out, and his hand was restored as whole as the other.

They Remain Silent

In verse four, they remain silent. They don't want to answer. They don't want to self-indict themselves because the fact is they don't care, and so they don't want to say to do well because then that elevates Jesus and that tears down their prosperity doctrine that they're living in their religion. They don't want to see people set free. They want to see people kept in bondage.

Jesus is Angry – Christian take Note What Angers Jesus (and Be Careful)

In verse six. You only see a few places in the scriptures where Jesus is angry, but Jesus is angry here because these people, they don't care about people that are hurting. They only care about their little world and they would rather see people in bondage. They would rather see marriages destroyed. They would rather see withered hands stay inside the robe. They would rather see children going wayward. They would rather see drugs being abused. People Living shallow lives and in a bondage. They could care less, and Jesus is angry and every Christian needs to take note, oh, what makes Jesus angry, and purpose to not make Jesus angry.

How to Know if in the Right

Here are two things that we can evaluate on whether we have heard from the Lord, and whether our actions are in line with the heart of God:

- Compassion for people – if I have lost the compassion for hurting and/or perishing people, I can be sure I have entered into a deceived state of spirituality.
- Conviction of personal sin – if I am busy about everyone else’s sin, but never find myself under the conviction of personal sin, I can be sure I have entered into deceived state of spirituality.

Don’t Hide What is Withered

Jesus said, stand up and stretch forth your hand. This tells us that his hand was withdrawn and if this man wants to be healed, he has to extend and reveal that what is withered in his hand, in his life. and then there's a word for

each and every one of us. We try to hide with these things that are withered in our hands, that stained glass masquerade, that great Casting Crowns song sings. Jesus says, if you want me to touch you, you got to reveal and extend out that which has withered in your life. You can't try to hide it. You can't think that hiding will cover the shame of it. He just says, put it out there. Yeah, the world may see so be it. Put it out there and let me take it and heal it, and this man so desperate and so desirous, he's stretched forth his hand and God meets him.

2 Choices

This man at this moment has two choices as always, do what Jesus said to do or to question what he just said to do. And many people today say they want help from Jesus, but they will do it Jesus' way. Jesus said, come. Let me heal you. You say, I want to be healed. Jesus said, comeforsake the assembly of those people you hang out with and do not forsake the assembly of the brethren and yet people go, no, I don't agree with that. I still want your help, but I don't want to do it that way. Then they never get help, but it's a year later. It's a decade later and they're still in the same place. It's just easier to stand up. Face the battle for the moment, however that moment last, but face it so you can break through and move on.

Command Comes with Enablement

God's commandment comes with is enablement and Jesus is doing something new here and that's something so new, (that new wine and the new wine skin) is the giving to man, the ability at his word and his power to overcome whatever's withered in their life. God's commands always come with God's enablement to keep his command. The glory of the New Covenant is God's Spirit enabling you to keep the command of God, that were made for good. In your body, electrical signals travel along nerve fibers at speeds of 300 mph. In a nanosecond a message can travel from your brain to your hand. When Jesus issued His command, this man made a choice to obey - to stretch out his balled up, crippled hand. Rather than focus on his atrophied muscles - He believed in the Word of Jesus, and acted on his faith. In the millisecond it took for the message to travel from brain to fingers his withered hand was whole.

1 Corinthians 3:16 (NKJV) ¹⁶ Do you not know that you are the temple of God and that the Spirit of God dwells in you?

Mark 2:21–22 (NKJV) ²¹ No one sews a piece of unshrunk cloth on an old garment; or else the new piece pulls away from the old, and the tear is made worse. ²² And no one puts new wine into old wineskins; or else the new wine bursts the wineskins, the wine is spilled, and the wineskins are ruined. But new wine must be put into new wineskins."

Mark 3:6 Then the Pharisees went out and immediately plotted with the Herodians against Him, how they might destroy Him.

The Destroyer

In verse six, they seek to destroy Jesus. In Revelation, it tells us that's the name of Satan is Apollyon, which means the destroyer. So these are men being influenced by the destroyer to destroy, and anybody religious or nonreligious saved or unsaved who destroys the work of God, comes against the work of God, they are under the influence of the destroyer.

Revelation 9:11 (NKJV) ¹¹ And they had as king over them the angel of the bottomless pit, whose name in Hebrew is Abaddon, but in Greek he has the name Apollyon.

Liberal Theologians & Liberal Politicians

The Herodians were a political party and boy, we see that today. We see false religious groups or errant religious groups coupling with political groups to further and stop the work of God. Two thousand years, nothing's changed. So they're going to try to change the laws of the land to make what Jesus is doing illegal or make up some law that looks like Jesus is guilty of breaking the law. They'll come up and they'll make laws called separation of church and state or they'll say if you quote the Bible and it offends somebody, it's hate speech. They'll say, no prayer in the school except you can teach Islam but not Christianity. And the list goes on and on and on.

No Man – Govt -Program Can Stop the Work of God

But as I always say for you personally, No man government or program can stop the work of God in your life. Only you can, by lack of faith or disobedience. But believe on the Lord Jesus Christ. Commit your ways to him. Obey him,

following. Know his word. Stay in the assembly of the brethren, and there is nothing that can stop you. You will be like Jesus..... unstoppable

Conclusion

Prayer – Boldly Ask Your God

The Word of God is Living and Powerful, and is ready, and will do a mighty work in our lives.

Hebrews 4:12 (NKJV) ¹² For the word of God is living and powerful, and sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing even to the division of soul and spirit, and of joints and marrow, and is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart.

In Every Study

- Who Is God? (How Great is He?)
- What Does He Think of Me? (How Wonderful Are His Thoughts Towards Me?)
- What Does He Want Me to Do?
- What Can I Boldly Request of Him?
- What Do I Need to Be on Guard of When I Leave Here Today?

Boldly Come to Throne of Grace

Boldly come to the throne of grace, ask God to reveal Himself in a mighty way to you, and to do I might work in you, and through you.

Hebrews 4:16 (NKJV) ¹⁶ Let us therefore come boldly to the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy and find grace to help in time of need.

End of Study

Mark 3
Mark 3:1-12

Recap/Intro / The God of the One

We have come as far as chapter three in our study through this fast-paced book. When we get to chapter 6 of this book, Jesus will be 1 year from the cross. Chapter 1 we saw His baptism and thus the beginning of His public ministry. So we are somewhere around 1-2 years into His public ministry. His ministry has exploded, His popularity as we will see in our chapter is drawing people from miles away, upwards of 100 - 200 miles. Swelling crowds will press in upon Him so much so that He needs a boat to preach from some days, and thus based on that, some estimate there are times where Jesus is preaching to upwards of tens of thousands of people at one time. But, regardless of swelling crowds, He is “The God of the One”, and see individuals in the midst of a crowd, and He see you today, individually, every detail of your life, every need, every care, every heartache, every triumph, every high and every low. God sees you today and seeks you out to minister to your heart through this Word.

Luke 15:4–7 (NKJV) ⁴ “What man of you, having a hundred sheep, if he loses one of them, does not leave the ninety-nine in the wilderness, and go after the one which is lost until he finds it? ⁵ And when he has found it, he lays it on his shoulders, rejoicing. ⁶ And when he comes home, he calls together his friends and neighbors, saying to them, ‘Rejoice with me, for I have found my sheep which was lost!’ ⁷ I say to you that likewise there will be more joy in heaven over one sinner who repents than over ninety-nine just persons who need no repentance.

Let’s Pray

Prayer – Boldly Ask Your God

The Word of God is Living and Powerful, and is ready, and will do a mighty work in our lives.

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In Every Study

- Who Is God? (How Great is He?)
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Boldly come to the throne of grace, ask God to reveal Himself in a mighty way to you, and to do I might work in you, and through you.

Hebrews 4:16 (NKJV) ¹⁶ Let us therefore come boldly to the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy and find grace to help in time of need.

Outline of Today’s Study (Mark 3:1-12):

- Jesus Heals the Man with a Withered Hand on the Sabbath (3:1-6)
- A Great Multitude Follow Jesus (3:7-12)

Jesus Heals the Man with a Withered Hand on the Sabbath (3:1-6)

Mark 3:1 And He entered the synagogue again, and a man was there who had a withered hand.

Mark 3:2 So they watched Him closely, whether He would heal him on the Sabbath, so that they might accuse Him.

Mark 3:3 And He said to the man who had the withered hand, “Step forward.”

Jesus Searches Out the Neediest

We have come as far as chapter three in our study through this fast-paced book. When we get to chapter 6 of this book, Jesus will be 1 year from the cross. Chapter 1 we saw His baptism and thus the beginning of His public ministry. So we are somewhere around 1-2 years into His public ministry. His ministry has exploded, His popularity as we will see in our chapter is drawing people from miles away, upwards of 200 miles. Swelling crowds will press in upon Him so much so that He needs a boat to preach from some days, and thus based on that, some estimate there are times where Jesus is preaching to 50-60, even 80 thousand people at one time. Yet, Jesus

always has time for, and ministers to, “the one”. And if that is you today, He will meet you and minister to you, on a one-on-one basis. He knows your name, he knows your need, He searches you out today.

Beloved – What is Your Need Today – Step Forth

Beloved, what is your need, step forward, say to Him, here is my need, to which he will say “I know”, let Him touch you, minister to you, comfort you today. Come in here today believing that He sees, that He cares for you, that when He walks into a room he looks for the person in need, so that He can minister to, comfort, and speak to your heart directly regarding the matter.

It is Why He Came

Lord, I pray You meet those in need today, that you comfort those who mourn, you comfort those who hurt, let no one leave here today without you touching their heart. It is why he came!

Isaiah 61:1–3 (NKJV) ¹ “The Spirit of the Lord GOD is upon Me, Because the LORD has anointed Me To preach good tidings to the poor; He has sent Me to heal the brokenhearted, To proclaim liberty to the captives, And the opening of the prison to those who are bound; ² To proclaim the acceptable year of the LORD, And the day of vengeance of our God; To comfort all who mourn, ³ To console those who mourn in Zion, To give them beauty for ashes, The oil of joy for mourning, The garment of praise for the spirit of heaviness; That they may be called trees of righteousness, The planting of the LORD, that He may be glorified.”

1 Peter 5:7 (NKJV) ⁷ casting all your care upon Him, for He cares for you.

Mark 3:4 Then He said to them, “Is it lawful on the Sabbath to do good or to do evil, to save life or to kill?” But they kept silent.

Hard Hearts / Jesus is a Threat to Their (Kingdom, Power, and Glory)

As Jesus’ popularity grew, the religious leaders were taking note, and they are not in for the people, but for themselves, and they see Jesus as a direct threat to their, kingdom, their power, and their glory.

Matthew’s Account / Great Shepherd – Jumps in Pit for His Sheep

In Matthew’s account of this same event, he tells us that Jesus said to these guys that if your sheep fell into a pit you would rescue it, because it means something to you, it is of value to you, so how much more so a person who was in need. And, to Jesus, the Great Shepherd, this is man is one of His sheep, and you betcha, I am going to tend to My flock. Oh my how He loves you, you’re His precious sheep. This would also mean that there is no pit you are in, that He isn’t in with you.

Matthew 12:9–13 (NKJV) ⁹ Now when He had departed from there, He went into their synagogue. ¹⁰ And behold, there was a man who had a withered hand. And they asked Him, saying, “Is it lawful to heal on the Sabbath?”—that they might accuse Him. ¹¹ Then He said to them, “What man is there among you who has one sheep, and if it falls into a pit on the Sabbath, will not lay hold of it and lift it out? ¹² Of how much more value then is a man than a sheep? Therefore it is lawful to do good on the Sabbath.” ¹³ Then He said to the man, “Stretch out your hand.” And he stretched it out, and it was restored as whole as the other.

John 10:10–11 (NKJV) ¹⁰ The thief does not come except to steal, and to kill, and to destroy. I have come that they may have life, and that they may have it more abundantly. ¹¹ “I am the good shepherd. The good shepherd gives His life for the sheep.

Mark 3:5 And when He had looked around at them with anger, being grieved by the hardness of their hearts, He said to the man, “Stretch out your hand.” And he stretched it out, and his hand was restored as whole as the other.

Jesus is Angry – Someone Mistreats One of His Sheep (For He is the God of the One)

So Jesus is angry, when people, anyone (including me and you) that mistreats one of His sheep, has no heart for one of His sheep, who has a hard-heart towards one of His sheep. We would all do well to see what angers the Lord, and ask Him to correct our hearts, soften our hearts, change our minds where we have allowed ourselves to have hardened hearts towards one of His sheep..... For He is after all, The God of the One.

300 MPH – The Moment Your are Willing – He Enables

Jesus says stretched forth your hand, and the moment the man does he is healed. The signal from your brain to your extremity (hand, foot, mouth, eye, etc) travels at 300 miles-per-hour. When this man chose to obey Jesus, at 300mph he had the ability to move and use that withered hand again. Beloved, Christ Jesus gives that same ability

to you today, for the moment you believe, in an instant, 300mph, he gives you the ability to overcome that which is withered in your life. In an instant, the moment you are willing:

- you can be free of that fear in your life by faith that He protects you
- you can be free from that bitterness, resentment, even hatred you have towards that person who has hurt you, that in faith you can ask Him to set you free from those feeling, which if you are honest, is withering your life because you spend so much time thinking and rehashing what has happened.
- You can be from that addiction, that bondage, that sin in your life, in a moment, in a twinkling of an eye, by faith saying Lord help me. And you may have to reach back out to Him over and over again, but in every time, you reach, He will respond with the ability for you to overcome.
- Jesus is always looking for the neediest person in the room, who is desiring Him to touch them.

Mark 3:6 Then the Pharisees went out and immediately plotted with the Herodians against Him, how they might destroy Him.

The Destroyer

In verse six, they seek to destroy Jesus. In Revelation, it tells us that's the name of Satan is Apollyon, which means the destroyer. So these are men being influenced by the destroyer to destroy, and anybody religious or nonreligious saved or unsaved who destroys the work of God, comes against the work of God, they are under the influence of the destroyer. And Satan wants to destroy every good work in your life, and he wants to destroy you too. He is a thief! But the Good Shepherd, He comes to give you life and that more abundant.

Revelation 9:11 (NKJV) ¹¹ And they had as king over them the angel of the bottomless pit, whose name in Hebrew is Abaddon, but in Greek he has the name Apollyon.

John 10:10–11 (NKJV) ¹⁰ The thief does not come except to steal, and to kill, and to destroy. I have come that they may have life, and that they may have it more abundantly. ¹¹ I am the good shepherd. The good shepherd gives His life for the sheep.

Herodians Political Party – Remember King Herod killed All the Babies Under 2 Years-Old

The Herodians were the political faction that came out of King Herod. You remember King Herod, he killed all the babies under the age of two in Bethlehem and the surrounding area of Bethlehem. He was a madman.

Matthew 2:16 (NKJV) ¹⁶ Then Herod, when he saw that he was deceived by the wise men, was exceedingly angry; and he sent forth and put to death all the male children who were in Bethlehem and in all its districts, from two years old and under, according to the time which he had determined from the wise men.

All Returned Because of Census / But Also Lived There Because of Inheritance

So anyone of the tribe, lineage of King David, at the time of the birth of Jesus, Herod killed. Mind you, they all would have returned to Bethlehem because of the census that Rome had put on the Nation of Israel so that made it easier to do. And, most of the families would have stayed in that region, because when the land was divided up as an inheritance, your family would land that was passed down from generation to generation.

Luke 2:1–7 (NKJV) ¹ And it came to pass in those days that a decree went out from Caesar Augustus that all the world should be registered. ² This census first took place while Quirinius was governing Syria. ³ So all went to be registered, everyone to his own city. ⁴ Joseph also went up from Galilee, out of the city of Nazareth, into Judea, to the city of David, which is called Bethlehem, because he was of the house and lineage of David, ⁵ to be registered with Mary, his betrothed wife, who was with child. ⁶ So it was, that while they were there, the days were completed for her to be delivered. ⁷ And she brought forth her firstborn Son, and wrapped Him in swaddling cloths, and laid Him in a manger, because there was no room for them in the inn.

Textual Criticism

There were two Bethlehem's in the land of Israel. One was up in the north by Nazareth, and it was allotted to the Tribe of Bethlehem (Joshua 19), and the other (most famous of all) was in the south, only several miles south of Jerusalem, and was of the Tribe of Judah

Joshua 15:20 (NKJV) ²⁰ This was the inheritance of the tribe of the children of Judah according to their families:*Joshua 15:63 (NKJV)* ⁶³ As for the Jebusites, the inhabitants of Jerusalem, the children of Judah could not drive them out; but the Jebusites dwell with the children of Judah at Jerusalem to this day.

Joshua 19:10 (NKJV) ¹⁰ The third lot came out for the children of Zebulun according to their families, and the border of their inheritance was as far as Sarid.*Joshua 19:15–16 (NKJV)* ¹⁵ Included were Kattath, Nahallal, Shimron, Idalah, and Bethlehem: twelve cities with their villages. ¹⁶ This was the inheritance of the children of Zebulun according to their families, these cities with their villages.

Messiah Pool / Herod – Wise Men – Chief Priest – Scribes (Believed Prophecy)

So now I want you to consider this, and that is how small the “Messiah Pool” (if you would), would be at this time? The prophecy of Micah pinpoints where the Messiah would be born (Micah 5:2). King Herod believed the prophecy, so we see people are familiar with the scriptures, from kings, to wise men, to chief priest, and scribes. Herod would kill all within that age bracket, but by divine design, Jesus was taken to Egypt after a dream was given to his father Joseph. Thus Jesus is not killed.

Micah 5:2 (NKJV) ² “But you, Bethlehem Ephrathah, *Though you are little among the thousands of Judah, Yet out of you shall come forth to Me The One to be Ruler in Israel, Whose goings forth are from of old, From everlasting.*”

Matthew 2:1–6 (NKJV) ¹ Now after Jesus was born in Bethlehem of Judea in the days of Herod the king, behold, wise men from the East came to Jerusalem, ² saying, “Where is He who has been born King of the Jews? For we have seen His star in the East and have come to worship Him.” ³ When Herod the king heard *this*, he was troubled, and all Jerusalem with him. ⁴ And when he had gathered all the chief priests and scribes of the people together, he inquired of them where the Christ was to be born. ⁵ So they said to him, “In Bethlehem of Judea, for thus it is written by the prophet: ⁶ *‘But you, Bethlehem, in the land of Judah, Are not the least among the rulers of Judah; For out of you shall come a Ruler Who will shepherd My people Israel.’*”

Matthew 2:13–15 (NKJV) ¹³ Now when they had departed, behold, an angel of the Lord appeared to Joseph in a dream, saying, “Arise, take the young Child and His mother, flee to Egypt, and stay there until I bring you word; for Herod will seek the young Child to destroy Him.” ¹⁴ When he arose, he took the young Child and His mother by night and departed for Egypt, ¹⁵ and was there until the death of Herod, that it might be fulfilled which was spoken by the Lord through the prophet, saying, “*Out of Egypt I called My Son.*”

Killed Babies – Age of Understanding

Before going on let me state there is an age of understanding, and all these babies that were killed by this ruthless attack by King Herod, they are in heaven now before God, they never reached the age of understanding nor accountability of the need for a Savior. When David’s son died as an infant, we read David saying the child is in heaven.

2 Samuel 12:22–23 (NKJV) ²² And he said, “While the child was alive, I fasted and wept; for I said, ‘Who can tell whether the LORD will be gracious to me, that the child may live?’” ²³ But now he is dead; why should I fast? Can I bring him back again? I shall go to him, but he shall not return to me.”

Jesus is One of the Few Men that Age

But the point that I want to make regarding our passage today is Jesus is just one of the very few that would have survived this. Now consider everyone knew why he (Herod) did it, but nobody is considering the age of Jesus is one of the few survivors and that the prophecies regarding the Coming Messiah, have been narrowed down to just a very few. So this small amount of men born at this period who survived the King Herod would have to be the messiah. This is amazing to consider how few men would qualify to be the messiah at this age, at this time of Jesus. Just hearing Jesus born in Bethlehem some 33 years ago, people should realize this has a very high possibility that he is the messiah. The one promise from the prophecy of Micah, it is just amazing to consider every detail of these things. And, always remember, God is in the details, and He is in every detail of your life.

The Questions We Ask about Someone

So when you hear about someone that's come on the scene, world leader or somebody lets say who is a love interest to a person that you know; what are some of the things that you ask, you asked such things of what do they look like? What else do you ask? How old are they? Where are they from? Where were they born, where do they live? Tell me about their family. And now as we live here in intelligence community, we dig deep, very deep to get all the details. Well, these Pharisees and these Herodians they are digging deep of anyone who they would consider a threat and you know they have dug into all those questions and they have all the answers of who Jesus Christ is. How old is he? Where was he born? Where's he from? Where's he live? Tell me about his parents. These type of things. They have all these answers.

Daniels Prophecy

King Herod knew the Christ would come. He asked the religious leaders, go search it out, and they had no problem coming back. The say in Bethlehem, these religious leaders, the scribes, this was their job was to search the scriptures and they would know another prophetic passage and that would be Daniel chapter nine, which clearly to the day says, when the Messiah would come to Jerusalem and that would be exactly 173,880 days from the time the command was given to rebuild the walls of Jerusalem (Nehemiah 2), and here we are somewhere around

173,500 from that prophecy. Somebody is only about 360 to 500 days away from fulfilling that prophecy. These religious leaders should have known how close it was. They might not have understood what it all meant, but those who are looking would realize how close it was.

***Daniel 9:24–26 (NKJV)** ²⁴ "Seventy weeks are determined For your people and for your holy city, To finish the transgression, To make an end of sins, To make reconciliation for iniquity, To bring in everlasting righteousness, To seal up vision and prophecy, And to anoint the Most Holy. ²⁵ "Know therefore and understand, That from the going forth of the command To restore and build Jerusalem Until Messiah the Prince, There shall be seven weeks and sixty-two weeks; The street shall be built again, and the wall, Even in troublesome times. ²⁶ "And after the sixty-two weeks Messiah shall be cut off, but not for Himself; And the people of the prince who is to come Shall destroy the city and the sanctuary. The end of it shall be with a flood, And till the end of the war desolations are determined.*

***Nehemiah 2:1–5 (NKJV)** ¹ And it came to pass in the month of Nisan, in the twentieth year of King Artaxerxes, when wine was before him, that I took the wine and gave it to the king. Now I had never been sad in his presence before. ² Therefore the king said to me, "Why is your face sad, since you are not sick? This is nothing but sorrow of heart." So I became dreadfully afraid, ³ and said to the king, "May the king live forever! Why should my face not be sad, when the city, the place of my fathers' tombs, lies waste, and its gates are burned with fire?" ⁴ Then the king said to me, "What do you request?" So I prayed to the God of heaven. ⁵ And I said to the king, "If it pleases the king, and if your servant has found favor in your sight, I ask that you send me to Judah, to the city of my fathers' tombs, that I may rebuild it."*

A 32-Year-Old Man / Standing in Front of Them (Sometime the Answer is the Answer)

And therefore, if you tie it in from the star to the cross, that man would be 32 years old. And here they are looking into the eyes of a man who was 32 years old, born in Bethlehem of the tribe of Judah, through the lineage of David, a shoot out of Nazareth (Matthew 2). He who had escaped to Egypt, standing before their eyes doing the things that the prophecy said the Christ would do. He's right before their eyes, the 32 year old man,

***Matthew 2:22–23 (NKJV)** ²² But when he heard that Archelaus was reigning over Judea instead of his father Herod, he was afraid to go there. And being warned by God in a dream, he turned aside into the region of Galilee. ²³ And he came and dwelt in a city called Nazareth, that it might be fulfilled which was spoken by the prophets, "He shall be called a Nazarene."*

***Isaiah 11:1–2 (NKJV)** ¹ There shall come forth a Rod from the stem of Jesse, And a Branch (nazar) shall grow out of his roots. ² The Spirit of the LORD shall rest upon Him, The Spirit of wisdom and understanding, The Spirit of counsel and might, The Spirit of knowledge and of the fear of the LORD.*

Sometimes the answer is the answer and for many people today, they know Jesus Christ is the answer, but they don't want to accept that answer

Even believers, you know Jesus Christ is the answer. You know his word is the answer, but you're refusing the answer because you don't want to repent or turn and therefore you wonder why you don't live in an abundant life, a life of peace. Sometimes the answer is the answer and you do well to just take the answer and live it out even if it is difficult at first and hard and uncomfortable.

Work - Sometimes the Answer is the Answer

I spent many years of my aerospace job doing risk analysis. We would take all the pieces, all the facts, all the resources, and bring them all together, and do an analysis of what the risk was to accomplish a certain project. Some projects were really easy, and very low risk. And some, had some many variables such as it had never been done before, or we just didn't have the right people who could do the job, or we just couldn't do it in the time the government wanted the project complete by, or it was going to cost way more than the government was willing to pay for the project. And managers, executives, they would say well what if we changed this, or changed that, or did this, or did that, because we really want this business, we need to figure out how to make this work. And there would be times where I would say, look, sometimes the answer is the answer. No matter how much you want to try to change it, or ignore it, the answer is still the answer.

We Are on Jesus Time

Sometimes the answers the we don't need to make it more complicated than it is. Just do the simplicity of the facts, it and most every time the most obvious answer is the answer. Jesus Christ is the most obvious answer for mankind today. Do you know how few 32-33-34 year olds from the tribe of Judah through the lineage of David there are in the whole country at this point? Jesus divided time. We all live to Jesus' time. Sometimes the answer is the answer. Many people do not want to tie all the facts together. They don't want to be honest with the facts and they don't want to accept. That's sometimes the answer is the answer.

Amazing Life Standing before Man

Jesus is standing before them, doing amazing things, it can't be denied and yet they're trying to deny it and the same still true for some people, they have people standing before them who have this amazing life that can only be attributed to the work of Christ in their life, and yet people looking on still miss it, still miss that Jesus is real, He is alive, and He does wonderous works in His people.

The Match Made in Hell / Liberal Theologians & Liberal Politicians (Still Today)

Now back to this matchmade in hell, the Pharisees and the Herodians. The Herodians were a political party and boy, we see that today. We see false religious groups or errant religious groups coupling with political groups to further and stop the work of God. Two thousand years, nothing's changed. So they're going to try to change the laws of the land to make what Jesus is doing illegal or make up some law that looks like Jesus is guilty of breaking the law. They'll come up and they'll make laws called separation of church and state or they'll say if you quote the Bible and it offends somebody, it's hate speech. They'll say, no prayer in the school except you can teach Islam but not Christianity. And the list goes on and on and on.

No Man – Govt -Program Can Stop the Work of God

But as I always say for you personally, No man government or program can stop the work of God in your life. Only you can, by lack of faith or disobedience. But believe on the Lord Jesus Christ. Commit your ways to him. Obey him, following. Know his word. Stay in the assembly of the brethren, and there is nothing that can stop you. You will be like Jesus..... unstoppable

YOUTH!!!!!! / Nothing Can Stop You / China – Korea Church Grows!!!

Let me scream it out to our youth today! No Man, government or program can stop the work of God. And I say to you as my evidence, take a look at North Korea and its great oppression. Yet the church grows. Look at China, the great oppression, yet the church grows. No Man, government or program can quench and stopped the work God.

And no man, government or program can stop the work of God in your life personally, regardless of how government can make laws and our Christian liberties are being stripped away, layer by layer, but it still doesn't change anything for me personally of who Jesus Christ is, what he's done for me and what he's called me to be and do and I can grow as close to Jesus Christ as I want, even with all the oppression of the world coming against me. But I continue, continue to grow in a personal relationship with Jesus Christ as much as I want to, but as I always say, but not one drop more. That's my choice. How far I want to go. That's your choice, how far you want to go,

Greg Laurie / Sometimes a Fight is Good for Us

Did you see this week that an atheist group complained about a Greg Laurie Harvest Crusade billboard that was rented in the local mall, so the mall revoked Greg's rental, as they said the atheist group said him holding the bible was offensive to them. The harvest crusade is August 17-19 in Southern California. It has been going on for 3 decades, but here is the day we live with liberal politics and plenty of liberal theologians saying religion should be kept to itself. Why does a book you think is a fairytale threaten you I would like to ask them? You know, I like a good fight from time to time, seems I am in one every week anymore, Jesus must be coming back soon. I like a good fight because it keeps me sharp, keeps me from getting lax and lazy, keeps me from me soft and docile. I love the fight, and wont back down from one that comes either.

But no man, government, or program can stop the work of God. Didn't stop Jesus, and won't stop Greg either. Actually, a big thank you should go out to that group. Who could ever afford all the free publicity that was given out to the lost and dying world because of this. The news made the local news, national news, Fox news, CBS news, local newspapers. Who knows how many people will now attend because they have heard about it through these news cast. No man, government, or program can stop the work of God

YOUTH!!!!!! / Nothing Can Stop You

Let me scream it out to our youth today! No Man, government or program can stop the work of God.

A Great Multitude Follow Jesus (3:7-12)

Mark 3:7 But Jesus withdrew with His disciples to the sea. And a great multitude from Galilee followed Him, and from Judea

Mark 3:8 and Jerusalem and Idumea and beyond the Jordan; and those from Tyre and Sidon, a great multitude, when they heard how many things He was doing, came to Him.

People Coming from everywhere

The people were coming from more than just these areas, the point is that the area mentioned are north, south, east, and west; they were coming from every direction,

- Galilee – where they are at there at Sea of Galilee
- Judea – south, the area of Jerusalem. About a 75 mile trek north.
- Jerusalem – Jerusalem is named, to make point the religious capital of the land was coming up to hear and see Jesus.
- Idumea – even further south of Judea, about a 100 mile trek north.
- Beyond Jordan – would be south and west of Capernaum.
- Tyre – about 30 miles north east of Capernaum
- Sidon – about 45 miles further north and east of Capernaum.

Imagine Glorious Scene of All these People

Imagine this glorious scene, people just pressing in to see Jesus, and I pray that we get to see that one last time

Synagogue Up the Hill from the Sea / Watching Congregation Empty Out

So we're in Capernaum and the synagogue, according to these archaeological ruins and findings, show us that the Sea of Galilee is just a couple hundred yards from the synagogue. So Jesus heals this man. The religious leaders are in an uproar. Jesus walks out and it says, then a whole multitude follows him. You can literally see that the synagogue is empty and if you can imagine it and they follow Jesus wherever he goes, which I would, and I do myself today. Wherever Jesus is gone, that's where I want to be.

But if you can imagine these guys, when they watched their congregation shrinking, they know there's a threat to their livelihood and their pride in their position and their arrogance and it's getting even more stirred up now and all these people follow Jesus down to the seashore.

People Follow Jesus – Me Too! / Grab a Blanket

Wouldn't it just be wonderful, I mean simply glorious to follow Jesus and walk the seashore with him and just hear his heart and then how glorious to pull up a blanket, throw it down and Jesus is pushed out onto the boat and he teaches, and they get to just sit there and hear the heart of God. See the reflection of God off the water. See the glory of God with the creation around them.

How glorious to see how mighty and majestic God is. I think there's just something wonderful my taking your Bible and going out into creation and just sitting and reading a song thinking and hearing the glory of God. What an amazing time this is for them and we get the same opportunity today.

Natural Amphitheater / No Man, Government, or Program can stop the work of God.

You want to hear another good one is when you did get down to the sea and then you launch off into a boat. It's like a natural amphitheater is made and your voice carries all the way back up the hill and guess where it would carry? back up into the synagogue. Those guys can't get away from the voice of God and people try to do that today. They try to snuff out and quench the voice of God, but it just keeps penetrating deeper and deeper into the hearts of man. Let me scream it out to our youth today! No Man, government or program can stop the work of God.

Mark 3:9 So He told His disciples that a small boat should be kept ready for Him because of the multitude, lest they should crush Him.

Crowds Swelling

Based on the area, it has been estimated that there could have been anywhere from thousands, to tens of thousands of people. You get desperate people, you could see how Jesus could get crushed.

Get a Boat

Keep a boat ready if need be, and Jesus would jump into it and preach from the boat, and thus nobody could crush Him. Now this would be my dream ministry, just being Jesus' rower. Not hard to imagine the man with the withered hand saying, I got this, see this hand that was once withered, it can row all day for Jesus. What once was withered and useless, now is strong and mighty for God's use, and God's glory. I'll row for Jesus, with this restored life he has given me, what was once withered, now is strong and mighty for God's use.

Mark 3:10 For He healed many, so that as many as had afflictions pressed about Him to touch Him.

Not the Hospital – But Hell

Jesus didn't come to get people out of the hospital as well as that is, He came to get them out of hell. When I go to visit people in the hospital, in terminal diagnoses, I pray for their healing, but I am very upfront and direct, as I know the statistics of a fallen world, every man dies, and I say to them, "are you sure that when it comes time to die, all you have to do is die", that you have done everything necessary to die a peaceful death". A peaceful death is not dying in your sleep, a peaceful death is dying with peace between you and God, that you are at peace with Him because your sins have been forgiven, the offense of breaking God's Holy Law has been put away, because you have ask Jesus to forgive your sins, and you have given your life to Him.

Mark 3:11 And the unclean spirits, whenever they saw Him, fell down before Him and cried out, saying, "You are the Son of God."

Mark 3:12 But He sternly warned them that they should not make Him known.

Jesus Mutes Demons – Don't Need Liars / I Separate from Popularity Ministries

Why would Jesus mute the demons? Because wouldn't we think, wow, free publicity, even the demons are declaring his name. Jesus would mute them because they believe, but they don't receive. They may say Jesus is God, but they don't pronounce him as Messiah. The only means of salvation.

I have personally in times past have separated from what I consider solid evangelical organizations because for the sake of popularity, for means to grow the ministry, they allow people to speak for them, to represent them, made them and showed them as partners, but the fact is these people only believe Jesus as the son of God, they have not received him as the only way to salvation. They add to Jesus Christ and him crucified. They even add to if you follow our way, our organization, you will be saved, but they don't repent and follow Jesus Christ. They add manmade traditions on top of the Gospel, Jesus Christ and Him crucified. Jesus isn't allowing demons or anyone to promote him. He's going to select his disciples here shortly and he's going to send them and they're going to preach in his name because they believed, but we'll even see one who believed but didn't receive and the danger that he presented to the ministry.

James 2:19 (NKJV) ¹⁹ You believe that there is one God. You do well. Even the demons believe—and tremble!

But oh, we see it all the time. Some sports figures, some entertainer gets religious and says, God, maybe even Jesus, but when you get down into the really core of that, what they believe, you don't see anything to do with repentance. You don't see anything to do with sacrifice. We just see they're having a religious experience and you can do that. You can be religious because we're spiritual creations, but it doesn't mean that you're in a personal relationship with Jesus Christ.

These demons, they are spiritual because their spirit beings, they believe Jesus, but they never bowed to him. They were given freewill and they chose to rebel and all they'll ever speak will ultimately end up being lies because the devil is the father of lies.

So many people, they're happy with church growth at whatever the price. The Mormon church is growing exponentially, but they don't preach Jesus Christ only, they add to it with all their doctrines that are contrary to the scriptures.

Jesus is Enough – Just Give them Jesus

Jesus is enough. Just give them Jesus like this gospel. Then let it be up to them to decide. John 6:44, no one comes to the Son unless drawn by the father. We can rest in that and we don't have to worry about promoting. We don't have to try to feel that we have to compete with the world. We don't have to get the most popular person who says they believe in God, but they don't have a personal relationship, or their God is very general and not specific in Jesus Christ and him only. We just give the Gospel.

John 6:44 (NKJV) ⁴⁴ No one can come to Me unless the Father who sent Me draws him; and I will raise him up at the last day.

It is Supernatural

I believe that it's supernatural and let God do what God will do and continue to do it, and then you're free. You're not under any pressure. Just give them Jesus Christ.

Mark's Gospel – Here are the Facts – What do You Decide

The book of John, as we study said, written so that you might believe. The book of John is very much a doctrinal theological book presenting the argument, if you would, trying to convince the reader and hearer to believe in Jesus Christ for salvation. The book of Mark on the other hand, it's very fast paced, it moves along quickly and it presents story after story, but not so much as the depth of doctrine and theology as John, rather it just presents facts and it lets the hearer decide. Here's the stories of Jesus Christ. Here's the facts, historical facts of what Jesus Christ did, who he claimed to be. When confronted, when challenged, when teaching and all of those facts are laid out and the person then makes a decision, is he Jesus Christ the Messiah who came to take away my sin? Or is this just stories that men listened to? And so the story is put before you today for you to decide who is Jesus Christ and what do I do with him and how do I respond to him in these stories and accounts of him.

John 20:30–31 (NKJV) ³⁰ And truly Jesus did many other signs in the presence of His disciples, which are not written in this book; ³¹ but these are written that you may believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God, and that believing you may have life in His name.

John 3:16 (NKJV) ¹⁶ For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have everlasting life.

And most always, the answer is the answer.....

Give Time to Let the Word Work

What has the Lord spoken to you today? How will you respond to His calling to you? Just sit before Him, grab a blanket and your Bible, and say Lord how do I apply this Word to my life personally today, so I can be transformed into Your glorious image.

Romans 12:1–2 (NKJV) ¹ I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that you present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable to God, which is your reasonable service. ² And do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind, that you may prove what is that good and acceptable and perfect will of God.

Recap the Study:

- The God of the One
- The God who always looks for those in the most need
- 300 MPH – The Moment You are Willing – He Enables
- Sometime the Answer is the Answer – Maybe Time to be Honest with What He has Shown you
- No Man, government or program can stop the work of God in your life
- Jesus is Enough
- You Decide – Who is Jesus?

Prayer – Boldly Ask Your God

The Word of God is Living and Powerful, and is ready, and will do a mighty work in our lives.

Hebrews 4:12 (NKJV) ¹² For the word of God is living and powerful, and sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing even to the division of soul and spirit, and of joints and marrow, and is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart.

In Every Study

- Who Is God? (How Great is He?)
- What Does He Think of Me? (How Wonderful Are His Thoughts Towards Me?)
- What Does He Want Me to Do?
- What Can I Boldly Request of Him?
- What Do I Need to Be on Guard of When I Leave Here Today?

Boldly Come to Throne of Grace

Boldly come to the throne of grace, ask God to reveal Himself in a mighty way to you, and to do I might work in you, and through you.

Hebrews 4:16 (NKJV) ¹⁶ Let us therefore come boldly to the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy and find grace to help in time of need.

End of Study

Mark 3:13-19

Jesus Appoints the Twelve Disciples (3:13-19)

Jesus' Mission Statement

Jesus declared His mission statement, He came to heal the brokenhearted, to set the captives free, to give us life and that more abundant. All things that cannot come from, nor be done in, this broken, fallen, sinful, world. Jesus did something about the broken world, He came! And for 2,000 years He continues to do something about the broken world, He sends!

Luke 4:16–19 (NKJV) ¹⁶ So He came to Nazareth, where He had been brought up. And as His custom was, He went into the synagogue on the Sabbath day, and stood up to read. ¹⁷ And He was handed the book of the prophet Isaiah. And when He had opened the book, He found the place where it was written: ¹⁸ "The Spirit of the LORD is upon Me, Because He has anointed Me To preach the gospel to the poor; He has sent Me to heal the brokenhearted, To proclaim liberty to the captives And recovery of sight to the blind, To set at liberty those who are oppressed; ¹⁹ To proclaim the acceptable year of the LORD."

John 10:7–11 (NKJV) ⁷ Then Jesus said to them again, "Most assuredly, I say to you, I am the door of the sheep. ⁸ All who ever came before Me are thieves and robbers, but the sheep did not hear them. ⁹ I am the door. If anyone enters by Me, he will be saved, and will go in and out and find pasture. ¹⁰ The thief does not come except to steal, and to kill, and to destroy. I have come that they may have life, and that they may have it more abundantly. ¹¹ "I am the good shepherd. The good shepherd gives His life for the sheep.

Historical – Yet Personal / Unbroken String of 2,000 Years / Doctrine of 1st Mention

So today we read a historical account and it has of course historical significance as these first apostles (minus one) will change the world, but there's more than a history story here. There is something as always in the scripture that is personal to you as we read of God's intimate relationship with those that he chooses, that He calls and that He sends out, and so there's a significance here for our learning as we read these 12 who were first called and sent. We read at the beginning of a string that has been unbroken for 2000 years and God will call someone here today, which I believe God will call everyone here today to become his sent-out ones because it's the desire of his heart.

I often refer to the doctrine of first mention and the power of reading the first time something is mentioned in the scriptures and how it was used and how it was applied and here is a most powerful doctrine of first mention for all of us and what it means to be called to be sent out by the Lord.

Called Out of this World – Then Sent Out into the World – to Change the World

So he is calling, selecting these twelve who would be apostles. Now there is no longer apostles today as these 12 were called. There was an apostolic ministry that was established just as the 12 tribes of Israel and the significance of that, but what is applicable is the "sent-out" ones. The called-out ones as we're called out of this world and then we're sent out into the world to turn it upside down as these 12 minus one did.

Prayer – Boldly Ask Your God

The Word of God is Living and Powerful, and is ready, and will do a mighty work in our lives.

Hebrews 4:12 (NKJV) ¹² For the word of God is living and powerful, and sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing even to the division of soul and spirit, and of joints and marrow, and is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart.

In Every Study

- Who Is God? (How Great is He?)
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Boldly Come to Throne of Grace

Boldly come to the throne of grace, ask God to reveal Himself in a mighty way to you, and to do I might work in you, and through you.

Hebrews 4:16 (NKJV) ¹⁶ Let us therefore come boldly to the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy and find grace to help in time of need.

Today's Passage:

Mark 3:13 And He went up on the mountain and called to Him those He Himself wanted. And they came to Him.

Mark 3:14 Then He appointed twelve, that they might be with Him and that He might send them out to preach,

Mark 3:15 and to have power to heal sicknesses and to cast out demons:

Mark 3:16 Simon, to whom He gave the name Peter;

Mark 3:17 James the son of Zebedee and John the brother of James, to whom He gave the name Boanerges, that is, "Sons of Thunder";

Mark 3:18 Andrew, Philip, Bartholomew, Matthew, Thomas, James the son of Alphaeus, Thaddaeus, Simon the Cananite;

Mark 3:19 and Judas Iscariot, who also betrayed Him. And they went into a house.

God Doing Something About Emptiness of the World

God is doing something about the broken world, the empty world, the perishing world, and our passage is deep regarding 2,000 years of an unbroken string, and here we seat today, called and sent out.

Consider This – Story of Leah

It's interesting to me as we studied last week of the lineage of the Messiah and how narrow the Messiah Pool was of someone coming from the lineage of Judah through the line of David and I find it interesting that as it starts with Judah, the fourth son of Jacob through his wife Leah.

Matthew 1:1–6 (NKJV) ¹ The book of the genealogy of Jesus Christ, the Son of David, the Son of Abraham: ² Abraham begot Isaac, Isaac begot Jacob, and **Jacob begot Judah** and his brothers. ³ Judah begot Perez and Zerah by Tamar, Perez begot Hezron, and Hezron begot Ram. ⁴ Ram begot Amminadab, Amminadab begot Nahshon, and Nahshon begot Salmon. ⁵ Salmon begot Boaz by Rahab, Boaz begot Obed by Ruth, Obed begot Jesse, ⁶ and **Jesse begot David the king**. David the king begot Solomon by her *who had been the wife* of Uriah.

Matthew 1:16 (NKJV) ¹⁶ And Jacob begot Joseph the husband of Mary, of whom was born Jesus who is called Christ.

We know the story from the book of Genesis that Jacob Loved Rachel and he would work seven years for Rachel, but then on the night of his wedding, Laban, the old trickster switches things up, the ultimate switcheroo and he ends up with the eldest daughter, Leah, who is described as having tender eyes (weak), which when we read of Leah, there's never a mention of her extreme beauty. Rachel's the one who gets the mention of extreme beauty and hence some bible scholars think that tender eyes means that she was not much to look at in terms of physical appearances because the verse makes comparison to Rachael's looks. Now, some take the opportunity of that comparison for a time for many jokes about Leah's looks, but I don't like to joke about those things. In today's obsession with looks, looks can become just haunting. Not just for a woman, but to men also, and oh yeah, women men have some hang-ups with their looks in the world that's so much about appearances.

Genesis 29:16–17 (NKJV) ¹⁶ Now Laban had two daughters: the name of the elder was Leah, and the name of the younger was Rachel. ¹⁷ Leah's eyes were delicate, but Rachel was beautiful of form and appearance.

And young girls I know how heavy and hard it is in this Madison Avenue fashion, runway culture, the people with the looks, they seem to get all the attention. They seem to get special privileges. They seem to get respect before they even open their mouth and some of them still getting respect even after they opened their mouth and nothing, but foolishness comes out of it.

I want you to follow this thread with me. I pray it ministers to you as ministered to me. So Jacob has two wives, Leah and Rachel, which was common at that time in that culture, but not as God intended. He intended it to be one man, one woman for life. And I might add here that Genesis clearly says a man and a woman would be joined together and that God created them, man and woman. God had no confusion on gender. It's our culture that has confusion on gender, but God is not confused in any way. He made you exactly as he determined you to be, He made you male or He made you female, by His creative design. Psalm 139. says He formed and fashioned you in your mother's womb. He knew you before the foundation of the world and he knew you to be male or female. It's our culture that's confused and our culture then is trying to propagate and pass on that confusion. And maybe someone here today, you may be confused about your gender. My friend, there is a God who created you, who can sort that confusion out for you. This world cannot sort it out for you, but there is a God in heaven who loves you. He died for you and you will stand before him on that day, and right now today he can sort out all the

confusion that you may have over this. Just spend time with him and seek him. And, let it clearly be seen the sanctity of life, for it is God who gives life, and not for man to take it, regardless of today's headline news (25 August 2018) of Oprah Winfrey telling woman to "shout it out in pride your abortion". This is why I warn people continually about Oprah's so-called spirituality, as she promotes this wind of doctrine (the Shack), that wind of doctrine (the Secret), and people think she is some kind of spiritual leader and follow her, and here she is with influence on millions and millions of people, as her show is one, are you ready for this, in 145 countries (as there are only 195 countries in the world – so she is on in 75% of the world's countries). The Devil's attack on sanctity of life, is to destroy the creation account, and propagate evolution (that there is no god; evolution is one of Satan's great works. And my how much more so the world has become empty and a mess since the acceptance of this so-called theory that is now being taught in public schools and colleges as a Law. For something to be a scientific Law, it has to be repeatable, and evolution has not one proven repeatable accountable).

Mark 10:6–9 (NKJV) ⁶ But from the beginning of the creation, God *'made them male and female.'* ⁷ *'For this reason a man shall leave his father and mother and be joined to his wife,* ⁸ *and the two shall become one flesh';* so then they are no longer two, but one flesh. ⁹ Therefore what God has joined together, let not man separate."

Psalms 139:13–16 (NKJV) ¹³ For You formed my inward parts; You covered me in my mother's womb. ¹⁴ I will praise You, for I am fearfully *and* wonderfully made; Marvelous are Your works, And *that* my soul knows very well. ¹⁵ My frame was not hidden from You, When I was made in secret, *And* skillfully wrought in the lowest parts of the earth. ¹⁶ Your eyes saw my substance, being yet unformed. And in Your book they all were written, The days fashioned for me, When *as yet there were* none of them.

So Jacob has two wives, Leah and Rachel, and we know the story, the one he loved greatly because of her beauty, Rachel, but she's barren. She can have no children. Leah, she's not having a problem at all bearing children. And so Leah has a son, Reuben, and she says, oh my husband will love me now, but the birth of a child didn't draw them together. So she has another one (Simeon), and says my husband will definitely love me now, but that doesn't draw them together either. Still yet again on her third child (Levi) she says surely my husband will love me now for giving him so many sons, but he doesn't. But then on her fourth child she has Judah (who is the lineage of the Messiah), she simply says "Now I will praise the Lord". She makes no mention of how this will affect her marriage with Jacob and him wanting her and being drawn to her. Judah means praise. She praises the Lord. She has seen past trying to find fullness in this world, trying to find love and acceptance in this world. She comes, and she sees the only place you'll find fullness, acceptance, is in the Lord. And she worships Him. Leah, she found her rest in praise, as she looked beyond the world and settled in to simply the presence of God in her life, where she found fullness of joy

Genesis 29:31–35 (NKJV) ³¹ When the LORD saw that Leah was unloved, He opened her womb; but Rachel was barren. ³² So Leah conceived and bore a son, and she called his name Reuben; for she said, "The LORD has surely looked on my affliction. Now therefore, my husband will love me." ³³ Then she conceived again and bore a son, and said, "Because the LORD has heard that I am unloved, He has therefore given me this son also." And she called his name Simeon. ³⁴ She conceived again and bore a son, and said, "Now this time my husband will become attached to me, because I have borne him three sons." Therefore his name was called Levi. ³⁵ And she conceived again and bore a son, and said, "Now I will praise the LORD." Therefore she called his name Judah. Then she stopped bearing.

Psalms 16:11 (NKJV) ¹¹ You will show me the path of life; In Your presence is fullness of joy; At Your right hand are pleasures forevermore.

When Dies – Jacob Says Bury me Next to Leah

And how interesting to me, that when Jacob dies, he doesn't say bury me next to Rachael, the love of my life, but next to Leah. There was a bond that exceeded physical, and became emotional and spiritual To which I say to all, dating and married, do you want a deep and intimate relationship, seek the emotional and spiritual things of God, and your marriage and relationship will never grow old or dull.

Genesis 49:29–31 (NKJV) ²⁹ Then he charged them and said to them: "I am to be gathered to my people; bury me with my fathers in the cave that is in the field of Ephron the Hittite, ³⁰ in the cave that is in the field of Machpelah, which is before Mamre in the land of Canaan, which Abraham bought with the field of Ephron the Hittite as a possession for a burial place. ³¹ There they buried Abraham and Sarah his wife, there they buried Isaac and Rebekah his wife, and there I buried Leah.

Here Starts String – God's Offering Himself – Offering the Fullness of Joy

So starts the string of the 12 sons of Jacob, with Judah to the Messiah Jesus. For this world is empty. It will constantly leave us empty and try as we might through relationships or things of the world, they will continually leave us empty after empty, after empty, until we come to, separate ourselves to the one thing, the Lord. There's only one place that we will find fullness, and Psalm 16:11, tells us in his presence is fullness of joy. The world leaves

us empty and dry. Jesus promises us the fullness and the abundant life. John 10:10, Jesus (who is God) has come through line of the Judah through the lineage of David, the Promised Messiah, because the world is empty, the world is drifting, the world is searching, the world is perishing, and God did something about that..... He sent his only begotten Son, Jesus Christ, to provided himself as the bridge that man may come and have a personal intimate and a personal relationship with God himself. Jesus not only showed the way, he became the way, Jesus is the way to God in heaven.

John 10:10 (NKJV) ¹⁰ The thief does not come except to steal, and to kill, and to destroy. I have come that they may have life, and that they may have it more abundantly.

John 3:16–17 (NKJV) ¹⁶ For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have everlasting life. ¹⁷ For God did not send His Son into the world to condemn the world, but that the world through Him might be saved.

John 14:6 (NKJV) ⁶ Jesus said to him, "I am the way, the truth, and the life. No one comes to the Father except through Me.

God Continues to Do Something about Empty World – Sends 12 – Unbroken for 2,000 years

God continues to do something about an empty world, a world that always leaves us lacking, and still today he does it through Jesus Christ, the way, the truth, the life, and here in our passage today, he's doing something about the emptiness of the world and the separation from God himself because of our sin. He picks these 12 to send them out to declare there is a way, and he's here, His name is Jesus Christ. He sends them out and for 2000 years, the string has not been broken. Not for a day, not for an hour, not for a minute, not for a second. God continually sends out his representatives to do something about this empty world.

Jesus Changing them into Shepherds – Everyone here is a Shepherd

Jesus is selecting fishermen, tax collectors, rebels. He's changing them all into Shepard's, who they themselves will shepherd the flock of God and they will equip the saints for the work of the ministry. And he calls them shepherds, because He calls us sheep. He says, feed my sheep. He'll tell Peter, which is a declaration to all of his shepherds, and let me make the point of every one of us have a shepherding ministry in some way, some from a pulpit, some teach Sunday school classes, you're a shepherd. When you walk into your home, you are a shepherd to your family. When you walk into your home, you're a shepherd to your children. When you share the love of Christ at the corner market, you're shepherding because God loves his sheep.

1 Peter 5:1–4 (NKJV) ¹ The elders who are among you I exhort, I who am a fellow elder and a witness of the sufferings of Christ, and also a partaker of the glory that will be revealed: ² Shepherd the flock of God which is among you, serving as overseers, not by compulsion but willingly, not for dishonest gain but eagerly; ³ nor as being lords over those entrusted to you, but being examples to the flock; ⁴ and when the Chief Shepherd appears, you will receive the crown of glory that does not fade away.

Jesus Appoints the Twelve Disciples (3:13-19)

Mark 3:13 And He went up on the mountain and called to Him those He Himself wanted. And they came to Him.

Prayed All Night – Luke 6

Verse 13, Luke tells us that Jesus went up to the mountain, prayed all night before selecting these 12

Luke 6:12–13 (NKJV) ¹² Now it came to pass in those days that He went out to the mountain to pray, and continued all night in prayer to God. ¹³ And when it was day, He called His disciples to Himself; and from them He chose twelve whom He also named apostles:

Jesus Does Everything Through His Connection to the Father / Prayer Paths

Jesus goes to the mountain and he prays all night. There's a story that was spoken in Africa as in the times they didn't have their own rooms or office or whatever you may have for private prayer. So They would go into the woods and each had their own little place down, a little spot in the woods and they would pray there. This one under this tree, this one by the waterside, this one by a waterfall, this one on top of a hill, whatever it may be, but each had their own spot that they would go and they would pray daily and even multiple times a day. And what would happen of course is a path would be worn to their prayer spot. Now, when one of the fellow believers would be walking his path and notice that his brother's path was starting to get overgrown with weeds, he obviously knew why. But they wouldn't come with a harshness, they wouldn't rebuke, they wouldn't come in a critical spirit, and they wouldn't look down upon, they would simply come to their brother/sister in love and say, *"brother has grass grown over your path".*

And so my question to you, has grass grown over your path to your prayer time with the Lord. As we look at the life of Jesus, everything that he did, he did through the connection with the father, through his prayer life with the father, he was tapping into the father and it would be in this time of prayer daily that Jesus would connect with the father and get his calling for the day, were to go and what to be done. And here he seeks the father on the 12, who would it be out of all these who are following, as it was hundreds, and as we studied possibly thousands, yet he would go up and he would pray to the father and then he would leave that prayer and these were the 12 that through his night of prayer, God, the father had confirmed these are the twelve, yes, even Judas, but we'll have to save that for another study.

Mark 3:14 Then He appointed twelve, that they might be with Him and that He might send them out to preach, Mark 3:15 and to have power to heal sicknesses and to cast out demons:

3 Things

Three things Jesus does with these disciples, as he calls them, is

- one that they might be with Him
- two, that they would go out and preach,
- and three that they would have power.

Good Shepherd Raises Up Shepherds

Jesus is the Good Shepherd, and God loves the sheep, so he raises up shepherds.

John 10:10–11 (NKJV) ¹⁰ *The thief does not come except to steal, and to kill, and to destroy. I have come that they may have life, and that they may have it more abundantly.* ¹¹ *"I am the good shepherd. The good shepherd gives His life for the sheep.*

Importance of Shepherd based on Value of the Sheep

The importance of the shepherd depends on the value of the sheep. Mom and Dad, Sunday school teachers, all you who in some form or fashion tend to God's flock, remember the importance of the shepherd depends on the value of the sheep, and God will lay His life down for them, and so how much and how great is your worth?

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3 Things

Three things Jesus does with these disciples, as he calls them, is

- one that they might be with Him
- two, that they would go out and preach,
- and three that they would have power.

One - that they might be with Him

Ministry Simple – When Maintain the Atmosphere of His Presence

Ministry starts with, and must continual with, being with Him. Beloved, maintain the atmosphere produced by the personal relationship. Ministry stays really simple when we abide in His presence. But, when we don't maintain the atmosphere, everything gets complicated. Judas means, wasteful. When he lost the atmosphere of the relationship, he not only lost his ministry, he lost himself

The atmosphere of being in His presence, brings a fragrance, a perfume, that others smell, a fragrance that lingers even after we leave their presence. Simply linger in His presence and you will diffuse (manifest, emanate, bring forth) His fragrance everywhere you go.

2 Corinthians 2:14–17 (NKJV) ¹⁴ *Now thanks be to God who always leads us in triumph in Christ, and through us diffuses the fragrance of His knowledge in every place.* ¹⁵ *For we are to God the fragrance of Christ among those who are being saved and among those who are perishing.* ¹⁶ *To the one we are the aroma of death leading to death, and to the other the aroma of life leading to life. And who is sufficient for these things?* ¹⁷ *For we are not, as so many, peddling the word of God; but as of sincerity, but as from God, we speak in the sight of God in Christ.*

Two - that they would go out and preach,

Health of Sheep based off their Diet

The health of the sheep is based on their diet. We need to feed the sheep. Preaching means to declare a truth. Teaching is to bring understanding to that truth. Preaching and teaching are inseparable, as we declare a truth that men/woman are expected to respond to, and we expound on that truth through teaching of what that truth means and how they are to respond to it according to God and His Word.

John 21:17 (NKJV) ¹⁷ He said to him the third time, "Simon, son of Jonah, do you love Me?" Peter was grieved because He said to him the third time, "Do you love Me?" And he said to Him, "Lord, You know all things; You know that I love You." Jesus said to him, "Feed My sheep.

Don't Entertain – Feed

And beloved, we don't need to entertain them, we are to feed them. I love this book I read from time to time, it is an old preacher who preached with power:

It is to feed sheep on such truth that men are called to churches and congregations, whatever they may think they are called to do. If you think that you are called to keep a largely worldly organisation, miscalled a church, going, with infinitesimal doses of innocuous sub-Christian drugs or stimulants, then the only help I can give you is to advise you to give up the hope of the ministry and go and be a street scavenger; a far healthier and more godly job, keeping the streets tidy, than cluttering the church with a lot of worldly claptrap in the delusion that you are doing a job for God. The pastor is called to feed the sheep, even if the sheep do not want to be fed. He is certainly not to become an entertainer of goats. Let goats entertain goats, and let them do it out in goatland. You will certainly not turn goats into sheep by pandering to their goatishness. Do we really believe that the Word of God, by His Spirit, changes, as well as maddens men? If we do, to be evangelists and pastors, feeders of sheep, we must be men of the Word of God.

Still, William. Work of the Pastor (Kindle Locations 222-229). Christian Focus Publications. Kindle Edition.

Beloved, Jesus would ask, do you love me? Then feed my sheep. And be reminded, the importance of the Shepherd, is based on the value of the sheep.

Three - that they would have power.

Delegate Authority / Doctrine of 1st Mention

Thirdly it says that he gave them power and of course we always immediately jumped to that word in the Greek, dunamis, which we get our word dynamite. But that's not the word that's used here. It's "exousia" and it means to "delegate authority". And there's a powerful application in our doctrine of first mention here as we look at what God does with the sent ones, and that is he delegates authority to them, to us, and we have to understand this and receive it into our being. God delegates, authority to us. We speak words that have been delegated with authority, that have the power to change. When I am called by God, sent by God, I have the authority to speak his word. And these three together are pure power. Too often we forget. We have these three and therefore we don't speak in power, maybe even weakness. We speak for the fear of people, fear that they don't want to hear in the world and the culture that we live in. But when I am reminded that I have these three, I will speak in power that I am called by God, by his desire, I am sent by God, and I am giving his delegation of authority.

I have power and I will speak in power. I won't care if they don't want to hear it. I won't be timid for. I know that I have a word from heaven that has the power to change a life and I won't think it's me. I won't think that I stand alone, and I do this alone. I know all of Heaven stands with me and is behind me because I had been given this power of authority, this delegation of authority. Period.

Side Note on Hate Speech

Hey, let me just side note. When people say that I have hate speech, if I truly hated them, then I would just be quiet, and I would let them face the judgment of separation from the holy God. If I truly hated them, I would look forward to their punishment and they're perishing, but the fact that I'm willing to step out of my comfort zone, to step into this place, to speak the words to them, that can rescue them, deliver them, give them life and that more

abundant, eternal life..... demonstrates and proves that I loved them. So if anyone ever calls you out on hatred, just remind them of that, of what I just said.

2 Peter 3:9 (NKJV) ⁹ The Lord is not slack concerning His promise, as some count slackness, but is longsuffering toward us, not willing that any should perish but that all should come to repentance.

Mark 3:16 Simon, to whom He gave the name Peter;

Mark 3:17 James the son of Zebedee and John the brother of James, to whom He gave the name Boanerges, that is, “Sons of Thunder”;

Mark 3:18 Andrew, Philip, Bartholomew, Matthew, Thomas, James the son of Alphaeus, Thaddaeus, Simon the Cananite;

Mark 3:19 and Judas Iscariot, who also betrayed Him. And they went into a house.

Changed Names – Changed Lives – Changed Ways

So here, all 12 of these, they all have a name like when we see Jesus, changes names from Simon to Peter, James and John, the sons of thunder, who knows what else for the others because not everything was recorded for us. But each of these names had a meaning. Each of these lives had their own way. They were living their own lives, going their own way, their own cares, their own desires, but then they meet the Way, the Truth, the Life, and it changes the way they were going, it changed what the truth was in their life. It changed then how they would live, they will turn and follow the Way all the way, all 12, minus one.

John 14:6 (NKJV) ⁶ Jesus said to him, “I am the way, the truth, and the life. No one comes to the Father except through Me.

Judas - Wasteful

Judas, his name is described in the scripture as wasteful, the son of perdition means “son of destruction, son of ruin, son of waste,and truly what a wasteful life it is to meet Jesus, to experience Jesus, to hear the words of Jesus, to experience the very heart of Jesus and yet selling out in the end for trinkets and bobets of the world..... that is a wasteful life. What a waste to come. So near and falls so far,

John 17:12 (NKJV) ¹² While I was with them in the world, I kept them in Your name. Those whom You gave Me I have kept; and none of them is lost except the son of perdition, that the Scripture might be fulfilled.

God Changes Men – Who go On to Change Other Men / 2,000 Years the String has been Unbroken

God changes men who then go on to change other men, and the string that was started here with these 12 has been unbroken for 2000 years. Not a day, not an hour, not a minute, not a second as God has always had his sent ones in this world.

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Conclusion

Easy to be a Leah – And get Caught Up in the Cares of the World Again

Let me add this regarding Leah. She's going to have two more children after Judah. It appears to be quite some time after Judah. It will actually be after Rachel has her own, and the handmaidens will have children for Jacob. And Leah will find herself going from praising the Lord and the contentment of the Lord to putting her eyes back on the world. The two children she has after Judah, as she names them, are all in indicative of she's trying to win Jacob's heart again because she feels competition from the world. And that's so easy for us to do.

Genesis 30:17–21 (NKJV) ¹⁷ And God listened to Leah, and she conceived and bore Jacob a fifth son. ¹⁸ Leah said, "God has given me my wages, because I have given my maid to my husband." So she called his name Issachar. ¹⁹ Then Leah conceived again and bore Jacob a sixth son. ²⁰ And Leah said, "God has endowed me with a good endowment; now my husband will dwell with me, because I have borne him six sons." So she called his name Zebulun. ²¹ Afterward she bore a daughter, and called her name Dinah.

We try the things of the world. Find them empty. Then come and know that it's Jesus Christ only and then we walk in that fullness, we live in that praise. We're free to simply enjoy him, but then we start looking around at the world again and start being drawn back into it and it's so easy to get drawn back in after being delivered from it. And so I say to you today, maybe you need to go back to where you once were, just free. Set free from trying to find your place and your worth in the world and just simply enjoy Jesus Christ, your relationship with him. And if you're truly honest with yourself, you will say, those are the time, that was the time, when I am most free, when I am most at peace. When, I don't care about the world, I got Jesus, and Jesus is enough for me.

God has Given us a High Call

God has given us a high calling, a wonderful calling, and I just want to remind us all to not be distracted by the cares of the world, and to just keep on keeping on, pressing in on the high calling of God.

Mark 4:18–20 (NKJV) ¹⁸ Now these are the ones sown among thorns; they are the ones who hear the word, ¹⁹ and the cares of this world, the deceitfulness of riches, and the desires for other things entering in choke the word, and it becomes unfruitful. ²⁰ But these are the ones sown on good ground, those who hear the word, accept it, and bear fruit: some thirtyfold, some sixty, and some a hundred."

Give Time to Let the Word Work

So before we rush out of here, let's have some time of prayer and ask the Lord to work this word, into our heart, mind, and soul.

Recap the Study:

- Has grass grown over your path?
- We are – God's 2,000-year unbroken string of Sent Out Ones
- May we simply sit in His presence – and diffuse the fragrance of that atmosphere with Him
- We are sent to preach and teach – His Word
- He has given us the delegation of His authority
- God changes men/woman – so they will then change other men/woman.

Prayer – Boldly Ask Your God

The Word of God is Living and Powerful, and is ready, and will do a mighty work in our lives.

Hebrews 4:12 (NKJV) ¹² For the word of God is living and powerful, and sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing even to the division of soul and spirit, and of joints and marrow, and is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart.

In Every Study

- Who Is God? (How Great is He?)
- What Does He Think of Me? (How Wonderful Are His Thoughts Towards Me?)
- What Does He Want Me to Do?
- What Can I Boldly Request of Him?
- What Do I Need to Be on Guard of When I Leave Here Today?

Boldly Come to Throne of Grace

Boldly come to the throne of grace, ask God to reveal Himself in a mighty way to you, and to do I might work in you, and through you.

Hebrews 4:16 (NKJV) ¹⁶ Let us therefore come boldly to the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy and find grace to help in time of need.

End of Study

Mark 3:20-35

Intro/Recap

We have come to chapter three in our study of this wonderful and glorious book, and we are probably somewhere around 1.5 years into the public ministry of Jesus. Jesus is drawing large crowds at this point everywhere he goes. The religious leaders now see Him as a threat and even once enemies are uniting together to determine His demise, and the storm clouds are gathering. And in our last study out of the hundreds, even thousands, that have been following Jesus, he handpicks the 12 who will be with Him to the end (minus one – Judas).

Outline Today's Passage of Mark 3:20-35:

- Jesus Heals the Man with a Withered Hand on the Sabbath (3:1-6)
- A Great Multitude Follow Jesus (3:7-12)
- Jesus Appoints the Twelve Disciples (3:13-19)
- A House Divided Cannot Stand (3:20-27)
- The Unpardonable Sin (3:28-30)
- Jesus' Mother and Brothers Come for Him (3:31-35)

Why Listen

So today we will cover:

- The power of the radically changed life.
- The weakness of a house divided, and the power of the house united.
- What is the unpardonable sin, and what isn't the unpardonable sin.

What a Gift - The Word and Freedom to Fellowship

Wow, what a gift to cover such topics as these, to be instructed by the Lord regarding them. And it made me reflect how glorious and wonderful a life we have as believers, to have this book, the word of God, the very heart of God.

I was thinking back over some of the apostles we met last week in our study and how their lives began and ended. The death of the apostle James we read in through church history that he was tied by his ankles and dragged through the streets until his skull split open and his brains spilled out, yet never recanted his commitment to his Lord. Peter was crucified upside down, but not before seeing his wife martyred before him, to which he would say to her in parting words, woman, remember the Lord. John we're told was placed in the cauldron of boiling oil, but that did not kill him, nor even in the boil refute his faith in the Christ. It's even said that when he came out of the oil, his flesh was as pure as when he first went in, so hence we had the first (friar – hahaha). And under the Roman law you could not be tried a second time for the same crime, and it was a crime at this time in the Roman Empire to preach that Jesus Christ was the only God and not Caesar.

Then and today, everywhere Christians are persecuted, the church is strong. The Christians are strong because they believe what they believe and they're willing to die for it. It's not a religion of convenience. They know that death may come to them for they lived in areas of the world today where it's illegal to follow Christ. Those believers, when they want to come to a Bible study, they are given a very specific location of where the study would be, but you can't have 20, 30, or 130 people showing up at the same time or else the governing authorities will see that and they'll know what's happening and they'll come down upon it and kill, and so what those Christians do is they start coming two to three hours before the Bible study begins, just one or two at a time walking the streets, so not to draw attention of one people all coming at once, so they come by twos, gradually flowing in and imagine that at 10:00 AM Bible study, people are showing up at 7:00 AM and willing to wait the three hours just for the Bible study and no one is never ever upset. When the Bible study carries long. It's their whole purpose for being there. They're actually upset if the Bible study would end early.

Oh, and by the way, when the Bible studies over, it takes two or three hours for the whole Bible study, they actually empty out because they don't all leave at once. They leave just a couple at a time and how sweet it is. No

one wants to be the first to leave. They want to be the last to leave because they want to get it all the fellowship that they possibly can.

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A House Divided Cannot Stand (3:20-27)

Mark 3:20 Then the multitude came together again, so that they could not so much as eat bread.

Mark 3:21 But when His own people heard about this, they went out to lay hold of Him, for they said, “He is out of His mind.”

No Time to Eat

So that they could not so much as eat bread: The idea is that the huge crowds so pressed upon Jesus and the disciples that they did not have the time or the space to eat.

His People – Ties to Verse 31 / Verse 22 – The Religious People Fuel It

Verse 21 ties in with verse 31, this is all the same story, and his own people mean his family, the people that knew him are saying he's out of his mind. He's crazy. He thinks He is the Lord of the Sabbath, aka God. He quit His carpentry job to this. No He doesn't even eat. And then to make a perfect storm, verse 22, the religious people come and pile on and so the religious leaders are feeding his people the poison that what he's doing is wrong. Confirming what he's doing is wrong. Satan is so masterful the way he energizes people so they do his dirty work.

Mark 3:31 (NKJV) ³¹ Then His brothers and His mother came, and standing outside they sent to Him, calling Him.

Mark 3:22 (NKJV) ²² And the scribes who came down from Jerusalem said, “He has Beelzebub,” and, “By the ruler of the demons He casts out demons.”

Lay Hold Of / Straight Jacket

It says they came to lay hold of Jesus, and that word was used when force was used, it was taking by force against a person's will. Yes, this is put on the straight jacket, and take them to the mental ward, that is literally what is being said here.

One of the Reason is who the 12 are that Follow him

One of the reasons they think Jesus has lost His mind is not just all the people following Him, not just the words that He is saying, but now the close company of friends he has. Still today we evaluate who people's friends are in our determination of who they are. Who you hang out with reflects very much who you are. So just consider the 12 and some of their “issues”.

Simon the Zealot

Let's just talk about one of them right now, Simon the Zealot. Now this is radical salvation, to come and join Jesus for something that's not a physical and violent uprising can only declare that Jesus Christ had got hold of his heart.

He was a zealot, which means he hated Rome. He hated anyone that had anything to do with Rome and he would very possibly have been a murderer because the zealots would walk the streets with knives in their robes, wait until they were in a group, a packed crowd, and they would walk past a Roman soldier and thrust the blade in between their body armor between the chest and the back and pierce right into their heart. This very well could have been Simon the zealot and what he did. Here he is radically saved.

Luke 6:13–16 (NKJV) ¹³ And when it was day, He called His disciples to Himself; and from them He chose twelve whom He also named apostles: ¹⁴ Simon, whom He also named Peter, and Andrew his brother; James and John; Philip and Bartholomew; ¹⁵ Matthew and Thomas; James the son of Alphaeus, and Simon called the Zealot; ¹⁶ Judas the son of James, and Judas Iscariot who also became a traitor.

Simon Would Hated Matthew

So radical was his salvation that he could walk alongside of someone like Matthew the tax collector. Simon the zealot would have totally hated Matthew, for collecting taxes for the Romans, especially Matthew since he was Jewish. Probably the first month as they walked with Jesus, Matthew probably slept with one eye open. He probably made sure Simon the zealot never walked behind him, and he was probably very, very on alert when they were in a crowd with people pressing in.

The Toughest Man he Ever Met

But these radical stories still go on today. I'm reminded of the story that's told by Nik Ripkin in the book, *The Insanity of God*. He speaks of who he calls, the toughest man he ever met. He was a Muslim fighter, defending against the so-called invaders and he said he lost track of how many, men he murdered, but he said he would always have this great joy, of sneaking up behind one of the foreign invaders and killing them with his bare hand or slitting their throat with a knife and let the blood bleed out over his hands. He lost track at 150. But then he started having dreams and, in his dreams, he would have blood on his hand. He would go and try to wash his hands and in the beginning of his dreams, his hands will become clean. Then day after day of this dream, the blood wouldn't wash off and he said, I knew I was really going mad when even in the daytime, wide awake, I would see the blood on my hand and try to wash them off. God was getting his attention and God showed up in his dream, revealed himself and He sought the Lord for almost two years, and finally came to the realization, understanding who Jesus was, committed his life to Jesus. So radical was he, he started smuggling bibles in the Muslim countries to distribute to believers and he even got caught multiple times beat and yet he would get back up like the apostle Paul. Go get more bibles and go back in smuggling bible. And to our knowledge, still alive today, still doing that underground work.

A Room of Radical People here Today

I love stories of changed lives. And don't think that this man's story are the radical ones. No equally radical are the stories of you youth going against the current of this world, and marriages sticking it out through hard times, those overcoming lives of addictions and bondage, and one of the greatest..... people faithfully, maybe quietly, walking out obedience and faithfulness to Christ, year after year after year.

God Loves You

And listen Christian, God loves you! You have responded to His invitation of love and relationship. He wanted you so bad, that He died for you, so that separation caused by sin would be wiped away, so He could have you, to love and to cherish, and there will be no death do you part, for He not only overcame sin, but death too.

What if Today You Say – I Don't Feel Radical / Draw the Line Today !!!!

What if right now you are saying, I haven't been very radical lately..... ok, how about right here, right now. I could put a question mark on the end of that statement, or I could put an exclamation point. I pray you will put an exclamation point on the end of that statement, and say right here, right now, today, I am staking my mark in the sand, of a radical walk with Jesus Christ!

Mark 3:22 And the scribes who came down from Jerusalem said, “He has Beelzebub,” and, “By the ruler of the demons He casts out demons.”

Mark 3:23 So He called them to Himself and said to them in parables: “How can Satan cast out Satan?”

Mark 3:24 If a kingdom is divided against itself, that kingdom cannot stand.

Mark 3:25 And if a house is divided against itself, that house cannot stand.

Scribes from Jerusalem

The scribes who came down from Jerusalem: This was an official delegation of experts from Jerusalem coming to Galilee to observe and assess the ministry of Jesus. The opinion of these scribes carried a lot of weight with many people.

Beelzebub / Scribes have no Scriptural Backing

Beelzebub is a name for Satan, so they are saying Jesus is demon possessed. It is interesting to me that the scribes, who were the religious experts in the scriptures, do not quote a passage of scripture to support their position. I find this often, that people have lots of strong positions, but can't back them scripturally, to which I can't receive what they are saying because usually they are taking an unscriptural approach. Before they could destroy Him, they had to first discredit Jesus in the eyes of the multitude.

House Divided Grieves the Holy Spirit

Now this may not be the big picture that is being spoken here in the context of the passage, but it still has a truth behind it, and is doctrinally, a house divided cannot stand. A house divided grieves the Holy Spirit because he lives in you and it grieves him. When the beloved turn against each other, it grieves the Holy Spirit, and it weakens the house.

Ephesians 4:29–32 (NKJV) ²⁹ Let no corrupt word proceed out of your mouth, but what is good for necessary edification, that it may impart grace to the hearers. ³⁰ And do not grieve the Holy Spirit of God, by whom you were sealed for the day of redemption. ³¹ Let all bitterness, wrath, anger, clamor, and evil speaking be put away from you, with all malice. ³² And be kind to one another, tenderhearted, forgiving one another, even as God in Christ forgave you.

Proverbs 6:16–19 (NKJV) ¹⁶ These six things the LORD hates, Yes, seven are an abomination to Him: ¹⁷ A proud look, A lying tongue, Hands that shed innocent blood, ¹⁸ A heart that devises wicked plans, Feet that are swift in running to evil, ¹⁹ A false witness who speaks lies, And one who sows discord among brethren.

Pictures – Darts – and Jesus

A friend sent us this story about a young lady named Sally and her experience in a recent seminary class, given by her teacher, Dr. Smith. Dr. Smith was known for his elaborate object lessons. This particular day, Sally walked into the class and knew they were in for a fun day.

On the wall was a big target and on a nearby table were many darts. Dr. Smith told the students to draw a picture of someone that they disliked or someone who had made them angry, and he would allow them to throw darts at the person's picture.

Sally's friend drew a picture of girl who had stolen her boyfriend. Another guy drew a picture of his little brother. Sally drew a picture of a former friend. The class lined up and began throwing darts. Some of the students were throwing their darts with such force that their targets were ripping apart and everyone was laughing hysterically.

Finally, Dr. Smith asked all the students to be seated. He came to the front of the class with a less-than-amused look on his face. As he began removing the target from the wall, there appeared underneath, a picture of Jesus. A hush fell over the room as each student viewed the mangled picture; holes and jagged marks covered Jesus' face, and His eyes were pierced.

A House Divided (Your Marriage or Church)

A divided house, a divided marriage, a divided church, cannot stand, and will fall. Husbands and wives, you cannot allow the world, your flesh, or the devil to divide your marriage. You must unite!

United Marriage/Church – Binds the Devil who Steals from You

A united church, a united marriage, will be unstoppable. In verses 26-27, Jesus says bind the strongman, and you can take the whole house. So bind the devil and his attacks against your marriage, you church, you family, and you can take all the riches and glory God intends for His saints, which the devil keeps bound up, plundered, stolen, and kept from you.'

John 10:10 (NKJV) ¹⁰ *The thief does not come except to steal, and to kill, and to destroy. I have come that they may have life, and that they may have it more abundantly.*

Ephesians 1:3 (NKJV) ³ *Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who has blessed us with every spiritual blessing in the heavenly places in Christ,*

Mark 3:26 And if Satan has risen up against himself, and is divided, he cannot stand, but has an end.

Mark 3:27 No one can enter a strong man's house and plunder his goods, unless he first binds the strong man. And then he will plunder his house.

One Must be Stronger than Satan to Defeat Satan

Jesus is saying regarding the strongman, you have to be stronger than the strongman to take his goods. Jesus is saying one has to be stronger than Satan to defeat Satan.

Romans 16:20 (NKJV) ²⁰ *And the God of peace will crush Satan under your feet shortly. The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you. Amen.*

Hebrews 2:14–15 (NKJV)

¹⁴ *Inasmuch then as the children have partaken of flesh and blood, He Himself likewise shared in the same, that through death He might destroy him who had the power of death, that is, the devil, ¹⁵ and release those who through fear of death were all their lifetime subject to bondage.*

No Civil War in Hell / Satna is United Against You

Let's not miss this, what is being said is that Satan is not divided when he comes to divide us.. He fully has one mission and one purpose. And as it's been said, there is no civil war going on and hell. Satan has a strategy and it is one of destruction and division to destroy not just the church but mankind. He is the destroyer as we're told in revelation.

Only God Can Cast Out Demons

Only God can cast out the demons. We can go back to Genesis when God cast Satan and the fallen angels out of heaven. Satan has lost his beauty, and in Genesis he is now a serpent, (that is a far fall). Only God can cast out demons, and thus Jesus is doing what He does by the power of God. The scribes, the religious expert should have known this doctrine through their studies in the scriptures such as Genesis and Isaiah.

Luke 10:17–18 (NKJV) ¹⁷ *Then the seventy returned with joy, saying, "Lord, even the demons are subject to us in Your name." ¹⁸ And He said to them, "I saw Satan fall like lightning from heaven.*

Genesis 3:1 (NKJV) ¹ *Now the serpent was more cunning than any beast of the field which the LORD God had made. And he said to the woman, "Has God indeed said, "You shall not eat of every tree of the garden?"*

Isaiah 14:12 (NKJV) ¹² *"How you are fallen from heaven, O Lucifer, son of the morning! How you are cut down to the ground, You who weakened the nations!*

Revelation 12:3–4 (NKJV) ³ *And another sign appeared in heaven: behold, a great, fiery red dragon having seven heads and ten horns, and seven diadems on his heads. ⁴ His tail drew a third of the stars of heaven and threw them to the earth. And the dragon stood before the woman who was ready to give birth, to devour her Child as soon as it was born.*

The Unpardonable Sin (3:28-30)

Mark 3:28 "Assuredly, I say to you, all sins will be forgiven the sons of men, and whatever blasphemies they may utter;

Mark 3:29 but he who blasphemes against the Holy Spirit never has forgiveness, but is subject to eternal condemnation"—

Mark 3:30 because they said, "He has an unclean spirit."

Assuredly I say to you

Verse 28 - Assuredly, I say to you - Mark's first use of this expression, which occurs throughout the gospels, was employed as a formula that always introduced truthful and authoritative words from Jesus (cf. 6:11; 8:12; 9:1, 41; 10:15, 29; 11:23; 12:43; 13:30; 14:9, 18, 25, 30).

Unclean Spirit

Because they said, He has an unclean spirit: These religious leaders were in danger of blasphemy of the Holy Spirit because they looked at the perfectly good and wonderful work of God in Jesus and officially pronounced it the evil of Satan. This pointed to a settled rejection of heart against Jesus—possible evidence of the blasphemy of the Holy Spirit.

The Work of the Holy Spirit – Testifies Jesus is the Only Way to Salvation

The work of the Holy Spirit in term of salvation is this, the Holy Spirit testifies who Jesus is, that He is God, and that his mission is to be the Lamb of God who takes away the sins of the world. The Holy Spirit testifies that Jesus Christ is the one and the only way, the only truth and the only life and the only way to the father in heaven. To reject the witness, the testimony, of the Holy Spirit is the unpardonable sin. Let me explain more.

*John 1:29 (NKJV)*²⁹ *The next day John saw Jesus coming toward him, and said, "Behold! The Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world!*

*John 14:6 (NKJV)*⁶ *Jesus said to him, "I am the way, the truth, and the life. No one comes to the Father except through Me.*

Much Confusion – People then Miss Out / Need to Understand the 3 Relationships

There is so much confusion today about the baptism in the Spirit. People get hung up and miss out because they don't understand there are three relationships Jesus talked about that a person can and should have with the Holy Spirit (also called Holy Ghost – which I don't care for that translation personally). When we talked of the Holy Spirit, there's three prepositions that we always discuss when we do to give the broad picture of the work of the Holy Spirit here on earth, and may we never forget the Holy Spirit. He is God, the third person of the Trinity, which is Augustine would say, trying to explain and grasp and comprehend. The trinity is like trying to pour the Atlantic Ocean into a bucket and that's well said because God is huge and he's overflowing and that's a good thing that we can put him into a bucket or a box that our God is so big that he can meet every need and overcome every obstacle in our life and he'll do that for you today.

1.) With Us "para" / John 14:17 / God will use Vessels like John Baptist /

He is with us (the Greek preposition "para" which means alongside of). The Holy Spirit comes alongside of a person and God's Spirit moves across the earth witnessing to a person their need for a Savior for their sin separates them from the Holy God (John 14:17). God will often time use vessels such as a John the Baptist to proclaim His message. You never would have been born again unless the Holy Spirit had been with you, whispering, "God loves you. You're a sinner, but Jesus died in your place." Speaking the message of sin, separation, repentance, and restoration. Whether it was through a meeting at church, or at a Billy Graham crusade, whether it was over the radio, or through a friend, it was the Holy Spirit with you who began to tug on the strings of your heart, drawing you to salvation. If the Holy Spirit had not been with you, you could not have been born again. "There is none that seeketh after God," wrote Paul (Romans 3:11). "We are born again not of the will of man, but of God" (see John 1:13). A person can't, on his own, say, "Hmm. I think I'll be born again." The only way someone can be born again is for God to sovereignly choose to send His Holy Spirit to work with him. God the Holy Spirit comes alongside a person and says, "Hello, I love you, let Me open your eyes to see it".

*John 16:7–11 (NKJV)*⁷ *Nevertheless I tell you the truth. It is to your advantage that I go away; for if I do not go away, the Helper will not come to you; but if I depart, I will send Him to you.*⁸ *And when He has come, He will convict the world of sin, and of righteousness, and of judgment:*⁹ *of sin, because they do not believe in Me;*¹⁰ *of righteousness, because I go to My Father and you see Me no more;*¹¹ *of judgment, because the ruler of this world is judged.*

*John 14:17 (NKJV)*¹⁷ *the Spirit of truth, whom the world cannot receive, because*¹⁷ *it neither sees Him nor knows Him; but you know Him, for He dwells with you (para) and will be in (en) you.*

*Romans 3:11 (NKJV)*¹¹ *There is none who understands; There is none who seeks after God.*

John 1:12-13 (NKJV) ¹²But as many as received Him, to them He gave the right to become children of God, to those who believe in His name: ¹³who were born, not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God.

1 Corinthians 2:13–14 (NKJV) ¹³ These things we also speak, not in words which man's wisdom teaches but which the Holy Spirit teaches, comparing spiritual things with spiritual. ¹⁴ But the natural man does not receive the things of the Spirit of God, for they are foolishness to him; nor can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned.

Warning – The Spirit will not always Strive with Man – Genesis 6:3

Before moving on, let me clearly give warning, the Spirit of God will not always strive with man, so if you haven't received Him yet, be warned that there may come a day where He is no longer knocking on the door of your heart (Genesis 6:3).

Genesis 6:3 (NKJV) ³And the Lord said, "My Spirit shall not strive^e with man forever, for he is indeed flesh; yet his days shall be one hundred and twenty years."

No One Can Say Jesus is Lord – Except by Holy Spirit

No one can say that Jesus Christ is Lord, except by the Holy Spirit. This is not referring to speaking with words, but by believing in the heart. Only through the work of the Holy Spirit can a person come to faith.

1 Corinthians 12:3 (NKJV) ³ Therefore I make known to you that no one speaking by the Spirit of God calls Jesus accursed, and no one can say that Jesus is Lord except by the Holy Spirit.

Romans 10:9–10 (NKJV) ⁹ that if you confess with your mouth the Lord Jesus and believe in your heart that God has raised Him from the dead, you will be saved. ¹⁰ For with the heart one believes unto righteousness, and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation.

2.) In – En / Comes in and Dwells / We can Cry Out – Abba Father

After coming alongside of us, The Holy Spirit then comes in us the moment we open our heart to the Savior (John 20:22), after hearing the message proclaimed through a vessel chosen by God, or just God speaking to us in His own way; The Greek preposition for in, is "en". When you opened your heart to Jesus, the Holy Spirit came into you. He indwelt you. You were born again. You were regenerated. The baptism of John spoken of by Christ is the washing away and forgiveness of sin. It is then because the sin and separation has been dealt with, that God takes us residence, the indwelling, it is then we can cry out Abba Father! And the Holy Spirit begins to teach and lead a person in the way to walk.

John 20:21-22 (NKJV) ²¹So Jesus said to them again, "Peace to you! As the Father has sent Me, I also send you." ²²And when He had said this, He breathed on them, and said to them, "Receive the Holy Spirit.

Romans 8:15-17 (NKJV) ¹⁵For you did not receive the spirit of bondage again to fear, but you received the Spirit of adoption by whom we cry out, "Abba, Father." ¹⁶The Spirit Himself bears witness with our spirit that we are children of God, ¹⁷and if children, then heirs—heirs of God and joint heirs with Christ, if indeed we suffer with Him, that we may also be glorified together.

John 16:13 (NKJV) ¹³ However, when He, the Spirit of truth, has come, He will guide you into all truth; for He will not speak on His own authority, but whatever He hears He will speak; and He will tell you things to come.

We May Choose to Sin – But are not Powerless to Sin

As believers, we may choose to sin; we may decide to sin; but we never have to sin because the power of Christ resides in us. And He who told us to go our way and sin no more, to be holy for He is holy, also gives us the power to carry out His commands.

Vacation / ECT Power

Christian don't try to overcome the flesh with the flesh. God is waiting. He's giving us his holy spirit inside of us to help us overcome and how often we don't use it.

We just took vacation to Maine, it is a beautiful state. We choose to drive rather than fly for various reasons. My favorite drive tome is when Renee is sleeping. I will drive until I am one vapors, because I don't want to change the motion of the car and wake her, then have to stop at the restroom every 90 minutes. There are times where I slowly and gradually reduce my speed so not to awake, and I will try it silently drift up to the gas pump and try to fill up without waking her up. But anyhoo, back to my story.

My truck has six cylinders and I just drove it up to Maine and therefore I had the drive through New York City and because everyone's a madman, if you don't drive like a madman, you're going to get run over so you got to gun it and run it and throw your breaks down and swerve left and swerve right. And even with my six cylinders, there's times where I'm like, it's just not enough to get up and go to get out of the way. And as I was in Maine, I went to Acadia National Park and we drove the truck to the top of Cadillac Mountain, which is the highest point in the United States on the northern tip of the eastern seaboard. It's actually the first spot to get sunlight in the United States. So it was nice to make the climb and there was times where I had to put a little more extra gas to it because of the climb, but I gotta tell you this, I knew it since I bought my truck. I have a button on my dashboard called "ECT Power" and ECT stands for "electronically controlled transmission" and of course the word power and you push the button to engage it. But you know what? I never pushed the button the whole time I have had the truck, because I remember reading it reduces your gas mileage. So, through New York City up Cadillac Mountain, I never pushed the button. Not until this week did I push this button and see what happens. Not what happens is it adds power to my transmission and when you engage that button, that truck flat out flies, and you want to talk about get up and get out of the way and go. It cranks through the gears faster than a human could shift through them if it was a manual transmission, and faster than the standard settings can for an automatic transmission. It gets you up and moving in probably twice the time. It's just eats up the hill, you need to keep an eye on your speed because you going over speed limit in half the time. Talk about jumping out in city traffic, hang on, and get ready to brake! And so you can see my point that I make. I had all this power at my fingertip literally, and yet I drove through New York City peak rush hour without it. I climbed Cadillac Mountain, the highest peak here in the northern seaboard without it, and it's such a picture of our lives, mine too. I have literally at my fingertip access to the power of the Holy Spirit to do mighty works in my life, overcoming sin or overflowing out into the ministry and how many times I ride with just my standard power if you would, and I don't tap into the power of the Holy Spirit that's promised to me.

Yeah it does eat up some extra gas, because I do have to make a sacrifice to tap into the power, to get alone with the Lord, to seek him, to petition Him to help, to slow down and be honest with Him and myself that I need help. But it is worth the little extra, to get the great power

3.) Comes Upon – Heppi / Comes to Empower Us for Service

Then there is the third, as Jesus said John baptized with water, but you shall be baptized with the Holy Spirit when He comes upon you (the Greek preposition is "heppi") when He empowers us for service (Acts 1:5). The Spirit of God is available not only to work with you to become a Christian, or to come into your life once you open your heart to Him, but He is now available to come upon your life and to empower you to see your own world turned upside down and made right-side up. In the Old Testament, when the Holy Ghost came upon men like Moses and David, Gideon and Ezekiel, Samson and Bezaleel, it was to empower them for service. So, too, Jesus said to His disciples, "The Spirit is in you, but when the Spirit comes upon you, you will be empowered for unique ministry and service, and then you will be My witnesses" (see Acts 1:4–8).

(Acts 1:5 NKJV) "for John truly baptized with water, but you shall be baptized with the Holy Spirit not many days from now."

(Acts 1:8 NKJV) "But you shall receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon (heppi) you; and you shall be witnesses to Me in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the end of the earth."

Interesting – Way, Truth, and Life

I find it interesting as I look at the 3 prepositions of the Holy Spirit I see John 14:6, the way, the truth, and the life.

- The Spirit is with (para) a person convicting and convincing that Jesus is the Only Way to salvation.
- The Spirit is in (en) a person when they receive Him and speaks and shows them the truth about how to live for God. And, gives the person the power to overcome the world and live for God.
- The Spirit is upon (heppi) a person, and empowers them for service unto the King, and that is not just storing treasures up in heaven, but enjoying and experiencing the "zoe" life.

Before Moving On – Notice You are Completely Enveloped in God / We are Exceptional Creations

Before moving on, did you notice these verses

John 14:10 (NKJV) ¹⁰ Do you not believe that I am in the Father, and the Father in Me? The words that I speak to you I do not speak on My own authority; but the Father who dwells in Me does the works.

John 14:17 (NKJV) ¹⁷ the Spirit of truth, whom the world cannot receive, because it neither sees Him nor knows Him; but you know Him, for He dwells with you and will be in you.

John 14:20 (NKJV) ²⁰ At that day you will know that I am in My Father, and you in Me, and I in you.

1 John 4:8 (NKJV) ⁸ He who does not love does not know God, for God is love.

So, the Father is in Jesus (v10), Jesus is in you, therefore the Father is in you (v20), and the Spirit is in you (v17) – which all means you are completely enveloped in God. How precious you are to God, how intimate is God to you, what does God think of you. He loves you so much He completely envelopes you, and He desires intimacy with you so much that He lives in you. God loves you!!!!!!!!!!!!!! You are priceless to Him, each and every one of you. Don't go out this door today and live some beaten life, so mediocre life, some half-in, half-out life. Go live the Zoe Life, the abundant life in every aspect and every moment of your life.

What the Unpardonable Sin

So, the unpardonable sin, is the rejection of the Holy Spirit testifying who Jesus is, that He is God, and that his mission is to be the Lamb of God who takes away the sins of the world. The Holy Spirit testifies that Jesus Christ is the one and the only way, the only truth and the only life and the only way to the father in heaven.

John 1:29 (NKJV) ²⁹ The next day John saw Jesus coming toward him, and said, "Behold! The Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world!

John 14:6 (NKJV) ⁶ Jesus said to him, "I am the way, the truth, and the life. No one comes to the Father except through Me.

John 16:7–11 (NKJV) ⁷ Nevertheless I tell you the truth. It is to your advantage that I go away; for if I do not go away, the Helper will not come to you; but if I depart, I will send Him to you. ⁸ And when He has come, He will convict the world of sin, and of righteousness, and of judgment: ⁹ of sin, because they do not believe in Me; ¹⁰ of righteousness, because I go to My Father and you see Me no more; ¹¹ of judgment, because the ruler of this world is judged.

What the Unpardonable Sin is Not

The unpardonable sin is not suicide, it is not murder, it is not having an abortion, it is not homosexuality, it is not idolatry..... the unpardonable sin is rejection the witness of the Holy Spirit saying you need a Savior, and Jesus is the Savior, and the only Savior. Now, the things I mentioned beforehand, if you live in those sins habitually, it most likely means you do not know him, for there is no evidence of a changed life, a God who lives in you and is changing you from the inside out.

Have you Committed the Unpardonable Sin

Some ask, what if I have already committed the unpardonable sin, I am lost forever. To which I would say, if you had committed the unpardonable sin, this would be the last place you would be, and listening to the word of God would be the last thing you would ever want to hear. So no, you have not committed the unpardonable sin. And today, you can receive Jesus as your Lord and savior.

2 Corinthians 6:2 (NKJV) ² For He says: "In an acceptable time I have heard you, And in the day of salvation I have helped you." Behold, now is the accepted time; behold, now is the day of salvation.

The Gospel

Your sin (breaking God's Holy Law) separates you from the Holy God, righteousness means "right-with", and you are not right with your Creator because of your sin, and there is a judgement to come for sin, the breaking of God's law, and that is eternal separation from Him, in a real place, which is hell. The Gospel (Good News), is that Jesus Christ came into the world, went to a brutal cross to pay the price for sin, the breaking of God's Law, and that whoever should believe in Him, that He did that for them, and then turns from sin and follows Him, shall have everlasting life with Him in heaven, not hell. The unpardonable sin is to hear the Holy Spirit speaking to you your need for a Savior (someone who can save you from your sin), and that Jesus is the Savior, and for you to say no, not I do not need a Savior, my sin isn't a big deal, or I like my sin and don't want to turn from it, or Satan's most masterful lie, later not today, I still have time. I am not saying that if you do not receive Jesus Christ as your Lord and Savior today that you have committed the unpardonable sin, but each time you do reject His invitation, your heart becomes a little harder, and over time, your heart may become so hardened, that you cant hear the Holy Spirit calling you, and therefore one of those times you rejected, was the unpardonable sin, and you didn't even

know it. Today is the day of salvation, while your heart is open, while you can still hear, you can still respond, so why not today?

John 16:7–11 (NKJV) ⁷ Nevertheless I tell you the truth. It is to your advantage that I go away; for if I do not go away, the Helper will not come to you; but if I depart, I will send Him to you. ⁸ And when He has come, He will convict the world of sin, and of righteousness, and of judgment: ⁹ of sin, because they do not believe in Me; ¹⁰ of righteousness, because I go to My Father and you see Me no more; ¹¹ of judgment, because the ruler of this world is judged.

Hebrews 3:15 (NKJV) ¹⁵ while it is said: "Today, if you will hear His voice, Do not harden your hearts as in the rebellion."

2 Corinthians 6:2 (NKJV) ² For He says: "In an acceptable time I have heard you, And in the day of salvation I have helped you." Behold, now is the accepted time; behold, now is the day of salvation.

Jesus' Mother and Brothers Come for Him (3:31-35)

Mark 3:31 Then His brothers and His mother came, and standing outside they sent to Him, calling Him.

Mark 3:32 And a multitude was sitting around Him; and they said to Him, "Look, Your mother and Your brothers are outside seeking You."

Mark 3:33 But He answered them, saying, "Who is My mother, or My brothers?"

Mark 3:34 And He looked around in a circle at those who sat about Him, and said, "Here are My mother and My brothers!

Mark 3:35 For whoever does the will of God is My brother and My sister and mother."

Huge Contrast

Whoever does the will of God is My brother and My sister and mother: Mark 3 ends with a huge contrast. There are religious leaders in danger of damnation and an invitation to be part of Jesus' family.

Will of God - Believe

Jesus tells us what the will of the Father is, and it is that we might believe in the Son (John 6:40); and we are even told what the work of God is,

John 6:28–29 (NKJV) ²⁸ Then they said to Him, "What shall we do, that we may work the works of God?" ²⁹ Jesus answered and said to them, "This is the work of God, that you believe in Him whom He sent."

John 6:40 (NKJV) ⁴⁰ And this is the will of Him who sent Me, that everyone who sees the Son and believes in Him may have everlasting life; and I will raise him up at the last day."

All Sin is Forgiven

Jesus said all sin will be forgiven, except blasphemy of the Holy Spirit. So beloved of God, all means all, go live in the freedom that all and every last sin has been forgiven you. But I struggle with sin, I do the things I don't want to do, and don't do the things that I want and should do..... Christian, you keep believing in the Son, and what you believe, will change what you do. Keep walking with Him. Your work is to believe, and His work will be to change you.

Mark 3:28–29 (NKJV) ²⁸ "Assuredly, I say to you, all sins will be forgiven the sons of men, and whatever blasphemies they may utter; ²⁹ but he who blasphemes against the Holy Spirit never has forgiveness, but is subject to eternal condemnation"—

Philippians 1:6 (NKJV) ⁶ being confident of this very thing, that He who has begun a good work in you will complete it until the day of Jesus Christ;

Recap What We Learned

So today we will cover:

- The power of the radically changed life.
- The weakness of a house divided, and the power of the house united.
- What is the unpardonable sin, and what isn't the unpardonable sin.

Prayer – Boldly Ask Your God

The Word of God is Living and Powerful, and is ready, and will do a mighty work in our lives.

Hebrews 4:12 (NKJV) ¹² For the word of God is living and powerful, and sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing even to the division of soul and spirit, and of joints and marrow, and is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart.

In Every Study

- Who Is God? (How Great is He?)
- What Does He Think of Me? (How Wonderful Are His Thoughts Towards Me?)
- What Does He Want Me to Do?
- What Can I Boldly Request of Him?
- What Do I Need to Be on Guard of When I Leave Here Today?

Boldly Come to Throne of Grace

Boldly come to the throne of grace, ask God to reveal Himself in a mighty way to you, and to do I might work in you, and through you.

Hebrews 4:16 (NKJV) ¹⁶ Let us therefore come boldly to the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy and find grace to help in time of need.

There is a Prayer Team Available to With and For You

End of Study

Mark 4
Mark 4:1-20

Intro/Recap

Today's passage is the "Parable of the Sower and the Seed", the Seed is the Word of God, and the Sower is God Himself. Let me start off by saying, GOD LOVES YOU, and in His great love He gives us this Word, the very breath of God, the very heart of God. So that, we may know who He is (great and mighty and loving), and what He thinks of us (thoughts of peace, of love, and intimacy), and this word radiates, beats, screams out..... **I Love You!**

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Hebrews 4:16 (NKJV) ¹⁶ Let us therefore come boldly to the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy and find grace to help in time of need.

Today's Passage

Today's passage, Mark 4:1-20

Outline Mark 4:1-20:

- The Parable of the Sower and the Seed (4:1-9)
- The Purpose of Parables (4:10-12)
- The Parable of the Sower Explained (4:13-20)

Wilderness Temptation / Last Days Sermon

In his wilderness temptation, Jesus rebukes the Devil and declares to all mankind, man shall not live by bread alone but by every word that proceeds from the mouth of God. Every Word.....every Word. And He said in His Olivet Discourse (given on the Mount of Olives overlooking Jerusalem), which was a discourse given regarding the last days, He said heaven and earth will pass away, but My words will by no means pass away. My oh my what we hold in our hands today. The changeless, life changing, Word of God!

Matthew 4:1-4 (NKJV) ¹ Then Jesus was led up by the Spirit into the wilderness to be tempted by the devil. ² And when He had fasted forty days and forty nights, afterward He was hungry. ³ Now when the tempter came to Him, he said, "If You are the Son of God, command that these stones become bread." ⁴ But He answered and said, "It is written, 'Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceeds from the mouth of God.'"

Matthew 24:32-35 (NKJV) ³² "Now learn this parable from the fig tree: When its branch ³³ has already become tender and puts forth leaves, you know that summer is near. ³⁴ So you also, when you see all these things, know that it is near—at the doors! ³⁵ Assuredly, I say to you, this generation will by no means pass away till all these things take place. ³⁵ Heaven and earth will pass away, but My words will by no means pass away.

Why Listen / What We Will Learn of Him and Ourselves Today

- In my count, which is open for debate, but I found some 50 very specific teachings of Jesus that are parable. Some scholars, they count the volume of His teachings, and the amount that were parables, and they say that 1/3 of His teachings were parable. I am not sure about that, but I am sure of this, and that is

that a large portion of Jesus' teachings were in parable form, which we will explain more of what a parable is in our study today.

- Parable of Sower – great mystery, God wants to reveal something deep to us, something that not everyone will understand, but He wants to make it known to you. The God of the universe, wants to share a mystery with you, because He wants you to understand something, He wants you to have something. And in our passage today it is how to have a fruitful life, an abundant life, as man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceeds from the mouth of God. So the Lord will teach us how to unlock, understand, apply the parables
- And He will tell us how to have hearts that are prepared to receive His Words. And interestingly He doesn't say do these things and your heart will be well prepared to receive my word, rather He says there are three things that will keep you from receiving my word, guard yourself against them, and fruit will naturally happen in your life.
- He is also telling me how to pray for that friend or family member that just isn't responding to the word of God, so that the Word of God can reach their heart.

Mark 4:10–11 (NKJV) ¹⁰ But when He was alone, those around Him with the twelve asked Him about the parable. ¹¹ And He said to them, "To you it has been given to know the mystery of the kingdom of God; but to those who are outside, all things come in parables,

So let's jump in here at chapter 4, verse 1.

The Parable of the Sower and the Seed (4:1-9)

Mark 4:1 And again He began to teach by the sea. And a great multitude was gathered to Him, so that He got into a boat and sat in it on the sea; and the whole multitude was on the land facing the sea.

Jesus Teaches – When People are Taught they Grow

Verse 1 - And again He began to teach by the sea - And again He began to teach. I like that. We have already read in several places in the Book of Mark where Jesus taught. When people are taught, not entertained, they learn, when they learn they grow, when they grow they are strong. The teaching ministry is vital if the church is to be strong.

Great Multitude – Biggest Yet

Great Multitude – the verb context, this is the largest crowds to date.

Plan in Place – Should Ever Need It

Remember He had this boat thing as a backup plan should the need arise, and here the need has arisen because the crowds are so large. Just think of the guy who readied the boat all those times before, just in case it was needed, but never was. I wonder if he said to himself, or others said to him, what a waste, you are missing where the action is, what are you actually accomplishing? Until, this day came, then it would be seen, wow what an impact your boat ministry has made, the largest crowds ever, and you were there to ensure that the Word of God went forth. Don't despise the days of small things beloved, just keep being faithful to what God has called you to do. Whether that is Sunday School teacher, door greeter, floor sweeper, childcare worker, we just never know the impact we make, or when a moment comes, that will be impactful in ways we would never have expected.

Mark 3:9 (NKJV) ⁹ So He told His disciples that a small boat should be kept ready for Him because of the multitude, lest they should crush Him.

Matthew 25:21 (NKJV) ²¹ His lord said to him, 'Well done, good and faithful servant; you were faithful over a few things, I will make you ruler over many things. Enter into the joy of your lord.'

1 Corinthians 4:2 (NKJV) ² Moreover it is required in stewards that one be found faithful.

Zechariah 4:10 (NKJV) ¹⁰ For who has despised the day of small things? For these seven rejoice to see The plumb line in the hand of Zerubbabel. They are the eyes of the LORD, Which scan to and fro throughout the whole earth."

Mark 4:2 Then He taught them many things by parables, and said to them in His teaching:

Parables Used to Related / Para (alongside) – Ballo (Cast)

Parables were used to communicate when the speaker wanted to arouse curiosity and excite interest. They were little stories with big messages. The word parable comes from ‘parabalo’ in Greek. Para means ‘alongside’ and ballo means to cast, or throw. Therefore the word parable means casting alongside. Parabolic teaching places a story alongside a truth or a principle.

Mark 4:3 “Listen! Behold, a sower went out to sow.

Listen Up – I Want You to Hear This

Listen, Behold (behold means to discover); Jesus is saying “listen up” I got something you need to hear, tune in here, I want you to discover something.

Mark 4:4 And it happened, as he sowed, that some seed fell by the wayside; and the birds of the air came and devoured it.

Mark 4:5 Some fell on stony ground, where it did not have much earth; and immediately it sprang up because it had no depth of earth.

Mark 4:6 But when the sun was up it was scorched, and because it had no root it withered away.

Mark 4:7 And some seed fell among thorns; and the thorns grew up and choked it, and it yielded no crop.

Mark 4:8 But other seed fell on good ground and yielded a crop that sprang up, increased and produced: some thirtyfold, some sixty, and some a hundred.”

Mark 4:9 And He said to them, “He who has ears to hear, let him hear!”

Starts with/end With - Listen

Jesus starts with “Hey Listen up(v3), and He closes with Hey listen up (v9)”. Jesus is saying “listen up” I got something you need to hear, tune in here.

We Hear – But don’t Necessarily Listen

A few years ago the Rand Corporation did a study on listening and discovered that American Corporations lose 10 million dollars a day because of failure to listen - which results in waste, redundancy, and inefficiency. After an ABC News Broadcast, the producer sent a crew to survey those who watched the show in its entirety - which consisted of 19 stories in 30 minutes. 51% of those who watched the entire half hour broadcast could not tell the pollsters one single item that was on the show. People can hear, but not listen.

4 Soils

Jesus spoke of four soils:

- 1) Seed that fell by the wayside (v.4)
- 2) Seed that fell on stony/shallow ground (v5)
- 3) Seed that fell among thorns (v.7)
- 4) Seed that fell on good ground (v.8)

A Key to Learning

A key to learning, especially the scriptures because the spiritual warfare that comes every time we do read it because the Devil doesn’t want us to understand and grow, is to read the passage, then ask ourselves, ok what did I just read, and they to recap and summarize what we just read.

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The Purpose of Parables (4:10-12)

Mark 4:10 But when He was alone, those around Him with the twelve asked Him about the parable.

Mark 4:11 And He said to them, “To you it has been given to know the mystery of the kingdom of God; but to those who are outside, all things come in parables,

Mark 4:12 so that ‘Seeing they may see and not perceive, And hearing they may hear and not understand; Lest they should turn, And their sins be forgiven them.’”

Parables are Timeless

Parables are timeless. A parable told 2000 years ago is still applicable to today.

A Mystery

Before explaining the meaning of the parable to His disciples, Jesus told them they were those to whom the mystery of the kingdom of God would be revealed. In the Bible, the Greek word *musterion*, or “mystery,” refers to a truth previously hidden but now revealed. There are a number of mysteries of which the New Testament speaks, among them the mystery of iniquity, revealed through an understanding of spiritual warfare (2 Thessalonians 2:7), and the mystery of godliness, revealed in the Person of Jesus Christ (1 Timothy 3:16). Here, Jesus is about to reveal to the disciples the mystery of the kingdom of God.... (Courson)

Jesus not Trying to Hide Word – Twice He Said Listen

Jesus isn't saying I'm trying to hide this from them, for we just saw twice Jesus is saying listen to me, listen to what I have to say. Jesus said, “he who has ears to hear, let him hear.” You have ears, but are you using them to hear what I have to say. But some people don't want to hear, because then they will have to make a change or respond to what they have heard. Jesus is quoting Isaiah 6:9-10. He isn't bringing something new and unknown to the people, He is reiterating, that some people don't want to “get it”, because they don't want to admit their sin, or give up their sin, so when the Word comes they put it away from themselves, “Lest they should turn”, turn from their sin, and seek forgiveness, and thus be admitting their sin, and the responsibility to turn from it because of sins offense to the Holy God.

Isaiah 6:9–10 (NKJV) ⁹ And He said, “Go, and tell this people: ‘Keep on hearing, but do not understand; Keep on seeing, but do not perceive.’ ¹⁰ “Make the heart of this people dull, And their ears heavy, And shut their eyes; Lest they see with their eyes, And hear with their ears, And understand with their heart, And return and be healed.”

The Parable of the Sower Explained (4:13-20)

Mark 4:13 And He said to them, “Do you not understand this parable? How then will you understand all the parables?”

Key to Unlocking Parables – Expository Constancy

Jesus is saying there is a key to unlocking parables, once you have the key then you can unlock all of them. The key is called “Expository Constancy” It means that how a word is applied in the Scriptures one place, then that is how it is applied in other places. For example,

- Oil represents the Holy Spirit.
- Bronze through the Scriptures represents Judgement,
- and Leaven represents Sin.

As we study this passage we will learn a couple more (Seed is Word of God, Plucking Birds are Satan)

Expository Constancy – Still Key Today

Expository Constancy is still a key today for all the scriptures I might add. Some people want to do replacement theology of making the church Israel in the last days, or the gifts of the Holy Spirit were only for the time of the New Testament church to get it up and running, but now the gifts have been ceased from God (they call that – cessations). Their doctrines sound so right, until you string the whole string together, staying with expository constancy, and those type of doctrines fall apart; to which praise the Lord, the true doctrine of God stands forth and stands firm for any who will be willing to stand upon it, regardless how popular or unpopular it is.

Mark 4:14 The sower sows the word.

The Seed is the Word of God

The seed is the Word of God. So anytime we read seeds then we know they represent the Word of God.

[Luke 8:11 \(NKJV\)](#) ¹¹ "Now the parable is this: The seed is the word of God.

2 Approaches – Saved or Not / If Saved How Apply

As in that day, so today, there are four kinds of hearts and they respond to Gods message in four different ways. We will look at them from 2 perspectives; one, are they saved, and two, if they are saved how does this apply to them.

Note - It is not the Seeds Fault

And note this as we read, it is never the seeds fault for not growing, it is based on where the seed fell. As we read through the seed falling, the Greek reads "the seed of the same kind", so it is the same kind of seed, and it is not the seeds fault for not growing but was based on where the seed fell.

What are the 4 Soils?

What were the four types of soils again?

4 Soils

Jesus spoke of four soils:

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Why Keep Reiterating – So We Can Ourselves “How is My Heart?”

Why do I keep reiterating these four? Because there is a place in each and every one of us, in our lives, where we should continually be asking ourselves, what is the soil of my heart, to receive the word of God. Before I have my study time, before I attend a bible study, I need to ask myself what condition is my heart in right now, can the word of God find place to grow.

1 – The Hard Heart

Mark 4:15 And these are the ones by the wayside where the word is sown. When they hear, Satan comes immediately and takes away the word that was sown in their hearts.

Wayside – Beaten Path (Foot Path)

The wayside was a beaten path, a walking trail that went alongside the field where people would walk. The path would be so beaten down by all the foot traffic, it was like concrete, so hard that water couldn't not even penetrate through it, but would just run off it. It was like a concrete sidewalk. We saw a path like this as Jesus and His disciples walked through the field on a sabbath day and His disciples plucked heads of grain and ate them.

[Mark 2:23–24 \(NKJV\)](#) ²³ Now it happened that He went through the grainfields on the Sabbath; and as they went His disciples began to pluck the heads of grain. ²⁴ And the Pharisees said to Him, "Look, why do they do what is not lawful on the Sabbath?"

Satan Plucks – Easily Because Seed Never Penetrated

It was in their heart for some period of time, but then Satan himself comes and snatches it away. It can easily be snatched because it is just laying on top of the ground, it has not penetrated.

Birds = Satan / BTW – Jesus Says there is a Devil

Here is another key for unlocking the parables, in verse 3 it said the the birds of the air devoured the seeds. Here it says Satan snatches the seed away. So when we read about birds in the parables, they represent Satan. Keep that in mind as we read the next parable. By the way, Notice Jesus is clearly as clear can be, there is a Devil, Satan, the Destroyer. And if there is a Devil then there is a hell. Some Bible teachers want to soften it up and say there is no

hell, and there is no Devil, but Jesus says there is, and expositional constancy through the scriptures will confirm continually, there is a hell and a Devil.

Not Saved – Word Never Reached their Heart

In terms of salvation experience, this person is not saved, for If they were saved, Satan couldn't snatch them away. *(John 10:29 NKJV) "My Father, who has given them to Me, is greater than all; and no one is able to snatch them out of My Father's hand.*

For Those who Are Saved – Satan Comes to Steal

But looking at it from those who are already saved, there is a warfare going on, and the last thing Satan wants you to hear is the Word, for the word of God is living and powerful and has the ability to change lives. We must pray before we study, pray that the word would take root in our heart.

John 10:10 (NKJV) ¹⁰ The thief does not come except to steal, and to kill, and to destroy. I have come that they may have life, and that they may have it more abundantly.

Forgotten Scripture – Gun with No Scriptures

It's been rightly said - A forgotten Scripture is like a gun with no bullets.

Danger of Hard Heart When Come to Read the Word / When Approach Bible Study – How's My Heart

Let me speak for a moment about the "Hard Heart". When we approach our reading of the Bible, there is a danger of having a hard heart. Our heart is hard towards God, we are upset with Him for what we think He has done, or what He has failed to do. Or our heart is hard towards another person, and there is no way or where the word of God can take root and flourish in our lives. Why do I keep reiterating these four? Because there is a place in each and every one of us, in our lives, where we should continually be asking ourselves, what is the soil of my heart, to receive the word of God. Before I have my study time, before I attend a bible study, I need to ask myself what condition is my heart in right now, can the word of God find place to grow.

4 Soils

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2 - The Shallow Heart

Mark 4:16 These likewise are the ones sown on stony ground who, when they hear the word, immediately receive it with gladness;

Mark 4:17 and they have no root in themselves, and so endure only for a time. Afterward, when tribulation or persecution arises for the word's sake, immediately they stumble.

Emotional & Shallow / Doesn't Understand the Price

This represents the emotional hearer, who joyfully accepts God's Word but does not really understand the price that must be paid to be a real Christian. They have a religious feeling for awhile, but when the hard time comes they bail.

Stumble - Scandalize

Stumble - The word "offended" is the translation of skandalizō (σκανδαλιζω), where we get our English word "scandalize". Means "to put a stumbling block or impediment in the way upon which one may trip or fall." Thus, to be offended in someone is to find occasion of stumbling in him, to see in another what one disapproves of and what hinders one from acknowledging his authority. Here, those who are like seed sown on ground full of rocks, are offended at the afflictions and persecutions in the sense that they find occasion of stumbling in them since they disapprove of them (Wuest).

Saved? / They were part of the Excitement – Jesus is the Greatest

In terms of a salvation experience, are they saved? We have read and will continue to read, many people followed Jesus for the show, for the excitement, for what they could get out of it, not what they could give to it, and many walked away from Him in the end. But during the excitement, if you talked to them, they would say Jesus is the greatest. In John 6, after Jesus talks about His body being the sacrifice (eat my flesh, drink my blood), we read that many walked away. But up to that point many walked with Him, just as excited as those would follow Him to the end.

[John 6:66 \(NKJV\)](#) ⁶⁶ From that *time* many of His disciples went back and walked with Him no more.

Eternity Magazine did a Study After Crusade

Eternity magazine did a study some time ago of a large crusade by a famous evangelist. 178 churches came together for this crusade. In one week's time, 4,106 decisions were made for Christ. But within 3 months only 3% were going to church at all. That means 3,981 people came forward but didn't go on. They responded to the message and sprang up quickly, but when the walk got tough, they bailed out.

Today You Can be Sure

Here is what I would say to those 3,981, you should be concerned. As a minister of the Gospel of Jesus Christ, I can't assure you truly made a commitment to Jesus Christ unto salvation. The Holy Spirit comes next to you to say you need a Savior, and when you say yes, He then comes and lives inside of you. How can the great and mighty God live in you, and you don't walk with Him? And here is the purpose of a word that Jesus gives such as these, and that is so you can examine your heart and ask yourself, "am I really saved, or did I just have an emotional experience?" And if you did truly give your heart to Him, today's word is to shake you and awake you, it's time to change, it's time to come back to the Lord regardless of the ridicule or persecution of the world, and live it out with abandonment. Who cares what the world thinks of us, let us only care about what Jesus thinks of us.

Beloved we Guaranteed Tribulation / Errant Evangelism Teaches All Will be Well

But for the Christian we are guaranteed a tough road. It is wrong for a preacher to promise people if you come to Jesus all your worries will be gone and you will live happily ever after, it's just not true, trials will come.

[\(2 Tim 3:12 KJV\)](#) Yea, and all that will live godly in Christ Jesus shall suffer persecution.

Dangers of the Shallow Heart / When Approach Bible Study – How's My Heart

When we approach our reading of the Bible, there is a danger of having a shallow heart. We read the word to find feel good passages, or we read the word to find loop-holes to justify our sin. We want a word based on our requirements, not God's. For many, entertain me, but don't enter me and change me. Why do I keep reiterating these four? Because there is a place in each and every one of us, in our lives, where we should continually be asking ourselves, what is the soil of my heart, to receive the word of God. Before I have my study time, before I attend a bible study, I need to ask myself what condition is my heart in right now, can the word of God find place to grow.

4 Soils

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3 – The Crowded Heart

Mark 4:18 Now these are the ones sown among thorns; they are the ones who hear the word,
Mark 4:19 and the cares of this world, the deceitfulness of riches, and the desires for other things entering in choke the word, and it becomes unfruitful.

3 Things

Notice the three things listed that choke out the word, crowd the heart.

1. Cares of the world - Cares" is merimna (μεριμνα), which is derived from a root which means "to be drawn in different directions," thus, "to be distracted." The word means "care," in the sense of "anxiety."
2. Deceitfulness of riches – riches deceive because a person can think that is where their security is, until the doctor says it is terminal, until the loved one says goodbye, until the boss says your fired.
3. Desires for other things - The Greek word translated "lusts" means in itself "a craving or passionate desire,"

Saved? / be Sure Today – Is the Things of this World Really Worth It?

In terms of salvation experience are they saved? Same as the shallow heart, search your heart, ask the Lord, and make sure that you are sure. Is this world and the things of it, really worth it?

Mark 8:34–38 (NKJV) ³⁴ When He had called the people to Himself, with His disciples also, He said to them, "Whoever desires to come after Me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross, and follow Me. ³⁵ For whoever desires to save his life will lose it, but whoever loses his life for My sake and the gospel's will save it. ³⁶ For what will it profit a man if he gains the whole world, and loses his own soul? ³⁷ Or what will a man give in exchange for his soul? ³⁸ For whoever is ashamed of Me and My words in this adulterous and sinful generation, of him the Son of Man also will be ashamed when He comes in the glory of His Father with the holy angels."

Believers (Believe but Get Caught Back into World) / Where Spend Most Thought Time

As for believers, this probably constitutes the majority of the church today, especially the church of America. They believe the gospel, but the comforts of the world consume them, and they focus more on them, then they do on their Bible studies and ministries. You can tell what is number one in your life, by the amount of time you spend thinking and doing it. Now we have to work, sleep, and eat; but after you have met your basic needs, then what? Do you spend 3 hours in front of the TV and 30 minutes in front of the Bible and prayer. How about working out? How about work, do you have more focus on your career than on your ministry. People can still love the Lord, but be ineffective in serving him - time is short are we busy about our fathers' business?

Allen Redpath / Saved Soul – Wasted Life

Alan Redpath said that one moment of weakness cost him seven years of his Christian life - because he didn't have just one beer. He had another one and another one until he was drunk. As a result of his compromise, he became so discouraged and defeated by failure that he went right back to living the way he had been living before he had put his faith in Christ. For seven years, no one could tell the difference between Alan and any of the other workers in his office.

At the end of those seven years, the "fanatic," who had led him to Christ and had since moved away, came back to visit. He spent about an hour with Alan, talking about how he was doing. Then as he left, he turned, looked Alan in the eye, and said, "Alan, did you know that it is possible to have a saved soul and yet live a wasted life?"

Then he left.

Alan played rugby, and he had a match out of town that night. As he rode the train to the match, he related later that every time the wheels clacked on the tracks, it was as though he could hear those words: Saved soul, wasted life. Saved soul, wasted life. When he got to the rugby match and the band came out on the field to play, every beat of the drum seemed to say, Saved soul, wasted life. Saved soul, wasted life.

It rang like a refrain in his mind. He knew he was a saved soul living a wasted life. (God's Story, p. 147-148)

May I Be Bold Enough – As A Watchman on the Wall who is to Warn / How Much Seed do You Miss

I will be bold enough to say this, even knowing that some people will become offended by it, but Jesus has modeled for us His power, and that power was one of a daily each morning a time separated unto the Father in heaven to meet with Him, to get a word for the day. If you live a life where you sleep until the last minute, then jump out of bed, fix your hair, jump into your car and rush to work, and then spend the next 8-10 hours doing that, I would implore you to seek the Lord, and ask Him, Lord how much seed do I miss each day because I didn't carve out a quiet time to sit at Your feet, to meet with Him, to hear His voice and heart before you started the day.

It's been said rightly, if the devil can't make you bad, he will make you busy.

That Seed (Word of God) you miss each day, that day, may be the very word that rescues you from a hard heart, a shallow heart, a thorny heart. It may be the very word you receive, you cast out, sow into someone else's life, that rescues them from these three, and helps them to have the fruitful heart, which then produces much fruit.

Danger of a Crowded Heart When Come to Read the Word / When Approach Bible Study – How's My Heart

When we approach our reading of the Bible, there is a danger of having a crowded heart. We sit, and we read, and then we run, and we forget what we just read, because we were so distracted with all the other stuff. A key to learning, read it, then ask ourselves, ok what did I just read, and try to recap what we read.

4 – The Fruitful Heart

Mark 4:20 But these are the ones sown on good ground, those who hear the word, accept it, and bear fruit: some thirtyfold, some sixty, and some a hundred."

All 4 Heard – But Only 1 Brought Fruit

All 4 soils hear the word, but only soil 4 brought a lasting fruit. This heart will bear fruitful, because it is fertile ground for the Seed, the Word of God, to take root and grow.

Univ Nebraska Lincoln Study

According to a report done by the University of Nebraska Lincoln, the average wheat plant, grown from a single seed, produces five heads, and each head averages about 22 kernels. So there you your 30-60-100.

Verse 16 (receive) versus Verse 20 (accept) / Receive (Self Promoted Action) – Accept (Consent Form)

Verse 16 the word "receive" in Greek is - lambano, lam-ban'-o; meaning "to take". In Zodiates it says sometimes this word means "to receive as merely a self prompted action without necessarily signifying a favorable reception". Simply meaning they really didn't count the cost, they weren't sold out on the decision they made.

But in Verse 20 the word "accept" in Greek is paradechomai, par-ad-ekh'-om-ahee; means "to accept near". Zodiates says it means "to embrace with consent and obedience". People sign consent forms today when they visit doctors, or send kids on field trips, or jump off a platform with a bungee chord. They are saying I understand the agreement and have counted the cost, and I agree to them. The person who consents to God's word and is obedient to His word, this is the one who is fruitful.

Salvation & Repentance Looks Like Something

In terms of a salvation experience, fruit is an evidence of salvation. Not all true believers are equally as productive, but every genuine Christian's life will show some evidence of spiritual fruit. If someone can make a profession for Christ, but then there is no lasting change, they are not saved. Salvation and repentance look like something.

(Mat 3:10 NKJV) John the Baptist speaking, "And even now the ax is laid to the root of the trees. Therefore every tree which does not bear good fruit is cut down and thrown into the fire. Bottom line, no fruit, no salvation.

John 15:1-11 (NKJV) ¹ "I am the true vine, and My Father is the vinedresser. ² Every branch in Me that does not bear fruit He takes away; and every branch that bears fruit He prunes, that it may bear more fruit. ³ You are already clean because of the word which I have spoken to you. ⁴ Abide in Me, and I in you. As the branch cannot bear fruit of itself, unless it abides in the vine, neither can you, unless you abide in Me. ⁵ "I am the vine, you are the branches. He who abides in Me, and I in him, bears much fruit; for without Me you can do nothing. ⁶ If anyone does not abide in Me, he is cast out as a branch and is withered; and they gather them and throw them into the fire, and they are burned. ⁷ If you abide in Me, and My words abide in you, you will ask what you desire, and it shall be done for you. ⁸ By this My Father is glorified, that you bear much fruit; so you will be My disciples. ⁹ "As the Father loved Me, I also have loved you; abide in My love. ¹⁰ If you keep My commandments, you will abide in My love, just as I have kept My Father's commandments and abide in His love. ¹¹ "These things I have spoken to you, that My joy may remain in you, and that your joy may be full.

3 Enemies of Receiving the Word

Each of the 3 fruitless hearts are influenced by a different enemy.

- The hard heart - the devil himself snatches the seed;

- the shallow heart the flesh counterfeits religious feelings;
- the crowded heart - the things of the world smother the growth and prevent a harvest.

These are the 3 great enemies of the Christian: the world, the flesh, and the devil.

When Approach My Daily Devotion – How is My Heart

When we approach our reading of the Bible, there is a power of having a well prepared heart, good soil, ready to receive the word.

Fruit Happens

Fruit naturally happens, when it is attached to the Vine, there is not striving or straining, it naturally is produced (John 15:1-11)

What is fruit? The Scriptures specify 6 types of fruit.

- Romans 6:22 - says that holiness is a fruit:
- Romans 1:13 - says that soul-winning is a fruit:
- Galatians 5 - describes the fruit of the Spirit
- Romans 15 - calls financial giving a fruit
- Colossians 1:10 - labels good works a fruit:
- Hebrews 13:15 - names praises as a fruit.

1. Romans 6:22 says that holiness is a fruit:

[\(Romans 6:22 NKJV\) But now having been set free from sin, and having become slaves of God, you have your fruit to holiness, and the end, everlasting life.](#)

Your life begins to take on a new wholeness, not eroded by sin, not wiped out by the world. Holiness begins to grow in you, and a new wholesomeness begins to be worked out through you. Holiness means “purification”, and “sanctification”, we are set apart for God. An easy self-examination is this, Lord how am I doing in terms of keeping your Word?

[\(1 Th 4:7 NKJV\) For God did not call us to uncleanness, but in holiness.](#)

2. Romans 1:13 says that soul-winning is a fruit:

[Romans 1:13–15 \(NKJV\) ¹³ Now I do not want you to be unaware, brethren, that I often planned to come to you \(but was hindered until now\), that I might have some fruit among you also, just as among the other Gentiles. ¹⁴ I am a debtor both to Greeks and to barbarians, both to wise and to unwise. ¹⁵ So, as much as is in me, I am ready to preach the gospel to you who are in Rome also.](#)

Paul said “I wish to come to Rome that I might have fruit among you “- or, see souls saved. Paul then goes into that powerful verse on preaching the gospel

[Proverbs 11:30 \(NKJV\) ³⁰ The fruit of the righteous is a tree of life, And he who wins souls is wise.](#)

3. Galatians 5 describes the fruit of the Spirit

[\(Gal 5:22-23 NKJV\) But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, longsuffering, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, self-control. Against such there is no law.](#)

4. Romans 15 calls financial giving a fruit

[\(Romans 15:26-28 NKJV\) For it pleased those from Macedonia and Achaia to make a certain contribution for the poor among the saints who are in Jerusalem. It pleased them indeed, and they are their debtors. For if the Gentiles have been partakers of their spiritual things, their duty is also to minister to them in material things. Therefore, when I have performed this **and have sealed to them this fruit**, I shall go by way of you to Spain](#)

The church in Jerusalem, because of their persecution, was so poor, that the Apostle Paul was taking up a collection to take to them so that they might have money just to buy food.

I know sometimes it is hard to write that check, but we have to remember financial giving is a fruit.

5. Colossians 1:10 labels good works a fruit:

(Colossians 1:10 NKJV) that you may walk worthy of the Lord, fully pleasing Him, being fruitful in every good work and increasing in the knowledge of God;

Serving others is a fruit. Helping someone I might also point out, a piece of fruit has no say in who picks it or who eats it. And so too it is with us, we are to give our fruit away freely with no conditions attached. Helping someone and figuring they owe us one is not fruit, probably the greatest blessings come when we help someone who has no ability to ever pay us back, this includes the financial fruit too.

6. Hebrews 13:15 names praises as a fruit.

(Hebrews 13:15 KJV) By him therefore let us offer the sacrifice of praise to God continually, that is, the fruit of our lips giving thanks to his name.

Giving thanks to the Lord is fruit in His eyes

Praises to God not only come in the form of worship, but also by every word that proceeds from our lips. Words of love and encouragement to others bring praises unto God. Words of destruction from God's children does not bring praise unto God. Let every word that proceeds from our mouths, be only words of edification.

Fruit Happens

So are we fruitful, we have 6 benchmarks to examine ourselves by. I think it is a good idea to lay these 6 out in our devotion time each day and say "God how's my fruit in these area, what type of fruit have I been producing? If little or none, then change me Lord; if lots, then Praise you Lord, lets do more.

John 15:1–11 (NKJV) ¹ "I am the true vine, and My Father is the vinedresser. ² Every branch in Me that does not bear fruit He takes away; and every branch that bears fruit He prunes, that it may bear more fruit. ³ You are already clean because of the word which I have spoken to you. ⁴ Abide in Me, and I in you. As the branch cannot bear fruit of itself, unless it abides in the vine, neither can you, unless you abide in Me. ⁵ "I am the vine, you are the branches. He who abides in Me, and I in him, bears much fruit; for without Me you can do nothing. ⁶ If anyone does not abide in Me, he is cast out as a branch and is withered; and they gather them and throw them into the fire, and they are burned. ⁷ If you abide in Me, and My words abide in you, you will ask what you desire, and it shall be done for you. ⁸ By this My Father is glorified, that you bear much fruit; so you will be My disciples. ⁹ "As the Father loved Me, I also have loved you; abide in My love. ¹⁰ If you keep My commandments, you will abide in My love, just as I have kept My Father's commandments and abide in His love. ¹¹ "These things I have spoken to you, that My joy may remain in you, and that your joy may be full.

Interesting the Opposites

It is interesting how these fruits, counter everything of the three non-fertile soils.

Romans 6:22 - says that holiness is a fruit:

Opposite of a Shallow Heart (a person lives in the holiness of God, set apart, repentant)

Romans 1:13 - says that soul-winning is a fruit:

Opposite of a Hard Heart (a person is not hard or unloving, but looking to spread the love of God)

Galatians 5 - describes the fruit of the Spirit

Opposite of a Shallow Heart (the fruit of the Spirit is as deep as Christian can go, for they reflect God)

Romans 15 - calls financial giving a fruit

Opposite of a Crowded Heart (deceitful of riches, desires for things) – a person is released from the grip of the world, and gives unto others for their sake and wellbeing, rather than everything being about them.

Colossians 1:10 - labels good works a fruit:

Opposite of a Hard Heart and a Crowded Heart (a person is serving others, rather than themselves)

Hebrews 13:15 - names praises as a fruit.

Opposite of a Hard Heart, a Shallow Heart, and a Crowded Heart (a person is overflowing with love and adoration for God, and His goodness, and His providing, and the depth of who He really is.

Conclusion

Why Listen / What Learned of Him and Ourselves Today

- The God of the Universe will Share a Mystery with You
 - How to Unlock the Parables
 - How to Prepare our Hearts to Receive His Heart
 - How to Pray for Those who are not Receiving His Word

Pray for Your Friend

So this passage has told us how to check to see our heart condition before we take in the Word, so that the Word of God may have great fruit in our lives. But we also have seen, why it doesn't penetrate and produce fruit, and therefore we now have a specific prayer we can pray to the Lord on that loved one or that friend who the word just doesn't seem to penetrate, and that is Lord break through their hard heart, their shallow heart, their crowded heart, so Your word can break through.

Prayer – Boldly Ask Your God

The Word of God is Living and Powerful, and is ready, and will do a mighty work in our lives.

Hebrews 4:12 (NKJV) ¹² For the word of God is living and powerful, and sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing even to the division of soul and spirit, and of joints and marrow, and is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart.

In Every Study

- Who Is God? (How Great is He?)
- What Does He Think of Me? (How Wonderful Are His Thoughts Towards Me?)
- What Does He Want Me to Do?
- What Can I Boldly Request of Him?
- What Do I Need to Be on Guard of When I Leave Here Today?

Boldly Come to Throne of Grace

Boldly come to the throne of grace, ask God to reveal Himself in a mighty way to you, and to do I might work in you, and through you.

Hebrews 4:16 (NKJV) ¹⁶ Let us therefore come boldly to the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy and find grace to help in time of need.

There is a Prayer Team Available to With and For You

End of Study

Mark 4:21-34

Intro/Recap

Last week we studied the parable of the sower, the soil, and the seed. And we continue on in this chapter as Jesus gives 3 more parables. A parable is a spiritual truth, cast alongside a story. So who remembers what the 4 types of soils there are? And, big bonus, who remembers the 6 specific fruits mentioned in the Bible?

Outline Mark Chapter 4:

- The Parable of the Sower and the Seed (4:1-9)
- The Purpose of Parables (4:10-12)
- The Parable of the Sower Explained (4:13-20)
- A Light is Not Put Under a Basket (4:21-25)
- The Parable of the Growing Seed (4:26-29)
- The Parable of the Mustard Seed (4:30-32)
- Jesus Speaks in Parables (4:33-34)
- The Wind and the Waves Obey Jesus (4:35-41)

4 Soils

Jesus spoke of four soils:

- 1) Seed that fell by the wayside (Hard Heart)
- 2) Seed that fell on stony/shallow ground (Shallow Heart)
- 3) Seed that fell among thorns (Crowded Heart)
- 4) Seed that fell on good ground (Fruitful/Fertile Heart)

What is fruit? The Scriptures specify 6 types of fruit.

- Romans 6:22 - says that holiness is a fruit:
- Romans 1:13 - says that soul-winning is a fruit:
- Galatians 5 - describes the fruit of the Spirit
- Romans 15 - calls financial giving a fruit
- Colossians 1:10 - labels good works a fruit:
- Hebrews 13:15 - names praises as a fruit.

1. Romans 6:22 says that holiness is a fruit:

(Romans 6:22 NKJV) But now having been set free from sin, and having become slaves of God, you have your fruit to holiness, and the end, everlasting life.

2. Romans 1:13 says that soul-winning is a fruit:

Romans 1:13-15 (NKJV) ¹³ Now I do not want you to be unaware, brethren, that I often planned to come to you (but was hindered until now), that I might have some fruit among you also, just as among the other Gentiles. ¹⁴ I am a debtor both to Greeks and to barbarians, both to wise and to unwise. ¹⁵ So, as much as is in me, I am ready to preach the gospel to you who are in Rome also.

3. Galatians 5 describes the fruit of the Spirit

(Gal 5:22-23 NKJV) But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, longsuffering, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, self-control. Against such there is no law.

4. Romans 15 calls financial giving a fruit

(Romans 15:26-28 NKJV) For it pleased those from Macedonia and Achaia to make a certain contribution for the poor among the saints who are in Jerusalem. It pleased them indeed, and they are their debtors. For if the Gentiles have been partakers of their spiritual things, their duty is also to minister to them in material things. Therefore, when I have performed this and have sealed to them this fruit, I shall go by way of you to Spain

5. Colossians 1:10 labels good works a fruit:

(Colossians 1:10 NKJV) that you may walk worthy of the Lord, fully pleasing Him, being fruitful in every good work and increasing in the knowledge of God;

6. Hebrews 13:15 names praises as a fruit.

(Hebrews 13:15 KJV) By him therefore let us offer the sacrifice of praise to God continually, that is, the fruit of our lips giving thanks to his name.

Why Listen?

Here are 3 things you will learn in our study today:

1. A special promise from God, the more we hear and take in, the more He will give us and pour out to us.
2. The Word of God is supernatural, and we can simply rest in its super natural ability to do what it was designed to do.
3. And lastly, be careful little ears, what you hear.

Prayer – Boldly Ask Your God

The Word of God is Living and Powerful, and is ready, and will do a mighty work in our lives.

Hebrews 4:12 (NKJV) ¹² For the word of God is living and powerful, and sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing even to the division of soul and spirit, and of joints and marrow, and is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart.

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Boldly come to the throne of grace, ask God to reveal Himself in a mighty way to you, and to do I might work in you, and through you.

Hebrews 4:16 (NKJV) ¹⁶ Let us therefore come boldly to the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy and find grace to help in time of need.

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Lets jump in at verse 21.....

A Light is Not Put Under a Basket (4:21-25)

Mark 4:21 Also He said to them, “Is a lamp brought to be put under a basket or under a bed? Is it not to be set on a lampstand?

Expositional Constancy

Expositional Constancy, this phrase was used by Jesus in the Sermon on the Mount (Matt 5:14). We can see we are called to be lights unto the world, and the whole reason is that our lives will “glorify the Father in heaven”, meaning just look at what God can do with a life that He gets hold of, changes, and then implants His word into, for that life will truly produce fruit.

Matthew 5:14–16 (NKJV) ¹⁴ “You are the light of the world. A city that is set on a hill cannot be hidden. ¹⁵ Nor do they light a lamp and put it under a basket, but on a lampstand, and it gives light to all who are in the house. ¹⁶ Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works and glorify your Father in heaven.

Uses Familiar Object & Scene

In this parable our Lord used a common object (a lamp) in a familiar scene (a home). The lamp was a clay dish filled with oil, with a wick put in the oil. In order to give light, the lamp had to “use itself up”; and the oil had to be replenished. The giving of ourselves is the only way to Let our light shine. If you try to minister to others yet still

try to protect your wants and needs, your ministry will suffer and not be all that it can be. If you serve self, you are not using yourself up, but saving up for yourself.

A Lamp Not Lit – Did the Home No Good

In verse 24 Jesus is going to talk about the measure we use, is the measure receive

If the lamp was not lit, it did the home no good. A lamp had to be on-fire to give light. I believe it was Charles Spurgeon who said, "Catch on-fire for Jesus Christ, and people will come to watch you burn". Mom and Dad, do your kids see a passion for Jesus Christ in your life? Do they see a prioritizing of the things of God over other things? Do they see, "the fruit" (these 6 fruits)? I pray they do, you can ask God if they aren't, and if they are not be not discouraged, for hang on to this study and listen to what the Lord would speak

Lamp – Precious Commodity

So there's not only the, well that's ridiculous, you wouldn't put it under a basket or a bed. There would also be the correlation of do you know how valuable oil was in those days? Do you know how valuable a candle was in those days? Those were precious commodities just in what it took to make them and get them. Imagine you didn't just find oil that could burn in a lamp down at the local store, nor candles. These are things that would take some working to get and have. They were valuable, and people considered them a precious commodity, and that's what amplifies our story here is Jesus is relating to what I share with you. Don't hide it. What I share with you, don't bury it because it's a precious commodity. It's rare. It's not something that you just come across and there it is, but it's something of rich and deep value and that's the application of our parable here in this story. Pretty much more than we could understand unless you lived in a hurricane and lost your power, you'd be really guarding your lamps in your candles and your battery charge on your cell phone. This latest hurricane some 800,000 were without power; when they got their power back, as you do when you lose it, you would appreciate the extreme value of power. So these hearers relate, you would never waste a lamp....., and for those who "get it" they realize they are not to waste their lives, hid their lives out of fear of man, nor be distracted with the cares of the world.

Mark 4:22 For there is nothing hidden which will not be revealed, nor has anything been kept secret but that it should come to light.

Mark 4:23 If anyone has ears to hear, let him hear."

He Who Has an Ear – Jesus Want Them/You to Hear

Again Jesus is emphasizing that these parables are not hide the truth from people, but that the people are hiding from the truth - lest they have to die to their sin.

For there will come a day of reckoning for all men, what did you do with your life, what did you do with Jesus Christ.

Revelation 20:11–15 (NKJV) ¹¹ Then I saw a great white throne and Him who sat on it, from whose face the earth and the heaven fled away. And there was found no place for them. ¹² And I saw the dead, small and great, standing before God, and books were opened. And another book was opened, which is *the Book of Life*. And the dead were judged according to their works, by the things which were written in the books. ¹³ The sea gave up the dead who were in it, and Death and Hades delivered up the dead who were in them. And they were judged, each one according to his works. ¹⁴ Then Death and Hades were cast into the lake of fire. This is the second death. ¹⁵ And anyone not found written in the *Book of Life* was cast into the lake of fire.

2 Corinthians 5:9–11 (NKJV) ⁹ Therefore we make it our aim, whether present or absent, to be well pleasing to Him. ¹⁰ For we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ, that each one may receive the things *done* in the body, according to what he has done, whether good or bad. ¹¹ Knowing, therefore, the terror of the Lord, we persuade men; but we are well known to God, and I also trust are well known in your consciences.

Lamp – Counters Fear of Persecution

The light under the basket is a counter to those who cannot withstand the persecution. Jesus is using a parable to go counter that point of the parable that the fear of man and persecution and the mocking will bring a person to a place of death. Put Your light out there, let it shine, and it will burn even brighter because the oxygen of life

coming from God breathing into it. Don't retreat into the fear of man and become impotent, that place of a meager existence in this world, saved soul, wasted life.

Mark 4:16–17 (NKJV) ¹⁶ *These likewise are the ones sown on stony ground who, when they hear the word, immediately receive it with gladness; ¹⁷ and they have no root in themselves, and so endure only for a time. Afterward, when tribulation or persecution arises for the word's sake, immediately they stumble.*

Mark 4:24 Then He said to them, “Take heed what you hear. With the same measure you use, it will be measured to you; and to you who hear, more will be given.

Mark 4:25 For whoever has, to him more will be given; but whoever does not have, even what he has will be taken away from him.”

Romans 10:17 / It is There for the Taking

(Romans 10:17 KJV) So then faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the word of God. The More you hear God's Word, the greater your faith will become. Too many people want the MacDonalds Faith, they think you just pull up and get an order of faith. Our faith is ever growing, we have to invest time into it. The more faith you want, the more God will give, but there is an action on our end.

Romans 10:17 (NKJV) ¹⁷ *So then faith comes by hearing, and hearing by the word of God.*

Walking with God isn't auto-pilot. In terms of salvation, its all God, we just receive it. In terms of growth we must be active, we must put forth an effort to grow. Priorities are important, as we decide how we will use the time God gives us.

As for the measure we use: the more faith, service, good works, financial giving, praise, soul winning, love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, and self-control, and Holiness we use, the more God will pour out on us. You can be sure when you are giving away God's fruit, He is going to give you more and more to give away.

God not Only Challenging You – Making a Promise to You

God is not only challenging you - He is also making a promise to you.

Don't be Discouraged / Simply Abide in Him – Fruit Will Happen

Maybe you're saying, oh no, I'm not bearing much fruit. Here's the good news. John 15, he says, every branch in him, he prunes, and here he is. He might be pruning you. He might be doing a nip and a cut, and you're saying ouch and ohh, but He's pruning you. He's washing you through his word. He's lifting you out of the mud so that you might bear much fruit, so being encouraged because you're here having the Word of God doing it's supernatural work in you. Be encouraged because He who began a good work will be faithful to complete it. And what does it say in Philippians 1 leading up to verses 6, “for your fellowship in the gospel from the first day until now. Simply “abide in Him”, and fruit will happen.

John 15:1–11 (NKJV) ¹ *“I am the true vine, and My Father is the vinedresser. ² Every branch in Me that does not bear fruit He takes away; and every branch that bears fruit He prunes, that it may bear more fruit. ³ You are already clean because of the word which I have spoken to you. ⁴ Abide in Me, and I in you. As the branch cannot bear fruit of itself, unless it abides in the vine, neither can you, unless you abide in Me. ⁵ “I am the vine, you are the branches. He who abides in Me, and I in him, bears much fruit; for without Me you can do nothing. ⁶ If anyone does not abide in Me, he is cast out as a branch and is withered; and they gather them and throw them into the fire, and they are burned. ⁷ If you abide in Me, and My words abide in you, you will ask what you desire, and it shall be done for you. ⁸ By this My Father is glorified, that you bear much fruit; so you will be My disciples. ⁹ “As the Father loved Me, I also have loved you; abide in My love. ¹⁰ If you keep My commandments, you will abide in My love, just as I have kept My Father's commandments and abide in His love. ¹¹ “These things I have spoken to you, that My joy may remain in you, and that your joy may be full.*

Philippians 1:3–6 (NKJV) ³ I thank my God upon every remembrance of you, ⁴ always in every prayer of mine making request for you all with joy, ⁵ for your fellowship in the gospel from the first day until now, ⁶ being confident of this very thing, that He who has begun a good work in you will complete it until the day of Jesus Christ;

What Comes In – Must Go Out

What comes in is meant to go out. God paints a picture in Israel of the Jordan river starting up at Mount Hermon with life giving water running through the land but ending in the Dead Sea. Once the flow stops, so does life.

The snow melts from Mount Hermon, goes into the Sea of Galilee. The Sea of Galilee has life in it. It has fish, it is surrounded by life, families, vegetation, animals. But the Dead Sea, no life, no families, nobody lives from its source.

And let it be seen. It's not the water going in that's bad. It's the same water from Galilee through the Jordan going into the Dead Sea. It's the same water that brought life upstream but brings death downstream because there is no outlet and without the outflowing life turns to death.

No More New Truths

Partake, give out, the truth God gives you, he'll give you more truth. Remember the story of Abraham before God, judged Sodom. Why did he tell Abraham? Because he knew Abraham would do something with that truth, to which Abraham did. He interceded in prayer. God gives to those who will respond and do something about it. He will give truth and people will go and give that truth out. They'll get more true. People wonder why their spiritual life has grown stagnant, that they're not hearing new truths from God and it very well may be and most likely is because they are not taking the truth that they've been given and given them out. So God is giving no more new truths.

Genesis 18:16–21 (NKJV) ¹⁶ Then the men rose from there and looked toward Sodom, and Abraham went with them to send them on the way. ¹⁷ And the LORD said, "Shall I hide from Abraham what I am doing, ¹⁸ since Abraham shall surely become a great and mighty nation, and all the nations of the earth shall be blessed in him? ¹⁹ For I have known him, in order that he may command his children and his household after him, that they keep the way of the LORD, to do righteousness and justice, that the LORD may bring to Abraham what He has spoken to him." ²⁰ And the LORD said, "Because the outcry against Sodom and Gomorrah is great, and because their sin is very grave, ²¹ I will go down now and see whether they have done altogether according to the outcry against it that has come to Me; and if not, I will know."

Genesis 18:22–33 (NKJV) ²² Then the men turned away from there and went toward Sodom, but Abraham still stood before the LORD. ²³ And Abraham came near and said, "Would You also destroy the righteous with the wicked? ²⁴ Suppose there were fifty righteous within the city; would You also destroy the place and not spare *it* for the fifty righteous that were in it? ²⁵ Far be it from You to do such a thing as this, to slay the righteous with the wicked, so that the righteous should be as the wicked; far be it from You! Shall not the Judge of all the earth do right?" ²⁶ So the LORD said, "If I find in Sodom fifty righteous within the city, then I will spare all the place for their sakes." ²⁷ Then Abraham answered and said, "Indeed now, I who *am but* dust and ashes have taken it upon myself to speak to the Lord: ²⁸ Suppose there were five less than the fifty righteous; would You destroy all of the city for *lack of five*?" So He said, "If I find there forty-five, I will not destroy *it*." ²⁹ And he spoke to Him yet again and said, "Suppose there should be forty found there?" So He said, "I will not do *it* for the sake of forty." ³⁰ Then he said, "Let not the Lord be angry, and I will speak: Suppose thirty should be found there?" So He said, "I will not do *it* if I find thirty there." ³¹ And he said, "Indeed now, I have taken it upon myself to speak to the Lord: Suppose twenty should be found there?" So He said, "I will not destroy *it* for the sake of twenty." ³² Then he said, "Let not the Lord be angry, and I will speak but once more: Suppose ten should be found there?" And He said, "I will not destroy *it* for the sake of ten." ³³ So the LORD went His way as soon as He had finished speaking with Abraham; and Abraham returned to his place.

Ask For More

If you won't hear, you will receive nothing more, but look at this promise. Those who want more, He'll give more and more and more the measure you press in the measure you will receive. He such a good God. Let's praise him for that. Let's just determine in our hearts, Lord, I want more of you. I want more of your word. I want more of this fruit in my life. Which one of these fruits would you look at and say, I need more of pray for that today. You can ask him for it and he'll give it onto you.

- Romans 6:22 - says that holiness is a fruit:
- Romans 1:13 - says that soul-winning is a fruit:
- Galatians 5 - describes the fruit of the Spirit
- Romans 15 - calls financial giving a fruit
- Colossians 1:10 - labels good works a fruit:
- Hebrews 13:15 - names praises as a fruit.

Take Heed What Hear

Verse 24 - Jesus said to take heed to what you hear. Brethren, you must guard the ear-gate. Take "heed", means to take care, to watch out, to discern, discriminate carefully between the things which you might hear,' e.g. 'select the right things to listen to. We must watch out for errant teachers and teaching, we must watch out for feel-good teaching that leaves out the holiness of God. We need to search the Scriptures to see if what is being said, lines up with the entirety of the 31,102 verses in this bible. And, oh..... *be careful little eyes what you see, be careful little*

ears what you hear – yeah we can sing it and teach it to our kids and then in adulthood forget it. You must be careful what you hear regarding things that are displeasing, sinful, worldly, and carnal. Course jesting, gossip, slander, sexual innuendo, and the likes..... all things that are fruitless, and poison the soil, turn hard, shallow, crowded, which will prevent the word of God finding good soil, so that it can produce good fruit.

Acts 17:11 (NKJV) ¹¹ *These were more fair-minded than those in Thessalonica, in that they received the word with all readiness, and searched the Scriptures daily to find out whether these things were so.*

Hebrews 2:1-4 (NKJV) ¹ *Therefore we must give the more earnest heed to the things we have heard, lest we drift away.* ² *For if the word spoken through angels proved steadfast, and every transgression and disobedience received a just reward,* ³ *how shall we escape if we neglect so great a salvation, which at the first began to be spoken by the Lord, and was confirmed to us by those who heard Him,* ⁴ *God also bearing witness both with signs and wonders, with various miracles, and gifts of the Holy Spirit, according to His own will?*

1 John 1:1-4 (NKJV) ¹ *That which was from the beginning, which we have heard, which we have seen with our eyes, which we have looked upon, and our hands have handled, concerning the Word of life—² the life was manifested, and we have seen, and bear witness, and declare to you that eternal life which was with the Father and was manifested to us—³ that which we have seen and heard we declare to you, that you also may have fellowship with us; and truly our fellowship is with the Father and with His Son Jesus Christ.* ⁴ *And these things we write to you that your joy may be full.*

Philippians 4:8-9 (NKJV) ⁸ *Finally, brethren, whatever things are true, whatever things are noble, whatever things are just, whatever things are pure, whatever things are lovely, whatever things are of good report, if there is any virtue and if there is anything praiseworthy—meditate on these things.* ⁹ *The things which you learned and received and heard and saw in me, these do, and the God of peace will be with you.*

Communion

The greatest parable in all the Bible (if you will), a truth cast alongside an object, is Communion. A picture of the body and blood of Christ. A reminder, the price paid, the way provided, so that we might be with Him, in Him, and He with us, and in us. Christian, we do not fight to victory, the battle was won on the cross, we fight from victory. And let us take communion together, or you who are reading this or listening to this, you can take communion even if you do not have the elements in your hand. When Richard Wurmbrand was in that brutal Romanian prison for 14 years, being persecuted for his faith, he and the other believers would have communion service with nothing, they would hold a cup of nothing, a bread of nothing, yet they would take communion together, not being denied remembering what Christ has done for us. Christian, we do not fight to victory, we fight from victory. And as you hold the bread and the cup, ask the Lord, based on Your finished works, I remember Your love for me, and I remember Your promises to me, and today I am reminded of that, and make claim to that.

1 Corinthians 11:23-26 (NKJV) ²³ *For I received from the Lord that which I also delivered to you: that the Lord Jesus on the same night in which He was betrayed took bread;* ²⁴ *and when He had given thanks, He broke it and said, "Take, eat; this is My body which is broken for you; do this in remembrance of Me."* ²⁵ *In the same manner He also took the cup after supper, saying, "This cup is the new covenant in My blood. This do, as often as you drink it, in remembrance of Me."* ²⁶ *For as often as you eat this bread and drink this cup, you proclaim the Lord's death till He comes.*

The Parable of the Growing Seed (4:26-29)

Mark 4:26 And He said, "The kingdom of God is as if a man should scatter seed on the ground,

Mark 4:27 and should sleep by night and rise by day, and the seed should sprout and grow, he himself does not know how.

Mark 4:28 For the earth yields crops by itself: first the blade, then the head, after that the full grain in the head.

Mark 4:29 But when the grain ripens, immediately he puts in the sickle, because the harvest has come."

Kingdom of God

Jesus is saying, what is the Kingdom of God like? So He is talking again what the kingdom of God is.

No One Doubts the Seed

Parable of the seed and the sickle is really simple. Sow it, and wait for harvest, as It will come. And no one challenged that. No one held a handful of seed in their hand and said, I don't believe that this is going to produce a crop. Even still today. If I held a handful of seed in my hand, people go, yes, all you gotta do is put it into the ground, cast it into the ground and it's going to grow once water and sun it. The seed in your hand is going to produce a crop. We don't know all the biology behind it, but we don't challenge its grows even if we don't understand all depths of the unknown about it. Even the greatest scientific minds in the world, cannot fully

explain how a seed turns into head of grain, an apple, coconut, tomato. Even the hardest core who subscribe to the theory of evolution say, yeah it is quite unexplainable. To which we say, it is supernatural.

Miracle of the Seed Process

A seed, has in it, an embryo, and sperm. And when it gets water, which breaks down the outer coat, a process of reproduction begins. And, somehow it knows for its root to respect gravity and go downward, but the shoot to defy gravity and shoot upward towards the sun.

The endosperm is the tissue produced inside the seeds of most of the flowering plants following fertilization. It surrounds the embryo and provides nutrition in the form of starch, though it can also contain oils and protein.. (Wikipedia)

Seed is Supernatural / No One Truly Knows What Makes Seed Grow / This Word is Supernatural

Jesus is saying, like a grain of seed producing crop is purely supernatural, so it the word of God. Beloved, the word of God is super natural. It's not of this world and unfortunately so many times we approach it like it is normal or something of this world, but this is a word that's outside of our time domain, outside of our universe, coming from the Creator himself speaking and transcending time and space to reach our hearts and when it does, the harvest is supernatural.

May we approach every time we read this word, something supernatural is before us. An opportunity for something supernatural to happen in our life is present with us.

Farming is Faith

Sleep is rest, Night and Day is persistence. When we our ministering for the Lord, we are to rest in Him to change people's hearts, but we also have to be persistent as we talked about the characteristics of a Fisherman. But do you realize Farming is Faith?

I can plow the soil, water it, weed it, pick rocks out, but the seed germinating is a miracle. Scientist can't explain it, they just accept it. The Scripture even backs it here in verse 27 "he himself does not know how"

Winning souls is the same. We can do all the plowing, watering, rock picking, but for the heart to change, it is truly a miracle from above.

I know it is hard to witness for Christ sometimes, sometimes it seems like you're wasting your time. But know that it's up to God to make a miracle happen. And the beauty of it for us is, it is not the results that matter, just action. God is pleased because you are spreading fruit when you are out trying to win souls.

Don't Have to Strain in Evangelism or Counseling – Just Cast Seed

We don't have to persuade and try to twist people to convince them. You simply give them the word and let God do what the word is designed to do. Supernaturally, it will change a heart that has ears to hear.

Somehow in the church today, we have taken that simplicity, a belief and faith, simply cast the seed, and yes, some will fall by the wayside, some will fall on shallow ground, some will fall on thorny, but some of it's going to fall on good soil and it's going to produce harvest. And yet in the church today, there can be this continual debate over how to present the Gospel, where to present the Gospel, what environment to present the Gospel, when not to present the Gospel n fear of offending somebody, to produce seeker friendly churches, and then eventually somewhere along the lines lip in the gospel. And that's not what's being said here. It's simply being said, just throw the word out there. Just throw the word out. Tell People Jesus loves you, gave his life for you. You can have new life. Your sins forgiven.

I used to get twisted up trying to present this perfect gospel that was tied in a bow that was air tight. And what I found is I was speaking for an hour and I was losing people. Whereas just coming, you're a sinner. I let God convict them of sin. You need a savior. I let God convinced them they need a savior. Jesus is the savior. I let God convinced them that Jesus is the savior and you need to give your life to Jesus Christ. And I let God convinced them that they

need to give their life to Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of sin, and then I can just walk away knowing that I presented the Gospel, that I threw the seed out there.

You got a handful of tracks and you hand them out on the street corner. That's awesome. Instead, people were afraid because they then debate and analyze how it should be done out on the street. You go down the list and list and I don't want to dismiss the necessity of preparing and presenting clarity and a heartfelt gospel and all those things, but I'm just going with what's being said here. Have, don't get wrapped up in all the worries and all the analysis. Just take this word of God and put it out there. When someone's in a bondage, this to a habitual sin. Tell the truth, the word of God. He can set you free. When someone's depressed, tell them the word of God that God will meet them and wants to comfort them and just put the seed out there and trust that the seed can do with the seeds designed to do. Just cast it out there and harvest will come

Notice Counter to Crowded Heart

And here we see a counter to the crowded heart. For as the word goes in, the crowded heart, the things that pull us in every direction, it is they that are pushed out, put in proper perspective, because the Word of God will put everything into its proper perspective in your life.

Mark 4:18-19 (NKJV) ¹⁸ Now these are the ones sown among thorns; *they are* the ones who hear the word, ¹⁹ and the cares of this world, the deceitfulness of riches, and the desires for other things entering in choke the word, and it becomes unfruitful.

The Parable of the Mustard Seed (4:30-32)

Mark 4:30 Then He said, "To what shall we liken the kingdom of God? Or with what parable shall we picture it?"

Mark 4:31 It is like a mustard seed which, when it is sown on the ground, is smaller than all the seeds on earth;

Mark 4:32 but when it is sown, it grows up and becomes greater than all herbs, and shoots out large branches, so that the birds of the air may nest under its shade."

Kingdom of God

Jesus is saying, what is the Kingdom of God like? So He is talking again what the kingdom of God is.

Mustard Seed – Mustard Bush – Mustard Tree

The mustard seed is the smallest, crop producing seed. The coconut is the largest. The mustard seed is tiny, in some cases it is only paper thin. The mustard bush only grows up to 3-5 feet. But, there are mustard trees, and some think this is what is being taught here. I personally don't think so, but will not be dogmatic on it, for I know I could be wrong. But I think it is the bush, the plant type because it is being referred to as a "herb" here by Jesus.

If a Bush – this is Abnormal

So if it is a bush, not a tree, birds don't lodge in bushes, but trees, and bushes don't usually give off much shade. So what we see is abnormal growth. The people who heard this would recognize it right away as being abnormal. For us today, most people think that a mustard seed grows into a tree, and fail to see this as abnormal

So what we have here is abnormal church growth with Satan dwelling in the church. What this represents is abnormal growth in the church. There are churches out there of several hundred, or thousands, where the Pastor isn't even saved. Churches who claim to be Christians yet deny that the blood of Jesus is enough to cleanse us from our sin, that man must do works to get into heaven.

Just because people go to church, doesn't mean they are Christian. Many churches are just organizations, with programs, nothing more than man's efforts.

Expositional Constancy – Bird is Satan

Remember back in the parable of the sower? Who snatched the seed? - the birds of the air. When Jesus gave the interpretation who did he saw snatched the seed? - Satan. So in keeping with Expositional Constancy, Birds of the air represent Satan, and here in this parable we see Satan lodging in the church. Thus we got a problem right from the start of this parable.

Mark 4:13–15 (NKJV) ¹³ And He said to them, "Do you not understand this parable? How then will you understand all the parables? ¹⁴ The sower sows the word. ¹⁵ And these are the ones by the wayside where the word is sown. When they hear, Satan comes immediately and takes away the word that was sown in their hearts.

Notice the Counter to Hard Soil

And notice here the counter to the hard soil we studied where Satan comes and plucks the seed. Yeah, he is here right now trying to pluck the seed from you. If you wonder why we are so protective of a distraction free environment, it is because we know Satan is here to pluck the word from the hearers' ears. He does that by distractions in the sanctuary, people moving about, it is why we say if you leave please sit in the back when you return. It is why we don't have laughing, or crying babies in the sanctuaries, for they distract. But, the Seed that reaches the soil, will grow.

Mark 4:14–15 (NKJV) ¹⁴ The sower sows the word. ¹⁵ And these are the ones by the wayside where the word is sown. When they hear, Satan comes immediately and takes away the word that was sown in their hearts.

Birds Nest for Shade / Satan Always Lurking in the Shadows

Birds of the air nest in its shadow. Doesn't that describe Satan and his ways. Satan is always lurking in the dark, his works are never in the light - for if they were, they would be exposed for what they are.

Be careful Little ears What you Hear

So, be careful little ears what you hear.

Jesus Speaks in Parables (4:33-34)

Mark 4:33 And with many such parables He spoke the word to them as they were able to hear it.

Mark 4:34 But without a parable He did not speak to them. And when they were alone, He explained all things to His disciples.

Psalm 78

Psalm 78 says that God, when he came with teaching parables,

Psalm 78:1–4 (NKJV) ¹ Give ear, O my people, to my law; Incline your ears to the words of my mouth. ² I will open my mouth in a parable; I will utter dark sayings of old, ³ Which we have heard and known, And our fathers have told us. ⁴ We will not hide them from their children, Telling to the generation to come the praises of the LORD, And His strength and His wonderful works that He has done.

Conclusion:

Here are 3 things you will learn in our study today:

1. A special promise from God, the more we hear and take in, the more He will give us and pour out to us.
2. The Word of God is supernatural, and we can simply rest in its super natural ability to do what it was designed to do.
3. And lastly, be careful little ears, what you hear.

Prayer – Boldly Ask Your God

The Word of God is Living and Powerful, and is ready, and will do a mighty work in our lives.

Hebrews 4:12 (NKJV) ¹² For the word of God is living and powerful, and sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing even to the division of soul and spirit, and of joints and marrow, and is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart.

In Every Study

- Who Is God? (How Great is He?)
- What Does He Think of Me? (How Wonderful Are His Thoughts Towards Me?)
- What Does He Want Me to Do?
- What Can I Boldly Request of Him?
- What Do I Need to Be on Guard of When I Leave Here Today?

Boldly come to the throne of grace, ask God to reveal Himself in a mighty way to you, and to do I might work in you, and through you.

Hebrews 4:16 (NKJV) ¹⁶ Let us therefore come boldly to the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy and find grace to help in time of need.

End of Study

Mark 4:35-41
Jesus in the Storms

Outline Mark Chapter 4:

- The Parable of the Sower and the Seed (4:1-9)
- The Purpose of Parables (4:10-12)
- The Parable of the Sower Explained (4:13-20)
- A Light is Not Put Under a Basket (4:21-25)
- The Parable of the Growing Seed (4:26-29)
- The Parable of the Mustard Seed (4:30-32)
- Jesus Speaks in Parables (4:33-34)
- The Wind and the Waves Obey Jesus (4:35-41)

4 Great Parables / Mark 4:33-34 (O-I-A) / Fruit Happens when we Obey/Apply

We ended our last study at verse 34, with Jesus giving a personal Bible study to the disciples, explaining all things, for they truly didn't understand all these parables, so Jesus is explaining, teaching them in depth. Another key to every Bible study. Lord, I don't understand, would you please explain this? Expound, give me more depth to what was said. Here's what was said. Help me to understand more of what it means. In every Bible study, every Bible study must have this third piece which is vital. How do I apply this to my life? Some people will take, here's what it says, here's what it means. But when it comes time to apply, they're afraid to do the hard part of applying. But oh, the fruit that comes from obeying the word of the Lord, asking for his applicationand you can be sure fruit will come.

Mark 4:33 And with many such parables He spoke the word to them as they were able to hear it.

Mark 4:34 But without a parable He did not speak to them. And when they were alone, He explained all things to His disciples.

Why Listen?

Why listen, why should we invest our time in studying God's Word today, digging into this passage, because it comes with one of the freeing, empowering, releasing words of God, quite honestly in all the Bible, and I say that honestly, not trying to sensational a Bible study, but words of power and peace Jesus will speak in a storm, "peace, be still". And maybe you are in a storm today, the winds, the waves, and the waters are beating against you, and you think you are going under, but God will speak to today..... "peace, be still".

Today's Passage

Mark 4:35-41 (NKJV) ³⁵ On the same day, when evening had come, He said to them, "Let us cross over to the other side." ³⁶ Now when they had left the multitude, they took Him along in the boat as He was. And other little boats were also with Him. ³⁷ And a great windstorm arose, and the waves beat into the boat, so that it was already filling. ³⁸ But He was in the stern, asleep on a pillow. And they awoke Him and said to Him, "Teacher, do You not care that we are perishing?" ³⁹ Then He arose and rebuked the wind, and said to the sea, "Peace, be still!" And the wind ceased and there was a great calm. ⁴⁰ But He said to them, "Why are you so fearful? How *is it* that you have no faith?" ⁴¹ And they feared exceedingly, and said to one another, "Who can this be, that even the wind and the sea obey Him!"

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- Who Is God? (How Great is He?)
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Boldly Come to Throne of Grace

Boldly come to the throne of grace, ask God to reveal Himself in a mighty way to you, and to do I might work in you, and through you.

Hebrews 4:16 (NKJV) ¹⁶ *Let us therefore come boldly to the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy and find grace to help in time of need.*

There is a Prayer Team Available to Pray with and for You

The Wind and the Waves Obey Jesus (4:35-41)

Mark 4:35 On the same day, when evening had come, He said to them, “Let us cross over to the other side.”

Sea Galilee

“The Lake of Galilee is 13 miles long at its longest, and 8 miles wide at its widest. At this particular part it was about 5 miles across.” (Barclay)

Take God at His Word

Jesus says let’s cross over - How important we understand and know the words of God, because when he says, we shall crossover, that’s his word and we shall crossover. When he says, and you shall be saved, you shall be saved. And when he says, he who began a good work will be faithful to complete it. He will be faithful to complete it. When he says Romans 8, all things work together for good. He means it. **You can take him at his word when he says you’re going over, you won’t be going under.**

Romans 10:13 (NKJV) ¹³ *For “whoever calls on the name of the LORD shall be saved.”*

Philippians 1:6 (NKJV) ⁶ *being confident of this very thing, that He who has begun a good work in you will complete it until the day of Jesus Christ;*

Romans 8:28–30 (NKJV) ²⁸ *And we know that all things work together for good to those who love God, to those who are the called according to His purpose. ²⁹ For whom He foreknew, He also predestined to be conformed to the image of His Son, that He might be the firstborn among many brethren. ³⁰ Moreover whom He predestined, these He also called; whom He called, these He also justified; and whom He justified, these He also glorified.*

Mark 4:36 Now when they had left the multitude, they took Him along in the boat as He was. And other little boats were also with Him.

Took Him Along / Shipped Off

They took Him along in the boat as He was: Jesus taught the multitude from a boat just off the shore of the Sea of Galilee. When the teaching was finished, He didn’t return to shore. He just said to the disciples, “Let us cross over to the other side.”

Other Ships / Others in a Trial

Let me point this out, “other little ships were also with them”. It is important to notice that so often when we are going through a trial we are not alone. The writer noticed it, or else he would not have included it in the Scripture. It is important to know others are going through a trial, so we may encourage them and minister to them.

Boat Specs / Rowed or Sailed

Historical and archaeological evidence tells us the boat Jesus is in in one of the fishing boats, which is about 22 feet long, 7 feet wide, and about 3 feet in depth. Pretty good size boat for a lake (for it really is a lake, as it is fresh water, not ocean water). of that size. The other boats are all smaller we are told, so when the storm hits, they would be in a perilous situation themselves. These boats could be rowed or moved by the wind when the sail was up. By Luke’s account of this story, we are told they are sailing, so the sail is up.

Luke 8:23 (NKJV) ²³ *But as they sailed He fell asleep. And a windstorm came down on the lake, and they were filling with water, and were in jeopardy.*

Mark 4:37 And a great windstorm arose, and the waves beat into the boat, so that it was already filling.

Mark 4:38 But He was in the stern, asleep on a pillow. And they awoke Him and said to Him, "Teacher, do You not care that we are perishing?"

Stern

The stern is the back of the boat. The stern is where the rudder is, and you would use the rudder when the sail was up to steer the boat. Jesus is sleeping, so we know He is not steering the boat. From the historical/archeological evidence, many of these boats had a little platform in the rear of the boat for the steersman to steer the ship, and the underneath to store the fishing nets, and some historical writings say there was sometimes a little stove under it to boil water for tea for those long cold nights of all-night fishing. So if that be the case that these was a platform, Jesus may be underneath the platform asleep on a pillow, and some netting, and Not totally being pelted by the rain. Or, as it said they took Him as He was, could be that He was preaching from on top of the platform, He finished preaching and said let's go, and He simply laid down to sleep on top of the platform, and they lifted sail, and turned the sail to steer the boat. The pelting rain and the whipping winds did not faze Him at all because He was in a deep-deep sleep. As the boat filled with water, since Jesus was on the top of the platform, the water in the hull of the boat was not reaching Him. Who knows, just interesting to speculate, and looking forward to see the video when we get to heaven (smiley-face).

Full of Water

But the boating is filling with water, coming up to the brim.

We Got This – We're Fisherman / The Time to Call Out to Jesus is Before You Launch

Verse 37,

- the wind storm arises and Jesus sleeps, but see, they keep rowing because we got this, we're fisherman.
- The waves beat the boat. Jesus keeps sleeping, but they keep rowing because we got this, we're fisherman.
- Then the water starts to fill the boat, but we got this, we've been here, we're fisherman and Jesus sleeps on.
- But as the boat begins to fill and that boat is three foot deep. Maybe at three inches, I got it. Maybe at a foot, I still got it.
- But now they've reached the point of we're going to go down. The filling of the boat and now was the time that they start to full panic and they're going to cry out to Jesus.

You know, can I say to you in everything that you do in your life, you know the time to pray is before you launch out, in all that we do, work, play, campus. In all that we do, Lord, be with me. I know You care and I know You want to be involved in every detail. So be with me. The time to awake Jesus was long before the water was up to the brim of the boat.

How Can Jesus Sleep? – He is Resting in the Father

How can Jesus sleep in such a storm? Because he's at peace.

- He has no worry of what he's going to eat when he crosses over to their side.
- He's not worried if there's a demon possessed man waiting for him (which there is).
- He's not worried if there's contention or interpersonal conflicts, a bunch of political and religious leaders seeking to kill Him.
- He has no worry of the overwhelming crowds, with their overwhelming needs.
- He has no worry of what His family thinks of Him, that He has lost His mind and become a religious nut.

He's at total peace because he knows his Father is in total control and he just submits to that and rest in that, so much so that he can sleep in the middle of a storm.

Another Reason – He is Poured Out for the Father / Sports Hero – Employee of Year – Religious Nut

Another reason Jesus can sleep is because he's absolutely exhausted. It says, now that the evening had come, we read, he started his day with a full day of ministering and teaching. You want a good night's sleep? Minister unto

the Lord. Whatever you're doing, make it a ministry unto the Lord, whether it's in the workplace or in the church or in the community or on the campus, work hard for the Lord, and you'll sleep sweetly through the night. It is interesting though. His family thinks he's crazy for going at the pace he does, but when an athlete does it, we call them heroes. When someone does it in the workplace, we call them employees of the year, but when you do it for Jesus, you're calling a fanatic or a nutcase. Who cares what the world thinks of us? Let our lamp so shine that people will know why we do what we do and for whose glory it is.

Matthew 5:14–16 (NKJV) ¹⁴ "You are the light of the world. A city that is set on a hill cannot be hidden. ¹⁵ Nor do they light a lamp and put it under a basket, but on a lampstand, and it gives light to all who are in the house. ¹⁶ Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works and glorify your Father in heaven.

Boat Filled Water – Disciples Filled with Fear

The boat is filled with water, and they are filled with fear. And, fear is a liar. That song is so true, but that song is not of a new truth. It's of an old truth that fear is a liar and here is the lie that fear is telling them

1. That they're going to perish
2. That Jesus doesn't care.

Call Him Teacher / Test not What Heard – Learned / F on Mid-Term / Will Ace the Final / Judas What a Waste

It's funny they call him teacher because He just taught a great Bible study, but the test isn't on what we hear. The test is what we heed and believe and for these guys, they get a flying, failing F on the test, but here's the good news. It was only the midterm. They will get to take the final and they will ace it. All 12 minus one will ace the final exam. What a shame for the minus one, Judas, that he would fail his exam, his final exam, even after seeing all the glory of God, so the warning continually goes to those that you're hearing the word, you're seeing the word in action, but there's just something in you that will not release this world and something in you that will not just die to yourself and Judas is called the Son of Perdition. Perdition means waste and Judas literally wasted not just his life, but his salvation. Judas never got saved, never received Jesus as his Lord and Savior, even after all that had been shown him regarding who Jesus was. They all heard the same word, all saw the great works, yet each man still decided for himself, what will I do with what I have seen and heard. So, 2,000 years later, each person gets to decide for themselves, what will I do with what I have heard.

Verse 41 – Who Can this Be? / Storms Answer the question of Who Jesus Is

Verse 41, they say who can this be? Do you see the purpose of a storm? It's the answer to that question,

- who is He
- and it answers the question, what does He think of me?
- It answers the question, what does He want me to do?
- It answers the question, what can I boldly ask of Him now that I see Him for who He is, what He thinks of me
- and then lastly, it answers the question, what do we need to be on guard about and in this story, it's to be on guard about fear and the lies of fear.

Mark 4:41 (NKJV) ⁴¹ And they feared exceedingly, and said to one another, "Who can this be, that even the wind and the sea obey Him!"

Confession – I Can be Obsessive / On Things Out of My Control

I will confess that I can be obsessive. I recognize it in myself and I'm just going to be honest with you that sometimes, I can find myself dwelling over and over and over on something that seems to be out of my control, something that seems to be swirling and storming against me and so I'll speak to the one in this room who this may apply to and that you relate with or maybe if we're all honest, I'll be speaking more than the one, I'll be speaking to everyone.

I can find myself churning it over and over and over everything that can go wrong, churning it over and over and over everything left to be done, churning it over and over and over the little bit of time I have and the little resources to get it done. I can look at the to-do list over and over and over and wonder how I'm going to get all this accomplished and my mind, it stirs and churns over it until that's all I can think of, waking up in the middle of the night or waking up first thing in the morning and there it is on my mind and going through the whole day with it on my mind, churning and churning over and over.

Sometimes my mind starts to churn gradually at first, even excitedly. Oh, cool, this is gonna be a great thing before me. Then I start to think about all the pieces of how is all this gonna happen and come together. I got all this over stuff to do. Then it starts to roll. Then it starts to overwhelm me and then I'm dwelling on it. Now what I see is winds, waves and water.

Never Understand Why I don't Obsess over the Word & Prayer that Way

To which I always challenge myself why aren't you that obsessed with churning it over and over the word of God, churning it over and over in prayer of just that prayer and the word and prayer and the word. That's where I need to be because it's so easy for us in the flesh to

- get distracted by the world and then we come to that third soil that we study, the crowded heart and you can almost work your way backwards
- in that that the crowded heart can easily take you into a shallow heart because you never really put much depth into something and then when the cares of the world and the trials and persecution comes, you find in yourself struggling to endure and then
- you can back it up one more and find yourself with that hard heart that you're so obsessed with these things that it's easy for Satan to come and pluck the seed, the word before it even reaches your heart.

Prayer is Where Rubber Meets Road – I am Not in Control / Prayerlessness – Declaration Independence

In prayer, the calling out to the Lord, I believe it's the ultimate act of faith. I think it's where the rubber meets the road, prayer, that is because obedience, yes, that is great faith, but prayer is my acknowledgement that I do not have control. Prayerlessness is my declaration of independence, but prayer is my declaration of dependence and that's what makes prayer the ultimate act of faith because I'm saying I have no control in that matter and I need you. Help me. I can't change anything because if I could, I'd just simply go do it, but prayer brings me, I have to ask because I can't.

Awakening Jesus is not Lack of Faith / Their Failing – That Jesus Doesn't Care

Now awakening Jesus is not a lack of faith. Recognizing a physical danger is not wrong nor is it a lack of faith. Jesus is not rebuking them in that manner that that is their lack of faith. Their failing is this and this is the summarization of all of this. Their failing is they say that God doesn't care. They say, "Don't You care that we are perishing?" And their failing is that God doesn't care about what is happening and what could happen.

THE POINT / Fear says God Doesn't Care – Faith says God Cares

Fear says God does not care. Faith says God cares and I had a three-sentence summary statement theologically tied in a bow of what faith is, but in the midst of a storm, it'll be too much to remember and I'll just boil it down to these two things. Faith is that God cares. Fear is that God does not care.

When I Settle On – God Cares / The I can Rest in the Storm

And when I can settle on that He cares, I can rest on that He cares even in the storm. Even if it seems that He's sleeping, I know that God cares for me.

When Faced with Storm – I Start Churning (Remind Myself – God Cares) – I am Not on My Own in This

So when I'm faced with a storm or anything and I'm obsessing with something, I'm stirring over it, it's churning over me, the way out of it is for me to say to myself God cares and that I can rest, that if God cares, He's involved in every detail of this, but when I recognize my fear, I'm saying God doesn't care or He's not gonna intervene in this. I'm all alone and on my own in this and therefore I'm saying God doesn't care, but when I say and know and believe God cares, then I can just rest and go, "God cares. I'm not in this alone and He will do what He will do."

Real Problems are Real Problems / Think so Much all See Winds/Waves/Water - God Doesn't Care

Back to my churning, back to your churning, even in real problem (real problems are real problems), okay, this is a problem, this storm is real. Then I start to play it out, the problem in my mind oh no this could happen, this could happen and the truth is, it may very well happen. I'm not saying that it can't happen when these storms of life

come out. But I can think it over so much, all I see is the winds, the water and the waves, for fear says God doesn't care.

Faith Says God Cares / Rom 10:17 / 31,102 Verses – Show me 1 Example Where God didn't Care

Faith says God cares. Romans 10:17, "Faith comes by hearing and hearing by the word of God," to which I would say based on 31,102 verses, I challenge you to find one instance in the scriptures where God did not care about one of his own people, one instance where he says, "Let Me know how it turns out." Everyone who is His, we always see Jesus coming to him and as we've talked before, Jesus was always coming to the person that had the most need. Faith comes by hearing, hearing by the word of God and when we can embrace that and lock it into our hearts, faith says God cares. Fear says God doesn't care and when faced with whatever storms of life happen, we can say it's a mighty storm or even if it's a little storm, but I know God cares and I'm not in the boat alone, and I can cast (throw) all my cares upon Him for He cares for me..

Romans 10:17 (NKJV) ¹⁷ So then faith comes by hearing, and hearing by the word of God.

1 Peter 5:7 (NKJV) ⁷ casting all your care upon Him, for He cares for you.

If We truly Believe God Cares – We will be Like Jesus (Resting in the Father even in the Storm)

If we truly believed, with no doubt, that God cares, we would not worry in the midst of any storm, any circumstances, because we would be like Jesus "resting" in the arms of the Father. Church, do you believe that? Do you believe that God cares? That God cares for you?

MAJOR POINT – We Believe God Loves Us – But Sometimes we Question if He Cares / They are Inseparable

I think every believer here would say, knows, and believes that God loves us. But there are times we question, or forget, that He cares. His love and He cares, are inseparable.

Mark 4:39 Then He arose and rebuked the wind, and said to the sea, "Peace, be still!" And the wind ceased and there was a great calm.

Be Muzzled You Barking Dog / An Erie Calm /

Jesus say be still, it meant to put a muzzle on it, like putting a muzzle on a barking dog. It says, when he said to be muzzled, it became not just calm but super calm, an eeriness. That's how calm everything was.

Not Just a Physical Storm – But Stirred by Devil

It appears that this storm was not just any normal storm, but it was stirred up by Satan himself, in either case, the storm didn't trouble Jesus, but it gave opportunity for the disciples to see his power and to see the glory of the father. If there had been no storm, there would be no story. There would be no passing on the faith for others to glean and for other's lives to be changed.

Satan Bent on Destroying Son of God – Bury Him in the Sea / Can't Save Self – Can't Save You from Sin

Satan stirred up the storm because he was bent on one thing, to kill the son of God. If I can bury him in the Sea of Galilee, this is all over. Let all mankind know, if he can't save Himself from the storm, He surely can't save you from your sin.

Totally Backfired – This Storm Released the Power of God in the 11

But this totally backfired on Satan, thinking that he could silence the voice of God. He instead releases the power of God into the eyes of 12 other men (minus one) who will go and turn the world upside down and mind you, all the other boats were watching also, they were in the storm with them and now they see the power and the glory of Jesus like never before.

So Too in Your Storms / Imagine the Other Boats / Passed Down to Apostle Paul

And so too God will do the same with you in the midst of your storms, as Satan tries to silence your voice to make you cry and complain and question where God is and what God's doing. Instead, if you allow it, He turns the tables and gives you a voice, and gives you a witness for the world to look on and see, a peace which passes

understanding, of trust and faith that can only come from knowing God intimately. And other people slowly but surely will start to grow in their faith and belief.

Imagine the other boats, they couldn't see nor hear what just happened. They just went from we are going to drown to immediate super calm, moon lite sea, perfectly still waters, and had to be what just happened. Then to get to shore and run up to the disciples, what just happened? And the disciples say, you are not going to believe this, and then retell the story, in the voice and posture of "awe and wonder". This would have been quite the moment for all involved.

This story will be passed down to the Apostle Paul in Acts. When he's in the storm, we see total peace. He's not fearing. He's not troubled. He knows the promise of God was to get him to Rome and he knows nothing was gonna to stop him getting to Rome, and he can tell the others, we're going to lose the ship, but we're not going to lose our lives. And so too when we read these stories of Jesus and believe him for ourselves, and when we live them out, we then pass the witness on to others who are looking on whether that be our children, or our spouse, our families, they will see where to find peace in their storms when they come.

Acts 27:24–26 (NKJV) ²⁴ saying, 'Do not be afraid, Paul; you must be brought before Caesar; and indeed God has granted you all those who sail with you.' ²⁵ Therefore take heart, men, for I believe God that it will be just as it was told me. ²⁶ However, we must run aground on a certain island."

MAJOR POINT: Only 1 Way to Muzzle Fear – The Word of God (Jesus Speaks)

Jesus speaks, and immediately the storm is calmed. There's only way to muzzle the fear of this world and that is with the word of God.

Peace be Still – How do I Apply That

Verse 39, Jesus says, "Peace, be still." Now how do I apply that personally because, see, I don't have the power to tell the sea, Satan, cancer, hurricanes, earthquakes, employers, enemies and the list goes on to be still. They will rage until my last breath on earth. For me to apply and to speak out and call, "Peace, be still," I can only call upon the Lord to make them still, then rest in His will.

- But there is a person that I can call out to and speak and say, "Peace, be still," and that is to myself. I can say to myself, "Be still," and call upon the word of God that says, "Be still and know that I am God," the God who cares for me and I will make myself still, to quiet the world around me. I tell myself be still. Stop obsessing. Stop trying to control. Stop thinking and thinking and thinking and simply be still. Get alone with Him and be still. Fear or faith? Fear says God doesn't care. Faith says God cares and if God cares, then we call upon the scripture that says, "Cast all your cares upon Me for I care for you, says the Lord."

Psalm 46:10–11 (NKJV) ¹⁰ Be still, and know that I am God; I will be exalted among the nations, I will be exalted in the earth! ¹¹ The LORD of hosts is with us; The God of Jacob is our refuge. Selah

- And not only do we not have the power over the winds, the water and the waves, there is something else we can't create and we can't create peace, for peace, as Jesus would say to the storm, peace, be still, we do not have the ability to create that peace. Peace can only come from God and it has to be given. It has to be sent and it has to be imparted to us from God. For all God, all peace comes from God. Jesus would say, "My peace I give to you. My peace I leave you." It's given, something we possess and it's something that can never be taken, but it can be something that can clouded and suppressed under all these cares of the world.

John 14:27 (NKJV) ²⁷ Peace I leave with you, My peace I give to you; not as the world gives do I give to you. Let not your heart be troubled, neither let it be afraid.

Philippians 4:6–7 (NKJV) ⁶ Be anxious for nothing, but in everything by prayer and supplication, with thanksgiving, let your requests be made known to God; ⁷ and the peace of God, which surpasses all understanding, will guard your hearts and minds through Christ Jesus.

Will never Find Peace in Situation – If Think God Doesn't Care

If I, you, we will never find peace in the situation if we think God doesn't care, but and I, you, we will never find fear in the situation either if we truly believe God cares and that He cares about every last detail of our lives, even the hairs on our head. Even if a sparrow falls, He cares. These 12 minus one will ace the final exam because they

will know Him and they will know that He cares and they will believe that in the face of fierce storms and persecution and tribulation. Even to the point of death, they have no fear because they know by faith God cares and that faith comes by hearing and hearing by the word of God and Jesus will say don't be fearful what man can do.

I Might Not be Able Bind Wind – But Can Tell Devil to Shut up!

Now I might not have the power to bind the evil one from stirring the waves, the winds and the water in this physical work that I live, but I can say to him, "Be quiet. Be muzzled. Quit barking. Quit trying to nip at me. I'm not listening to you." Put a muzzle on him. Tell him, "Get out of my life because fear is a liar and you are the father of all lies," and as he is the father of all lies, then Jesus is the Father of all truths and I can go and get still with my Heavenly Father, the God of all truth, the God of all love, who cares for me and I can simply cast all my cares upon Him.

Mark 4:40 But He said to them, "Why are you so fearful? How is it that you have no faith?"

Mark 4:41 And they feared exceedingly, and said to one another, "Who can this be, that even the wind and the sea obey Him!"

Waters Calm in Split-Second

I lived on the water by the sea for several years, and for any waters to go from waves to glass in a split second it is impossible. It takes time, in the Sea of Galilee probably a few hours because of the bowl shape that sea and shoreline is, for the waves to settle down to glass.

What Are You so Afraid Us / He Asks Them – and Us / I Am in the Boat With You

So Jesus asked them, why are you so afraid? What is it that you're afraid of? And he would ask that to every one of us, what is it that you're afraid? And we can answer, and we can answer, I am afraid of this, I am afraid of that, to which he would still say, why are you afraid? What is it that you could be afraid of if I'm in the boat with you?

You are the Boat

And Christian, if you've ever thought about it this way, you are the boat. Christ's in you, the hope of glory. And Christ is in you, and when the storms come against this boat, your body, Christ is in the boat with you. Christ is in you. And he is not sleeping; he lives to make intercession forevermore on your behalf. And you can rest in that.

God is in the Boat – Because Only God Controls the Sea

Psalms 65 declares that God and God only has control over the winds, the wave and the seas, and here they are standing in total awe. The Jewish people at that day, believed only God had power over the winds and sea. What they have just seen and heard that the Messiah, God, will speak in parables (Psalm 78); well, anybody can speak in parables, but then the speak and still the winds and the waves with that same voice. Things have gone to a new level now and they are in awe who, whose presence there in especially from the rollercoaster, the high emotional fear that you're going to die into an absolute stillness and calm. They are realizing, they are in the presence of God, dripping wet to prove it. And, every seafaring person knew Psalm 107, which puts the explanation point on the story before us.

Psalm 78:1-4 (NKJV) ¹ Give ear, O my people, to my law; Incline your ears to the words of my mouth. ² I will open my mouth in a parable; I will utter dark sayings of old, ³ Which we have heard and known, And our fathers have told us. ⁴ We will not hide them from their children, Telling to the generation to come the praises of the LORD, And His strength and His wonderful works that He has done.

Psalm 65:1-8 (NKJV) ¹ Praise is awaiting You, O God, in Zion; And to You the vow shall be performed. ² O You who hear prayer, To You all flesh will come. ³ Iniquities prevail against me; As for our transgressions, You will provide atonement for them. ⁴ Blessed is the man You choose, And cause to approach You, That he may dwell in Your courts. We shall be satisfied with the goodness of Your house, Of Your holy temple. ⁵ By awesome deeds in righteousness You will answer us, O God of our salvation, You who are the confidence of all the ends of the earth, And of the far-off seas; ⁶ Who established the mountains by His strength, Being clothed with power; ⁷ You who still the noise of the seas, The noise of their waves, And the tumult of the peoples. ⁸ They also who dwell in the farthest parts are afraid of Your signs; You make the outgoings of the morning and evening rejoice.

Proverbs 30:4 (NKJV) ⁴ Who has ascended into heaven, or descended? Who has gathered the wind in His fists? Who has bound the waters in a garment? Who has established all the ends of the earth? What is His name, and what is His Son's name, If you know?

Proverbs 30:5–6 (NKJV) ⁵ Every word of God is pure; He is a shield to those who put their trust in Him. ⁶ Do not add to His words, Lest He rebuke you, and you be found a liar.

Psalms 107:23–32 (NKJV) ²³ Those who go down to the sea in ships, Who do business on great waters, ²⁴ They see the works of the LORD, And His wonders in the deep. ²⁵ For He commands and raises the stormy wind, Which lifts up the waves of the sea. ²⁶ They mount up to the heavens, They go down again to the depths; Their soul melts because of trouble. ²⁷ They reel to and fro, and stagger like a drunken man, And are at their wits' end. ²⁸ Then they cry out to the LORD in their trouble, And He brings them out of their distresses. ²⁹ He calms the storm, So that its waves are still. ³⁰ Then they are glad because they are quiet; So He guides them to their desired haven. ³¹ Oh, that men would give thanks to the LORD for His goodness, And for His wonderful works to the children of men! ³² Let them exalt Him also in the assembly of the people, And praise Him in the company of the elders.

Jesus Teaching More than Words to Them – Showing Who He Is - God

This is the life lesson that Jesus is teaching them. More than words, but in life, in reality. Jesus saying to them, what is it that you could be afraid of? How is it that you still don't know Me and My heart for you after all I have taught you? Only Jehovah controls the wind and the sea, and it is He who is in the boat with you.

He Says this on Perfect Sea of Glass / I Pray There is a Stillness Today for You

He says this in perfect still glass sea, dripping wet as a reminder of what they been through. I pray there is a stillness of glass, of the turmoil's of life, the storms of life, that right now in the "assembly of His people" (Psalm 107), that you can hear Him speak to you. What is it that you are afraid of, what troubles you? I am in this boat with you, I have not left you, and I care for you, what are you afraid of? Only Jehovah controls the wind and the sea, and it is He who is in the boat with you.

Conclusion:

Hear God Say – I care About that Thing

Hear God speak to you today, but you can fill in the blank. That thing that you're worried about, that thing that's causing a storm in your life, may you hear God say, "Beloved, I care that thing you are worried about."

Why Listen?

Why listen, why should we invest our time in studying God's Word today, digging into this passage, because it comes with one of the freeing, empowering, releasing words of God, quite honestly in all the Bible, and I say that honestly, not trying to sensational a Bible study, but words of power and peace Jesus will speak in a storm, "peace, be still". And maybe you are in a storm today, the winds, the waves, and the waters are beating against you, and you think you are going under, but God will speak to today..... "peace, be still".

Communion

Communion is for us to remember what the lord has done for us, and it is for us to have fellowship, oneness, with Him (and each other). And today as we have oneness, and fellowship with Him, as we eat this bread, and drink this cup, may we "remember" what it means to us, and Him, that He cares for us.

1 Corinthians 11:23–26 (NKJV) ²³ For I received from the Lord that which I also delivered to you: that the Lord Jesus on the same night in which He was betrayed took bread; ²⁴ and when He had given thanks, He broke it and said, "Take, eat; this is My body which is broken for you; do this in remembrance of Me." ²⁵ In the same manner He also took the cup after supper, saying, "This cup is the new covenant in My blood. This do, as often as you drink it, in remembrance of Me." ²⁶ For as often as you eat this bread and drink this cup, you proclaim the Lord's death till He comes.

There is a Prayer Team Available to Pray with and for You

Prayer – Boldly Ask Your God

The Word of God is Living and Powerful, and is ready, and will do a mighty work in our lives.

Hebrews 4:12 (NKJV) ¹² For the word of God is living and powerful, and sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing even to the division of soul and spirit, and of joints and marrow, and is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart.

In Every Study

- Who Is God? (How Great is He?)
- What Does He Think of Me? (How Wonderful Are His Thoughts Towards Me?)
- What Does He Want Me to Do?

- What Can I Boldly Request of Him?
- What Do I Need to Be on Guard of When I Leave Here Today?

Boldly come to the throne of grace, ask God to reveal Himself in a mighty way to you, and to do I might work in you, and through you.

Hebrews 4:16 (NKJV) ¹⁶ Let us therefore come boldly to the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy and find grace to help in time of need.

End of Study

Mark 5

Mark 5:1-20

Outline Mark 5:

- A Demon-Possessed Man in Gadarenes is Healed (5:1-20)
- A Girl Restored to Life and a Woman Ill for Twelves Years Healed (5:21-43)

Mark 5:1–20 (NKJV) ¹ Then they came to the other side of the sea, to the country of the Gadarenes. ² And when He had come out of the boat, immediately there met Him out of the tombs a man with an unclean spirit, ³ who had *his* dwelling among the tombs; and no one could bind him, not even with chains, ⁴ because he had often been bound with shackles and chains. And the chains had been pulled apart by him, and the shackles broken in pieces; neither could anyone tame him. ⁵ And always, night and day, he was in the mountains and in the tombs, crying out and cutting himself with stones. ⁶ When he saw Jesus from afar, he ran and worshiped Him. ⁷ And he cried out with a loud voice and said, “What have I to do with You, Jesus, Son of the Most High God? I implore You by God that You do not torment me.” ⁸ For He said to him, “Come out of the man, unclean spirit!” ⁹ Then He asked him, “What *is* your name?” And he answered, saying, “My name *is* Legion; for we are many.” ¹⁰ Also he begged Him earnestly that He would not send them out of the country. ¹¹ Now a large herd of swine was feeding there near the mountains. ¹² So all the demons begged Him, saying, “Send us to the swine, that we may enter them.” ¹³ And at once Jesus gave them permission. Then the unclean spirits went out and entered the swine (there were about two thousand); and the herd ran violently down the steep place into the sea, and drowned in the sea. ¹⁴ So those who fed the swine fled, and they told *it* in the city and in the country. And they went out to see what it was that had happened. ¹⁵ Then they came to Jesus, and saw the one *who had been* demon-possessed and had the legion, sitting and clothed and in his right mind. And they were afraid. ¹⁶ And those who saw it told them how it happened to him *who had been* demon-possessed, and about the swine. ¹⁷ Then they began to plead with Him to depart from their region. ¹⁸ And when He got into the boat, he who had been demon-possessed begged Him that he might be with Him. ¹⁹ However, Jesus did not permit him, but said to him, “Go home to your friends, and tell them what great things the Lord has done for you, and how He has had compassion on you.” ²⁰ And he departed and began to proclaim in Decapolis all that Jesus had done for him; and all marveled.

Bible College 1996

The day was June 1, 1996, about 6 or 7 in the morning, the sun had just started to rise there in the mountains of Twin Peaks California. I was in the small laundry mat we had at the Bible College doing my laundry. The night before (May 31, 1996), I had just walked the stage to get my diploma as a graduate from the Bible College. And yes, that is what party-animal bible college students do the next day after graduation, their laundry. God had not confirmed to me on what was next. There were an abundance of ministry opportunities out on the west coast, from staying on at the Bible College and overseeing and mentor the young men attending the Bible College, or opportunities to serve at some Calvary Chapel’s out there on the west coast, to an opportunity to do ministry for the then exploding men’s ministry called Promise Keepers. So I had been doing laundry, reading my bible in my morning devotion time, and systematic reading through the bible had brought me to this story in the bible (it may have been Luke’s account, or this one here in Mark), and when I came to the verse – go home to your friends, and tell them what great things the Lord has done for you, God immediately spoke to my heart and said go back east, tell them on the east coast what great things the Lord has done. And so here I stand, to tell you the Lord is good, and greatly to be praise. He has been faithful to me these 22 years since then, and the 27 years since he rescued me out of my tomb, from living among the dead, and in my right mind. And His compassion is tremendous, they are new every morning, and great is His faithfulness.

Lamentations 3:21–26 (NKJV) ²¹ This I recall to my mind, Therefore I have hope. ²² Through the LORD’s mercies we are not consumed, Because His compassions fail not. ²³ They are new every morning; Great is Your faithfulness. ²⁴ “The LORD is my portion,” says my soul, “Therefore I hope in Him!” ²⁵ The LORD is good to those who wait for Him, To the soul who seeks Him. ²⁶ It is good that one should hope and wait quietly For the salvation of the LORD.

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The Word of God is Living and Powerful, and is ready, and will do a mighty work in our lives.

Hebrews 4:12 (NKJV) ¹² For the word of God is living and powerful, and sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing even to the division of soul and spirit, and of joints and marrow, and is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart.

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Hebrews 4:16 (NKJV) ¹⁶ Let us therefore come boldly to the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy and find grace to help in time of need.

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John 10:10 / Mark 5 – Destruction of Satan / Sophisticated Society

“The thief does not come except to steal, and to kill, and to destroy. I have come that they may have life, and that they may have it more abundantly.” These are Jesus’ words in John 10:10, and what a contrast!

Satan destroys... Jesus gives abundant life...And nowhere in Scripture are the blessings of Jesus and the destruction caused by Satan better illustrated than in Mark 5... Perhaps in modern societies Satan acts in more sophisticated ways, but his intentions have always been the same - He steals, kills, destroys. Satan wants to ruin lives. Jesus wants to redeem lives!

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The Book of Attacks / Satan Attacks – Jesus Attacks

We are in the book of Mark, but it could also be called the book of Attacks. And what I mean by that is so often we think and focus so much on the attacks of the enemy against us, against the church, and what we see here continually through the book of Mark is Jesus on the attack. He is now coming on the full attack, taking back the kingdom that Adam had surrendered back in the garden.

Romans 5:18–19 (NKJV) ¹⁸ Therefore, as through one man’s offense judgment came to all men, resulting in condemnation, even so through one Man’s righteous act the free gift came to all men, resulting in justification of life. ¹⁹ For as by one man’s disobedience many were made sinners, so also by one Man’s obedience many will be made righteous.

Jesus Quick Strikes / The Book of Mark – Book of Attack / Our God is Always on the Move

The book of Mark, this book of Attacks, is written at a quick pace. We move through stories quickly, at least some 50 stories through this book that we read, and I like that because when we read these stories of these situations and encounters of the living God versus the demons, such as in our story today here in chapter five, we see Jesus as a quick strike, as a lightning strike. He doesn't sit and he doesn't get entangled in long disputes and dissertations with the demons that he faces. He addresses them and then he casts them out, and therefore he beats them. And today he will send them into the deep. And there's a word for us, a power that our God is on the move for us. Our God is always on the attack for us, and no weapon formed against us, no enemy that comes against us, no devil that is looking for us can stand against his attack as he comes quickly and moves quickly.

Isaiah 54:17 (NKJV) ¹⁷ No weapon formed against you shall prosper, And every tongue which rises against you in judgment You shall condemn. This is the heritage of the servants of the LORD, And their righteousness is from Me,” Says the LORD.

Jesus Stills the Storm – Be Muzzled

Last week we closed out chapter four after the great parable teachings on the Word of God, and the supernatural working of the Word of God when it finds good soil, fruit naturally happens. And then we moved into the day was done, they got in the boat, they started across the Sea of Galilee. A storm was stirred, which appeared to be stirred by Satan himself. The disciples, in fear, awake Jesus, who with no fear but total power simply stands and says, "Be quiet. Be muzzled. Put a muzzle on it." And instantly, it says that the waters and storm became super calm. A quick

strike by Jesus, putting the devil in his place. And here today we come to our story. When they reached the shore, the other side, they'll meet a man here who is demon possessed, and we're gonna watch the same quick strike by Jesus, attacking the kingdom of darkness and turning it into the kingdom of light and love. So let's jump in. Verse one, chapter five.

Mark 4:39 (NKJV) ³⁹ Then He arose and rebuked the wind, and said to the sea, "Peace, be still!" And the wind ceased and there was a great calm.

Don't be Ignorant / Probably More Sophisticated

2 Corinthians 2:11 and Ephesians 6, both tells us to not be ignorant, to not be unlearned, not to be blindsided by the ways and the working and the schemes of the devil. And then in Ephesians 6, how to and the reminder of to be on the lookout for the wiles of the devil. Perhaps in modern societies Satan acts in more sophisticated ways, but his intentions have always been the same - He steals, kills, destroys. Satan wants to ruin lives. Jesus wants to redeem lives!

2 Corinthians 2:11 (NKJV) ¹¹ lest Satan should take advantage of us; for we are not ignorant of his devices.

Ephesians 6:11–12 (NKJV) ¹¹ Put on the whole armor of God, that you may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil. ¹² For we do not wrestle against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this age, against spiritual hosts of wickedness in the heavenly places.

Man Dressed Sunday Best (Mark 1) – Man Naked (Mark 5)

We've seen through the scriptures just how clever the devil is, and here we see in our passage before us an application and example of the mustard seed growing into the great bush. But ah, there's the bird of the air that we know is Satan, camped out in the bush in the branches. And we saw that when Jesus came into the synagogue, there was a man, could have been just like everyone else there, dressed in his Sunday best if you would, raising his hands in praise, quoting some scripture, but oh, when Jesus comes in, he knows. And the darkness can't stand the light, of course, and immediately there's the showdown and Jesus goes on the attack and defeats instantly and quickly. And so we see a total opposite as we see Jesus confronting the demon possessed man who was moral and well dressed and hair kept in the church, and here is a man totally out of control. Naked, breaking chains, out of his mind, a complete opposite of a story but yet still the same basis of a story.

Mark 1:23–27 (NKJV) ²³ Now there was a man in their synagogue with an unclean spirit. And he cried out, ²⁴ saying, "Let us alone! What have we to do with You, Jesus of Nazareth? Did You come to destroy us? I know who You are—the Holy One of God!" ²⁵ But Jesus rebuked him, saying, "Be quiet, and come out of him!" ²⁶ And when the unclean spirit had convulsed him and cried out with a loud voice, he came out of him. ²⁷ Then they were all amazed, so that they questioned among themselves, saying, "What is this? What new doctrine is this? For with authority He commands even the unclean spirits, and they obey Him."

Every Religion has Moral Code – Will Remain Unaffected Until Holy Spirit Confronts

Every religion has a moral system, and people can continue on in their moral systems unaffected until the Holy Spirit comes and moves. There're even church denominations that are dead of the Spirit. They won't allow the Spirit of God in. He's uninvited. He can't fit in to their time structure that they have. Or there's no room for the Word of the Spirit and people can get away and continue on in a moral sense until the Holy Spirit does show up, and then something has to show down. When the Holy Spirit shows up, there will always be a showdown, and here we see the Spirit of God coming ashore and this demon possessed man. There's gonna be a showdown with Jesus, the light of the world, and the devil, the darkness of the world. And in a moment, in a flash, Jesus goes on the attack and it is finished.

God Gives Scriptures – So we Talk About Works of Devil / Judas filled at Communion Service

So God gives us these scriptures and hence why we have to continue on in the scriptures, and we read chapter by chapter, verse by verse so we can see all of Jesus, but we can also see all the enemy and his wiles and his ways. We always think that the devil comes in a red suit with his little pitchfork, and then we'll know he was here, or somebody is spinning ... their head is spinning around, foaming at the mouth, and we go, "There he is." But so clever is he and so powerful is he and so bold is he, he'll fill Judas and take possession of Judas at a communion service in the presence of God himself and all the other disciples, and only Jesus recognized it of course. So the importance of us to continue on in these things, studying these things. A lot of people don't wanna talk about these things. They just wanna talk about warm things and uplifting things. How does this apply to my Sunday? As we go chapter by chapter, we're walking with Jesus. We're getting to know Jesus. We're getting to know him more

and more, regardless how long you've been walking with him. And you're also getting to know what we need to be on guard about and what we need to guard our children about, and we'll talk about that in our passage today.

Key Takeaways Today

There will be two key takeaways from our message today,

- and first is I want to plead with you, youth. Guard yourself from the wiles, ways, deceit of the enemy, for they are real. And he is real, and he has a real passion to destroy you.
- And secondly, to all of us, Jesus has the power to speak to this devil, your foe, and say, "Be muzzled." And Jesus, we see, He comes to this place to attack Satan's strong hold, and I believe, based on this passage and the scriptures, Satan does have strong holds, and I think many of you are agreeing with me. He's got a strong hold right now on my child, and he's got a strong hold on this region here around the capital or Baltimore. He has a strong hold and he's pushing an onslaught to guard his strong hold.

You Can Never Take Ground – By Defense – Must Attack

We are given an example in our passage today. The Lord will speak to us to not be ignorant of the devil and his ways, and the way to take the strong hold is by an attack, not by a defense. You can never take ground in a defense. It has to be through an offense, and our greatest offense is the word of God taken out as promised and lifted up as our basis for prayer for the will of God to be done. Lord, set the captives free. You said, Lord, in Luke 4, that's why you came, and Lord, we're going to take You at Your word and we're coming together to pray that You would set the captives free from the enemy, and loosens those who are in bondage. As Jesus closed this saying in Luke 4, today the Scripture has been fulfilled in your hearing, I pray literally it is fulfilled in your hearing, a God who heals the brokenhearted, and sets captive free, and a passage before us (a glorious chapter as a whole as we look at next weeks story of the woman and young girl touched by Jesus).

Luke 4:16–22 (NKJV) ¹⁶ So He came to Nazareth, where He had been brought up. And as His custom was, He went into the synagogue on the Sabbath day, and stood up to read. ¹⁷ And He was handed the book of the prophet Isaiah. And when He had opened the book, He found the place where it was written: ¹⁸ "The Spirit of the LORD is upon Me, Because He has anointed Me To preach the gospel to the poor; He has sent Me to heal the brokenhearted, To proclaim liberty to the captives And recovery of sight to the blind, To set at liberty those who are oppressed; ¹⁹ To proclaim the acceptable year of the LORD." ²⁰ Then He closed the book, and gave it back to the attendant and sat down. And the eyes of all who were in the synagogue were fixed on Him. ²¹ And He began to say to them, "Today this Scripture is fulfilled in your hearing." ²² So all bore witness to Him, and marveled at the gracious words which proceeded out of His mouth. And they said, "Is this not Joseph's son?"

A Demon-Possessed Man in Gadarenes is Healed (5:1-20)

Mark 5:1 Then they came to the other side of the sea, to the country of the Gadarenes.

Let Us Cross Over

Then crossed over, even after the storm, just like Jesus said they would. Are you in a trial today and have you forgotten the promise of God? I stand before you today to remind you of this promise and that all of his promises are yes and amen. What He's spoken to you, He will be faithful to complete in you. I just put that out there to minister the word of God to whoever is in need of a reminder of his promise to you.

Mark 4:35 (NKJV) ³⁵ On the same day, when evening had come, He said to them, "Let us cross over to the other side."

Gadarenes – East Side of Sea Galilee

"Then they came to the other side of the sea, to the country of the Gadarenes..." The country of the Gadarenes was east of the Sea of Galilee - across the lake from where the disciples set sail the previous day. Recall a few hours earlier Jesus had calmed a storm at sea. In 4:39 He "rebuked the wind, and said to the sea, "Peace, be still!" But notice He "rebuked the wind." This is what you do to a demon... You rebuke him. The storm at sea was more than a meteorological phenomenon, it was a spiritual attack. The devil didn't want Jesus coming to Gadara. He had a stronghold...

Mark 5:2 And when He had come out of the boat, immediately there met Him out of the tombs a man with an unclean spirit,

At One Time – A Son / But Opened Himself to Demonic Realm

At one time, this man was a boy who played in the field with other children, at one time this man was someone's son, being held, kissed, loved on by his parents. But somewhere he opened himself up to the demonic realm, and invite and allowed these demons into his life. You youth, be on guard, it all starts somewhere, whether it is dabbling in the occultic, or drug use, the door opens and the devil walks in. It all starts somewhere.

Galatians 5:19–21 (NKJV) ¹⁹ Now the works of the flesh are evident, which are: adultery, fornication, uncleanness, lewdness, ²⁰ idolatry, sorcery (word is pharmekai, where we get our word for pharmacy – drugs, as they would take drugs to open themselves to occult world, hence why translators called the word sorcery, hatred, contentions, jealousies, outbursts of wrath, selfish ambitions, dissensions, heresies, ²¹ envy, murders, drunkenness, revelries, and the like; of which I tell you beforehand, just as I also told you in time past, that those who practice such things will not inherit the kingdom of God.

And, it doesn't even have to be occultic entertainment, the Devil wants to walk in and cause his influence on every person.

Leave 1 Nail

I came across a powerful parable written by a Haitian pastor illustrating to his congregation the need for total commitment to the Lord.

A certain man wanted to sell his house for two thousand dollars. Another man wanted very badly to buy it but couldn't afford the full price the owner was asking. After much bargaining, however, he agreed to sell the house to the poor man for half the original price -- along with just one stipulation: He would retain ownership of one small nail protruding from just over the door.

After several years, the original owner wanted the house back, but the new owner was unwilling to sell. So the first owner went out, found the carcass of a dead dog and hung it from the single nail he still owned. Soon the house became unlivable and the family was forced to sell the house to the owner of the nail.

The Haitian pastor concluded that "If we leave the Devil with even one small peg in our life, he will return to hang his rotting garbage on it, making it unfit for Christ's habitation."

The devil has only come to steal, kill and destroy. He can be very crafty and he would love nothing more than to steal from us our very inhabitation in the Lord. Let's ask the Lord to reveal any pegs we may be leaving for the devil today and take back all that belongs to us -- for this truly is the season of restoration and repentance!

John 10:10 (NKJV) ¹⁰ The thief does not come except to steal, and to kill, and to destroy. I have come that they may have life, and that they may have it more abundantly.

Devil Wants to Destroy Image of God / As Long as Holiness, Purity, Love – He seeks to Destroy

We say the devil wants to destroy men, and that is true, but what his purpose behind the destruction is he wants to destroy the image of God in men, for all men have been created, and women, in the image of God. And the devil hates the image of God and he's bent on the destruction of that image of God in you, in men, and therefore why he comes against you. He wants to destroy the image of God, and as long as there's love, as long as there's holiness, as long as there's purity, there will be that desire in the devil to destroy that image of God in you. In the Garden, man was created in God's image, and in the Garden the choice of how much of an image bearer man chooses to be was created and given there also as the Tree of Good and Evil, the Tree of Knowledge there in the Garden, which I call the Tree of Choice, as every man has his free will choice of how much they want to reflect the image of God, how much of a light bearer they desire to be that reflects the image of God. And as we studied, let your light so shine, that men may see your good works for the glory of God.

Genesis 1:26 (NKJV) ²⁶ Then God said, "Let Us make man in Our image, according to Our likeness; let them have dominion over the fish of the sea, over the birds of the air, and over the cattle, over all the earth and over every creeping thing that creeps on the earth."

Romans 8:29 (NKJV) ²⁹ For whom He foreknew, He also predestined to be conformed to the image of His Son, that He might be the firstborn among many brethren.

Mark 5:3 who had his dwelling among the tombs; and no one could bind him, not even with chains,
Mark 5:4 because he had often been bound with shackles and chains. And the chains had been pulled apart by him, and the shackles broken in pieces; neither could anyone tame him.
Mark 5:5 And always, night and day, he was in the mountains and in the tombs, crying out and cutting himself with stones.

Bound By Man – Put him in a Cell / Jesus Comes for the One (Rahab, Woman Well, - And You)

Verse five, this man, he's not being bound by demons; these chains are being put on him by his countrymen. See, they had come to this place that there's nothing they can do with him. They said there's no rehabbing him. There's no rehabilitation. He is too far gone and he's too dangerous to himself and to society. And so they say, "Let's put him out in the tomb in a cave and chain him up and keep him away." And you know, that's a lot of what society wants to do today to the people that they feel cannot be rehabilitated, because their mind has been so destroyed and devoured. But I want you to see this: Jesus comes. This is like Rahab. This is like the woman at the well. God will rearrange the world. He'll go out of his way to reach the one that no one else wants. And may we take that same example and go after them the same.

Cutting – to Release the Pain / Jesus will Take Your Pain

Verse five says that he was cutting himself, and that's something that hasn't changed in 2000 years, this cutting. People cut themselves. They mark themselves. It's a release of pain, it's a release of anxiety. And what it is, it's a declaration of someone who is crying out for help. And here comes Jesus, and when this man sees Jesus, he runs to Jesus. He knows there's hope in Jesus. And I pray that for anyone within the earshot of my voice doing this study. You're cutting yourself, it's because there's pain inside you that you want out. And I declare on the power and the basis of the scriptures that there's hope in Jesus, and he can come and he can release that pain. As we studied last week, he'll say, "Roll that pain. Cast all your cares upon me, for I care for you." He can come and muzzle the storm of your life. He can come and steal the seas that are rocking your life. He comes because he cares. Fear says he doesn't care; faith says he cares, and he cares for you and he calls you today. "I can take that pain. I'm the one who took the cup. I'm the one who took the piercing there upon the cross so you don't have to. Come to me, all ye who labor and are heavy laden, and I'll give you rest." Jesus will give you rest today.

Mark 5:6 When he saw Jesus from afar, he ran and worshiped Him.

Mark 5:7 And he cried out with a loud voice and said, "What have I to do with You, Jesus, Son of the Most High God? I implore You by God that You do not torment me."

Demons Know Jesus / When Darkness & Light Collide – There will be a Showdown

Verse seven, James 2:19, says that the demons must, they know their final outcome, and that's why they tremble. They know there'll come a time when they will be judged and cast into the abyss, and here these demons are, knowing that that time will come, and they wonder if this is their time now. The demons know their future that they will be sent into the abyss, the bottomless pit, and then eventually into Gehenna consumed hell was created for Satan and his demons. They know that's their future. So the man comes running, but the demon takes over. The darkness has come into the light, and there will always be a showdown when there's darkness and light colliding. They're asking not yet. God in his divine purposes will allow them to continue to exist. It's like the tree. It's a choice that God allows for people to choose for the influence, or reject the works of the flesh and Devil.

James 2:19 (NKJV) ¹⁹ You believe that there is one God. You do well. Even the demons believe—and tremble!

Matthew 8:29 (NKJV) ²⁹ And suddenly they cried out, saying, "What have we to do with You, Jesus, You Son of God? Have You come here to torment us before the time?"

Revelation 20:1–3 (NKJV) ¹ Then I saw an angel coming down from heaven, having the key to the bottomless pit and a great chain in his hand. ² He laid hold of the dragon, that serpent of old, who is the Devil and Satan, and bound him for a thousand years; ³ and he cast him into the bottomless pit, and shut him up, and set a seal on him, so that he should deceive the nations no more till the thousand years were finished. But after these things he must be released for a little while.

Luke 8:30–31 (NKJV) ³⁰ Jesus asked him, saying, "What is your name?" And he said, "Legion," because many demons had entered him. ³¹ And they begged Him that He would not command them to go out into the abyss.

Street Witnesses to Kids After School

They call Him the Son of the Most High God. They recognize, and give that reverence to Him, even though they were against him and hated Him. It is like the Devil is forced to say it, even though he hates to say it. I remember doing street ministry out in California. Being up in the mountains we had lots of snow and cold. So when winter broke, everyone loved to feel the warmth upon them, and be out of the indoors. I knew that meant lots of youth on the streets after school. I made an announcement at the Bible College hey kids are going to be getting off the bus today around 3pm, anybody interested to share Christ meet me out front at 230. Wow what a site to see a caravan of cars, and 60 students, coming to be the Lights of the World. But my point of the story is I had like 15 high-schoolers gathered around me as I was on the streets. They were listening to every word. Then this car pulled up, this lady came running out of her car literally like a crazy person with arms waving all over the place, her was on fire, she was screaming from 20 feet away as she came running, "kids, kids, get away from him, don't listen to him, he is a good man, he means well, but don't listen to him, run home to your parents". Afterwards I pondered, how interesting, she obviously stirred and fueled by the devil to try to steal the seed, but even in her attempt to stop, still said (he is a good man, he means well). As much as she was against the Word of God, against me and what I was doing, she still had to acknowledge a truth, that she couldn't tear down, "he is a good man". And regarding the witnessing, I wish she would have followed me around all day, because you get a middle-aged mother telling kids don't listen and get away, sheeze.... I needed a boat like Jesus to preach in fear of being crushed by the multitude. They cleaned me out of every Bible and tract I had.

These demons hate Jesus, but they still have to acknowledge Him.

Mark 5:8 For He said to him, "Come out of the man, unclean spirit!"

Speaks - Done

Note this, it is done, the demon/demons are out of this man. Just like that, Jesus speaks, and it is over. So now the man is standing there, and so are these demons, to which I don't know what that physically looked like, but Jesus did. I also can't say exactly how the timing of it all went down, but it was quick, and Jesus did not mess around, He was on the attack. When Jesus says come out, they come out, when Jesus says go, they go. Just like that.

Matthew 8:30-32 (NKJV) ³⁰ Now a good way off from them there was a herd of many swine feeding. ³¹ So the demons begged Him, saying, "If You cast us out, permit us to go away into the herd of swine." ³² And He said to them, "Go." So when they had come out, they went into the herd of swine. And suddenly the whole herd of swine ran violently down the steep place into the sea, and perished in the water.

Mark 5:9 Then He asked him, "What is your name?" And he answered, saying, "My name is Legion; for we are many."

Legion (6,000) – A Mob

So legion, from a Roman standpoint, would be 6000. Not sure if that is an exact correlation that is in this one man, but the demons are many. JV McGee translates this as the answer is, we are a mob. Imagine the nightmare of a life that is, the torment that would come from that.

Ever see a Mob Brutalize a Person?

When Jesus asks this man his name, the demon jumps in and starts to talk. He who had the most power at this point in this man's life. He takes over and he gives the answer. We are legion, we are the mob (as JV Vernon McGee translated we are a mob and that's a good picture.) They have mobbed this man. You ever see a mob brutalize somebody in a riot or something of that nature and the persons on the ground and they're just beaten and kicking and throwing fists, bricks, whatever they can find. They just mobbed the person and this demon jumps in thinking that if he speaks, he gets to maintain control of this man, but when light comes before darkness, there will be a showdown and it won't be long. It won't take a rising of a son to the setting of a son to overcome this darkness. It will be a split second of a word go

Jesus not Talking to Demon – but to the Man when Asking Name

Jesus is not asking the name of the demon. Jesus knows who this demon is and Jesus is not going to give him/them the respect or the time of day, regardless of what his name would be. Jesus is speaking to the man saying, what's your name? Jesus knew this man. Jesus is bringing out that this is a human. There is/was a man inside this body, even with all the demons, however they may be. Jesus is speaking to a man and he's bringing the man to the surface, the image of God, and he does the same. Today we can look at a person and we see someone addicted to opioids. We see someone addicted to pornography. We see someone being destroyed by alcohol and that's who we see and we look right past the man, the woman that there is a man or a woman inside of that person who has been buried and crowded and suffocated, entombed, and not recognizable, but God always comes for the man, for the woman, He comes for you. He loves you. He wants to meet you and set you free. He wants to bring you back to the purpose of your creation, to reflect the image of God.

Demons Know Future / Oh That You Would Today – And LIVE IT

They knew their future and I would to God that every one of you would know your future, that you would leave here today without a doubt, without a shadow of a doubt. What your future is. Your future is eternity with Jesus and we're just pilgrims, sojourners in this rotten stinking world, but some day we will stand in glory. That's your future. Now we'll put off this old tent and I'll put on a new body. It's incorruptible and undefiled. Building not made with hands, eternal in the heavens. Oh, that you would know your future and live it today. Start living in today. Don't wait. You're the image bearer of Jesus Christ. God himself. Start living like you are.

2 Corinthians 5:1–2 (NKJV) ¹ For we know that if our earthly house, this tent, is destroyed, we have a building from God, a house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens. ² For in this we groan, earnestly desiring to be clothed with our habitation which is from heaven,

Hebrews 11:10 (NKJV) ¹⁰ for he waited for the city which has foundations, whose builder and maker is God.

1 Corinthians 15:52–55 (NKJV) ⁵² in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trumpet. For the trumpet will sound, and the dead will be raised incorruptible, and we shall be changed. ⁵³ For this corruptible must put on incorruption, and this mortal must put on immortality. ⁵⁴ So when this corruptible has put on incorruption, and this mortal has put on immortality, then shall be brought to pass the saying that is written: "Death is swallowed up in victory." ⁵⁵ "O Death, where is your sting? O Hades, where is your victory?"

Mark 5:10 Also he begged Him earnestly that He would not send them out of the country.

Demons Beg – Want a Body / They Want Human – to Destroy Image of God

"So all the demons begged Him, saying, "Send us to the swine, that we may enter them." And here we're given an interesting insight into the nature of demons.

Demons don't like being disembodied spirits. They seek a body to inhabit. Both the Holy Spirit and demonic spirits want to dwell in people. The Holy Spirit wants live in you to conform you into the image of Jesus. Satan wants to live in you to deform His image.

In Matthew 12:43-44 Jesus said, "When an unclean spirit goes out of a man, he goes through dry places, seeking rest, and finds none. Then he says, 'I will return to my house from which I came.'"

Demons want a house to inhabit. They take up residence in humans. But here's good news. If you're a Christian a demon can't have your body! The Bible teaches it's impossible for you to be inhabited by a demon. God's Spirit lives in you, and the Holy Spirit never bunks with evil spirits.

2 Corinthians 6 asks the question, "What fellowship has righteousness with lawlessness? And communion has light with darkness? And what accord has Christ with Belial (that is, Satan)?" God's Spirit never hangs out with evil spirits You might get hassled, or attacked, or oppressed by a demon, but never possessed. If you're a follower of Jesus, and a demon walks by he sees a "no vacancy" on the shingle of your heart.

Yet if you're NOT a Christian you're vulnerable. Your body was made to be inhabited by God's Spirit - yet Satan wants to be like God. That's why, if you spurn God's grace, evil spirits can try to take up residence.

Mark 5:11 Now a large herd of swine was feeding there near the mountains.

Against Levitical Law / Change the Word to Fit their Desire

So the raising of swines was against the Levitical law. And there you see some people, they can be the religious people, or the tribe of Gad, nation of Israel. Yeah, we're in the house of Jehovah. We're the chosen. But then they make their own rules and still somehow think that they're religious. Yeah, I know this is what the Word of God says, but that's not what it means for us. So here they are, making their living off of swines, pigs, which was strictly forbidden.

Satan had Stronghold

Ahh, so now the storm at sea makes a lot more sense to me also. Forbidden practices, mob of demons, Satan had a stronghold over this city, and he knew what would happen once Jesus stepped on the shores of it.

Mark 5:12 So all the demons begged Him, saying, "Send us to the swine, that we may enter them."

Mark 5:13 And at once Jesus gave them permission. Then the unclean spirits went out and entered the swine (there were about two thousand); and the herd ran violently down the steep place into the sea, and drowned in the sea.

Deviled Ham – Corny Jokes

So here we have the first mention of "deviled-ham". We have to tell these corny jokes I've told you plenty of times. You have to sign a statement that you promise to tell corny jokes such as these, and if you refuse, they will not give you a preaching license, and if they find out that you don't tell these corny jokes, they will, and I mean this, they will revoke your preaching license for not telling these corny jokes about things such as deviled ham or what car did the disciples drive, it was a Honda, because they all were in one accord. And who should make the coffee in the morning, the man, because it clearly says he-brews. Anyways, I get to keep the license for one more year.

God Judging Sin of City / Disobedience will Always Cost You

They cast themselves into 2000 pigs and over the cliff they go, and here are some pictures that you can see of this region where this most likely would have happened. And I love it in that God is judging the sin of the people of Gad for raising swine, which was against the Levitical law. You can have people who say they're religious, but they disobey the Word of God. And what you always find is that it will always cost you. Disobedience will always cost you. And here they lost a great livelihood by wasting away in revalidation and disobedience to the Lord.

So as Satan just a little while ago tried to bury the disciples and Jesus at the bottom of the Sea of Galilee, and a quick turn of the tables, Jesus buries 2000 of the henchmen at the bottom of the sea. No one can stop the Lord Almighty.

On a serious note though, this does illustrate the sinfulness of man... This fellow had tolerated the presence of the demons for years, while the pigs couldn't handle them for a few minutes. As soon as the demons enter them, the hogs go nuts, and run into the lake.

Hog Wild – Pigged Out – Swimming Pigs – Hog Heaven

"And at once Jesus gave them permission. Then the unclean spirits went out and entered the swine (there were about two thousand); and the herd ran violently down the steep place into the sea, and drowned in the sea." You might say, after leaving the man, the demons went hog wild or pigged out. They really hammed it up. I am trying to picture those pig legs trying to swim, wewewe, bubble, bubble, bubble. But don't feel too bad for the pigs, after they drowned, I'm sure they all went on to... hog heaven.

Mark 5:14 So those who fed the swine fled, and they told it in the city and in the country. And they went out to see what it was that had happened.

Mark 5:15 Then they came to Jesus, and saw the one who had been demon-possessed and had the legion, sitting and clothed and in his right mind. And they were afraid.

Three things of Changed Life

“Then they came to Jesus, and saw the one who had been demon-possessed and had the legion, sitting and clothed and in his right mind.” Notice the three ways Jesus liberated and changed this man’s life...

1. The man is now “sitting” - he’s no longer thrashing and wandering in the tombs. He’s at home with Jesus.
2. He’s now “clothed” - Luke says he’d been naked. His nakedness had revealed a lack of shame. He was oblivious to his sin. The fact he’s now clothed indicates that a sense of right and wrong has returned to him.
3. And he’s “in his right mind” - all the symptoms we associate with mental illness: paranoia, self-mutilation, delusions, manic episodes, depressions, violence - had all vanished, replaced with God’s amazing peace.

Mark 5:16 And those who saw it told them how it happened to him who had been demon-possessed, and about the swine.

Mark 5:17 Then they began to plead with Him to depart from their region.

Throw Human in Cave – Upset Pigs in Sea

How’s that for these people of this area is they’ll take a human and throw him in a cave and chain him and have no care about it. We get up in arms over someone killing their precious pigs, their livelihood. What a shame.

Jesus doesn’t Stay Not Wanted

Jesus doesn’t stay where He’s not wanted. Wow to a nation, a home, a business where Jesus is not welcomes, asked to leave, for He will leave.

Mark 5:18 And when He got into the boat, he who had been demon-possessed begged Him that he might be with Him.

Mark 5:19 However, Jesus did not permit him, but said to him, “Go home to your friends, and tell them what great things the Lord has done for you, and how He has had compassion on you.”

Mark 5:20 And he departed and began to proclaim in Decapolis all that Jesus had done for him; and all marveled.

First Evangelist

I've tried to line up the math. I can't decisively say it, but the first evangelist was not Philip as we so often say. The first evangelist sent out by Jesus or the first evangelist that went out from the presence of Jesus is either the woman at the well, who lived that life that we read, or this man here in Mark Chapter 5, with all of his issues of life. And I'm just amazed how reflective that is, he who has forgiven much, loves much. And when you know how much God loves you and how much you've been forgiven, you just can't help but radiate that love and desire to let people know there's a God in Heaven who knows you, and there's a God in Heaven who will set you free, and there's a God in Heaven who will give you new life, and there's a God in Heaven that you will spend eternity with in the presence of His love and glory.

Go Home – Where People Knew You

Jesus says, "Go back to your home. You come with me. Everybody that meets you, they'll think you've been saved your whole life. ", but the people who know you, they will recognize the miracle.

First Place to Shine – in the home

And this is applicable to us. “The first place to shine your light is among those who shared your darkness.”

The folks who saw your pain are the ones most impressed with your healing. Imagine, this man walking down Main

Street in Gadara - an amazing testimony. Sometimes following Jesus begins with going home.

Matthew 5:16 (NKJV) ¹⁶ Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works and glorify your Father in heaven.

Clothed & in Right Mind – Jesus Can do that for Anybody

So the man is sitting. He's clothed and he's in his right mind. This is what Jesus Christ can do to anybody. He can do this for anyone. All that the world gives up, all that the world says impossible, all that the world says it's over. But there's a God who can do this. He can change a life. He's changed many lives in this room that can testify. I was once living amongst the dead. Then I met the Lord. And he broke the chains, he set me free.

And never lose the simplicity such as this man went through all 10 cities telling people what great things the Lord has done for him. You don't have to get yourself worked up on memorizing every scripture and having every I dotted, T crossed. You get opportunity just tell people what great things God has done. That will be an amazing testimony and witness right there in itself. And then continue on learning and growing in the faith and you'll be able to declare even greater all and who this God is that sets men free.

Key Takeaways Today

There will be two key takeaways from our message today,

- and first is I want to plead with you, youth. Guard yourself from the wiles, ways, deceit of the enemy, for they are real. And he is real, and he has a real passion to destroy you.
- And secondly, to all of us, Jesus has the power to speak to this devil, your foe, and say, "Be muzzled." And Jesus, we see, He comes to this place to attack Satan's strong hold, and I believe, based on this passage and the scriptures, Satan does have strong holds, and I think many of you are agreeing with me. He's got a strong hold right now on my child, and he's got a strong hold on this region here around the capital or Baltimore. He has a strong hold and he's pushing an onslaught to guard his strong hold.

There is a Prayer Team Available to Pray with and for You

Prayer – Boldly Ask Your God

The Word of God is Living and Powerful, and is ready, and will do a mighty work in our lives.

Hebrews 4:12 (NKJV) ¹² For the word of God is living and powerful, and sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing even to the division of soul and spirit, and of joints and marrow, and is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart.

In Every Study

- Who Is God? (How Great is He?)
- What Does He Think of Me? (How Wonderful Are His Thoughts Towards Me?)
- What Does He Want Me to Do?
- What Can I Boldly Request of Him?
- What Do I Need to Be on Guard of When I Leave Here Today?

Boldly come to the throne of grace, ask God to reveal Himself in a mighty way to you, and to do I might work in you, and through you.

Hebrews 4:16 (NKJV) ¹⁶ Let us therefore come boldly to the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy and find grace to help in time of need.

End of Study

Mark 5:21-43

Outline Mark 5:

- A Demon-Possessed Man in Gadarenes is Healed (5:1-20)
- A Girl Restored to Life and a Woman Ill for Twelves Years Healed (5:21-43)

Last Study/Recap

We have made it as far as Mark chapter 5, verse 20. Jesus showing His has power over the spiritual realm, very specifically over the demonic realm as He cast the demons out of the man there in Gadares, sent them into 2,000 swine's, who then plunged themselves into the Sea of Galilee and drowned.

What We Will Take away from this Study

In our study today, Jesus will show us that He has the power of sickness, and death. But let's be honest, we are reading a book that is 2,000 years old, we live in the day of modern science, and modern facts, modern experiences, and to something I will call "modern-faith", as man can debate that was then, this is now, or name-it, and claim-it (that's if you have enough faith). All the while missing, what is right before us..... God, in our midst right now, wanting to share His heart with us. Showing us who He is (His greatness), and what He thinks of us (as the people in this story, are people, just like you and me who God has come for), we will learn in sickness and death what He wants us to do, and through it all what we can boldly request of Him, and as always what we need to be on-guard about, whether that be the devil, the world, or our flesh, for we are never more sensitive, confused, struggling than when we are faced with sickness and death.

Prayer – Boldly Ask Your God

The Word of God is Living and Powerful, and is ready, and will do a mighty work in our lives.

Hebrews 4:12 (NKJV) ¹² For the word of God is living and powerful, and sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing even to the division of soul and spirit, and of joints and marrow, and is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart.

In Every Study

- Who Is God? (How Great is He?)
- What Does He Think of Me? (How Wonderful Are His Thoughts Towards Me?)
- What Does He Want Me to Do?
- What Can I Boldly Request of Him?
- What Do I Need to Be on Guard of When I Leave Here Today?

Boldly come to the throne of grace, ask God to reveal Himself in a mighty way to you, and to do I might work in you, and through you.

Hebrews 4:16 (NKJV) ¹⁶ Let us therefore come boldly to the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy and find grace to help in time of need.

There is a Prayer Team Available to Pray with and for You

A Girl Restored to Life and a Woman Ill for Twelves Years Healed (5:21-43)

Mark 5:21 Now when Jesus had crossed over again by boat to the other side, a great multitude gathered to Him; and He was by the sea.

Faith – A Continual Process / They Got Faith to Get Back in the Boat

Faith is something that we continually grow in. And I can say there's things that I had no faith, total fear 27 years ago that today I don't even think of them. They don't even cross my mind. And if they do, I go, "God's got this." Not just that I've seen it for 27 years of this faithfulness, but I watched him put that to rest 25 years ago or 20 years ago because faith continually grows. And God will put us in a place to continually grow. See, these guys, there was no fear when they're on the shore, not at all. But to be out in the midst of the storm, they were put in a place of fear or faith. And we watched them go to fear, but here we watched them go to faith. Because see, they're getting back in the boat. No one is saying, "Let's walk. Let's go around. Be a good day to have a nice time of fellowship of walking along the shore." No, their faith puts them back in the boat. And every time they get back in the boat, they're exercising faith. And so God does in our life, he'll continually put us in places that we get to exercise faith or

fear. But as we exercise faith, we continually to grow. And I would say there came a time where these guys, they don't even think about the possibility of going under. They've come to the solid conclusion, "Jesus said we're going over, not under. And therefore, we're going over. Remember?" And they come to what God's done in the past, and then the multiple times God's done it again, that we go over, "Guys, we're not going under because Jesus is in the boat."

Mark 4:35 (NKJV) ³⁵ *On the same day, when evening had come, He said to them, "Let us cross over to the other side."*

Mark 4:37–38 (NKJV) ³⁷ *And a great windstorm arose, and the waves beat into the boat, so that it was already filling.* ³⁸ *But He was in the stern, asleep on a pillow. And they awoke Him and said to Him, "Teacher, do You not care that we are perishing?"*

What God Done in Past – Demonstration of Future

Verse 21, what God has done in the past is a demonstration of the future. And I ask you what great thing has God done? And what I ask you, has he ever left you or forsaken you? And here they are, God saying, "Boys, let's cross over." And they know, we'll cross over, we've learned that lesson. But I'll be honest, even I still have a remembrance of storms. And every new storm I'll still have this thought in my mind, could a new storm be brewing? But what we see is faith is a continual process. And we continually grow in it. Therefore, it's something we must continually invest in, and faith comes by hearing, hearing by the word of God. And then sitting with his word and sitting in the silence and letting him soak that promise, remind us of the past, and convince us of his power.

Mark 5:22 And behold, one of the rulers of the synagogue came, Jairus by name. And when he saw Him, he fell at His feet

Mark 5:23 and begged Him earnestly, saying, "My little daughter lies at the point of death. Come and lay Your hands on her, that she may be healed, and she will live."

Jairus – Bowing to Jesus Will Cost Him Everything

Verse 22, here Jairus, he literally is throwing it all away. He will be fired, he will be broke, he will be slandered and destroyed in character. And by bowing down at the feet of Jesus, he is risking it all. And not only that, he is willing to risk it all.

Remember Synagogue in Capernaum

Back in Capernaum, remember the man with the withered hand, this would be the same synagogue and they've come this synagogue rulers to the agreement, the Jesus must die and here comes one of their rulers. He who oversaw the synagogue with a group of other rulers who oversaw the synagogue. See how the word is plural. There are all in agreement. Jesus is a threat and Jesus must die.

Mark 2:1 (NKJV) ¹ *And again He entered Capernaum after some days, and it was heard that He was in the house.*

Mark 2:28–3:2 (NKJV) ²⁸ *Therefore the Son of Man is also Lord of the Sabbath."* ¹ *And He entered the synagogue again, and a man was there who had a withered hand.* ² *So they watched Him closely, whether He would heal him on the Sabbath, so that they might accuse Him.*

Mark 3:6 (NKJV) ⁶ *Then the Pharisees went out and immediately plotted with the Herodians against Him, how they might destroy Him.*

Pain & Sorrow Will Change Your Theology / Pain Made me More Reliant on God

Pain and sorry changes our theology, for when it's health and wealth, God is good. Pain and sorry will prove out if we truly believe God is good, all the time, and all the time, God is good, even in sorrow. And I am by no means saying that the pain and sorrow are corrective. Sometimes, yes, the pain and sorry are instructive. They show us the heart of God, and they'll show us our heart too.

I have seen in my life pain and sorrow makes me stronger, more resilient, but not in myself, not of resilience, but of reliance because it brings me to a place that I see, Lord, I need you, every hour I need you. All these things are beyond me. If I don't have you, I'll never get through.

I read an interesting article in the Voice of the Martyrs. This one man speaks how he had to go to prison to get his theology corrected, because it revealed to him truly how much he loved his enemies and how much he didn't.

Jairus – What's Title Ruler Matter / When Daughter is Dying

Think of Jairus, what's my position and respect matter now, my daughter is dying. Thinking of this father, how he would be in this place, these aren't the dreams I had for my daughter (his only child according to Luke 8, and she was 12 years old). This is not what I thought life would turn. My dreams are all disappearing, and I have no hope. As the dreams fade with every moment that her heart beat weakens. And where's a dad to go? He's the ruler of the synagogue. He's the one who's supposed to have the close connection to God. But he finds himself with nowhere to go.

Luke 8:42 (NKJV) ⁴² for he had an only daughter about twelve years of age, and she was dying. But as He went, the multitudes thronged Him.

Parents Cherish / It's All About the People

Parents, can I say cherish it, cherish our children. Life can change so quickly. I wonder if this leader, Jairus, would have said, "If only I knew, if only I knew. Was all this other stuff worth it? Was it just striving to make it to this position and all the things that came with it?" Teaching like this is always a good time for myself, and a good time to speak. Are we cherishing life, people? It's true it's all about people, loving people.

- I ask myself, I ask you, who have you loved this week?
- Who will you love?
- And how will you do that?
- What does that look like and how will they know it?

It's all about people. It's easy to go so fast, 100 miles an hour, that we don't even see people. All we see is the end game, getting this done or moving on to this next thing. Oh Lord, help us all to just cherish what we have, life and love, family and friends and fellowship. It's all about the people. And Jesus displays that his whole life, his whole ministry. It was always about people.

Mark 5:24 So Jesus went with him, and a great multitude followed Him and thronged Him.

They Heading to Jairus House - Time is of Essence

They are now on the move towards Jairus house, and time is of the essence, his little girl is dying.

Mark 5:25 Now a certain woman had a flow of blood for twelve years,

Mark 5:26 and had suffered many things from many physicians. She had spent all that she had and was no better, but rather grew worse.

Look at Comparison

Look at the comparison.

- Jairus, he's ready to go for broke. The woman, she is broke.
- Jairus, what he has can't save his daughter. The woman, what she spent couldn't save her.

Per Levitical Law

Per Levitical law (Leviticus 15:19-30), No part of her life was left unaffected. Based on Leviticus 15, it would seem this is along the lines of menstrual flow, a female specific issue.

- Sexually - she could not touch her husband. After 12 years, if she was married, he would have filed for divorce. If she was single, she lived in the glass house that saw everyone else have love and family, but she could only watch from a distance, and never invite into her home.
- Maternally - she could not bear children. If she had children, she would have to watch them grow-up from a distance.
- Domestically - anything she would touch was considered unclean. She couldn't even be a housewife.
- Spiritually - she was not allowed to enter into the temple

The Life is on The Blood

Why the separation because of the flow of blood? It's because the scripture says the life is in the blood. So God, as a foreshadowing, continually displaying the picture that blood is not common, for the life is in the blood, and without the shedding of blood, there is no forgiveness of sin, all pointing forward to the precious blood of the

Lamb, Jesus Christ. And oh precious is the flow that makes us white as snow. No other fount we know, nothing but the blood of Jesus.

[Leviticus 17:11 \(NKJV\)](#) ¹¹ For the life of the flesh *is* in the blood, and I have given it to you upon the altar to make atonement for your souls; for it *is* the blood *that* makes atonement for the soul.'

[John 1:29 \(NKJV\)](#) ²⁹ The next day John saw Jesus coming toward him, and said, "Behold! The Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world!

Imagine – Physical Aspects

And you have to think of what it is like to have a flow of blood for 12 years. Your iron levels are down, you'd be continually fatigued, you'd be weak, you would be weight loss, you would not sleep well, you would not eat well, everything would be affected by this flow of blood.

Humiliation of Doctors Visit

And here she is, 12 years of it. And every doctor's visit, imagine. I don't wanna talk about this, this is a sensitive topic, but she would make herself vulnerable. What a heartbreak.

What she may have suffered will appear from the prescription for the medical treatment of such a complaint given in the Talmud. "Take of the gum of Alexandria the weight of a zuzee (a fractional silver coin); of alum the same; of crocus the same. Let them be bruised together, and given in wine to the woman that has an issue of blood. If this does not benefit, take of Persian onions three logs (pints); boil them in wine, and give her to drink, and say, 'Arise from thy flux.' If this does not cure her, set her in a place where two ways meet, and let her hold a cup of wine in her right hand, and let some one come behind and frighten her, and say, 'Arise from thy flux.' But if that do no good, take a handful of cummin (a kind of fennel), a handful of crocus, and a handful of fenugreek (another kind of fennel). Let these be boiled in wine and give them her to drink, and say, 'Arise from thy flux!' " If these do no good, other doses, over ten in number, are prescribed, among them this: "Let them dig seven ditches, in which let them burn some cuttings of vines, not yet four years old. Let her take in her hand a cup of wine, and let them lead her away from this ditch, and make her sit down over that. And let them remove her from that, and make her sit down over another, saying to her at each remove, 'Arise from thy flux!' " (Quoted from Lightfoot by Geikie, "Life and Words of Christ").

[Vincent, M. R. \(1887\). Word studies in the New Testament \(Vol. 1, p. 189\). New York: Charles Scribner's Sons.](#)

In another place, the Talmud recommended that the afflicted woman carry a barley corn which had been taken from the droppings of a white she donkey

[Hughes, R. K. \(1989\). Mark: Jesus, servant and savior \(Vol. 1, p. 126\). Westchester, IL: Crossway Books.](#)

If you have ever been desperate, and you tried and applied things that you knew were foolish, but in desperation you were willing to try, and then when they failed, you now feel twice as foolish, and twice as hopeless.

Stigma of Day – You are in Sin / God has Abandoned You

The stigma of the day, was that you could only find yourself in such a place as this, because you were in sin, and God is punishing you; and..... God has abandoned you.

Maybe You Are this Woman Today / Let Us Pray right Now

Oh, the hurt and pain of this woman. And what about you here today? You're this woman. You have such a health issue as this. I know you're hurting, not just physically, but emotionally, maybe even spiritually wondering where is God. First, I pray right now for the physical. Let's have a moment of prayer for your physical need. And then I invite you to come after service to be prayed over by the elders, anointed with oil. And we're gonna take you to the Lord as a family and asked that you be touched.

Sickness entered into the world, along with death, at the fall there in the garden, when sin entered in. And if you're in a storm, there is a shore. Maybe there's a temporary healing here on Earth, a shore, but there will always be a complete and total healing on heaven's shore, where the Lord promises us through his word, where there will be no more pain and no more sorrow, the former things have all passed away, because Jesus, at the cross, said it is done.

And wherever you are in this place of pain, spiritually, I remind you of Mark 4, that God cares. And emotionally, I know you hurt, and God know, and he speaks to you, "Come to me, rest in me, hear my heart beat for you."

But No Only This Woman Hurts – All Here Loved Ones Too

And I speak to you word that as you hurt, others are hurting because you hurt. And what I would ask is

- speak to them, give them opportunity to share their heart with you, ask them how are you in all of this?
- Pray for them in your pain, knowing that they have pain. Literally, lay hands on them and pray for God to help them through this hard time for them.
- And teach them and share with them what you are learning and gleaning from the heart of God in this time and season. Pass it on to them.

And I know these things and I say would make yourself vulnerable, and some will wound you because they don't know what to say. But your pain, your heart will change others like this dad. Everything has come into the proper perspective now, and what truly matters are the people and not the positions. And that his religion can't change anything, he needs the relationship with the one true God.

And so I loop back to where I began, who will you love this week? And how will you love them and how will they know that you love them?

Mark 5:27 When she heard about Jesus, she came behind Him in the crowd and touched His garment.

Mark 5:28 For she said, "If only I may touch His clothes, I shall be made well."

Physically Exhausted – Emotionally Outcast

She was physically exhausted, and emotionally outcasted. - She was alone, have come to the need of all her resources.

Maybe Jesus Will be the Answer

And imagine this issue of blood, a life of separation from her family and fellowship. But every doctor represented hope. Every doctor was maybe this will be the cure. Maybe this will be the answer. And every time for 12 years it became failure and hopelessness and oh, the depths of hopelessness. She has reached the end of her depths of hopelessness, but now she hears Jesus is coming through. I've heard that he, through one touch, could heal me.

Mark 5:29 Immediately the fountain of her blood was dried up, and she felt in her body that she was healed of the affliction.

Mark 5:30 And Jesus, immediately knowing in Himself that power had gone out of Him, turned around in the crowd and said, "Who touched My clothes?"

Para – En - Heppi

Verse 30, here we see the three again, the Spirit with, the Spirit was in, and the Spirit upon. And here we see Jesus, he's touched, and the power leaves him. That's the (heppi) upon. It's a supply that we give out. There is the place where God comes alongside of us and speaks to us our need for a savior because our sin separates us from the holy God. We receive the savior when we see the need and then God doesn't just say, "Good to go," God comes and takes up residence, a down payment we're told in Ephesians. His promise is guarantee that he has sealed us until the day of redemption. But as we walk this world we have a calling. And that calling is to be poured out for people. It's about people. It's always about the people, it's not about ourselves. And he gives us a supply, God's very own supply, that we pour out to people. And Jesus was touched and his supply went out, and he will need to be refilled. In Acts 1 we see Peter baptized, filled with the Spirit, and then in Acts 4 we see him baptized again. So there is a place, it's a continual filling.

And Ephesians tell us, "Be ye filled with the Holy Spirit." And it's present imperative, it's a continual filling because there's a continual need, because there's a continual giving, and therefore there's a continual draining, and therefore there's a need for a continual resupplying. And if it's been a while since you've got alone with God, call to him, ask him, Lord, I need a fresh filling so I can pour myself out. The great preacher, the prince of preachers,

Charles Spurgeon, they asked him why he continually asked for a fresh filling of the Holy Spirit. And it's said because he leaks. I like that. But what he's leaking out is because he was giving out.

Ephesians 5:18 (NKJV) ¹⁸ And do not be drunk with wine, in which is dissipation; but be filled with the Spirit,

Acts 2:4 (NKJV) ⁴ And they were all filled with the Holy Spirit and began to speak with other tongues, as the Spirit gave them utterance.

Acts 4:31 (NKJV) ³¹ And when they had prayed, the place where they were assembled together was shaken; and they were all filled with the Holy Spirit, and they spoke the word of God with boldness.

Mark 5:31 But His disciples said to Him, "You see the multitude thronging You, and You say, 'Who touched Me?' "

Mark 5:32 And He looked around to see her who had done this thing.

Mark 5:33 But the woman, fearing and trembling, knowing what had happened to her, came and fell down before Him and told Him the whole truth.

Mark 5:34 And He said to her, "Daughter, your faith has made you well. Go in peace, and be healed of your affliction."

If Only I Can Touch Him

There are those who say what this woman is doing is based on superstition of the day, that she thought there was magic in His garment, or the significance of the hem/tassels of a Jewish male's garment (Numbers 15:38-40), but I don't think so, because Jesus doesn't and never would confirm superstition or errancy of His Word. This woman, by some means of hearing about Jesus and His miraculous healing power that could only come from a connection to God, knew she only needed to touch Him to touch His power. Not sitting on Ostrich eggs, nor carry corn from the droppings of a donkey, but simply getting to Jesus was to touch His power. And I would say, it is true, for when we get to Jesus, into His presence, and by getting to Jesus was to touch His power.

Jesus Secures Her Healing with His Word

Verse 34, the touch healed her. But then Jesus's word secured her. She could leave there thinking, "I was healed, but is it one and done? Could this return to me? Could it come back and I'd be in the same place again?" But Jesus secures her with his word, "You are healed."

Jesus Will Stop – Reach A heart in Need

Jesus is gonna stop for her. He's gonna do more than a touch and healing. And, He's gonna reach into her heart.

12 Years of Heartbreak / Jesus Always Looking for the Most in Need

And just heartbreaking the thought of what this poor woman went through for 12 years, every day and all that it meant and came with it. Jesus has always moved with compassion. When Jesus walks into a room, he's always looking for the person in the greatest need. And here this sea of people thronging him, when this woman makes it to him and touches, he could have easily went on of, "She's healed, now I'm on my way to the next miracle so everyone can see my power." But Jesus stops in the midst of a sea of people, and he starts to minister to this woman, who for 12 years has been living in such a heartbreaking condition. Because that's the heart of our savior, he's always looking for the person in the greatest need. And if you're in the greatest need today, he's looking for you. He wants to touch you, he wants you to touch him. He wants you to reach out to him. And he wants to speak to you, to your heart. He wants to speak to you his heart. And look at this exchange and how beautiful it is.

She will Never be the Same - Heard Words "Daughter"

And she will go away healed, but she'll never go away the same because she heard the words "Daughter." After 12 years of separation and isolation, she hears the word "daughter" from the heart of God Himself. When anyone truly hears the words and understands what that word means, "son," "daughter," from God himself, the heart of God, no person will ever be the same. When I knew that I was his son, accepted in the beloved, my life changed and I never looked back. Cause where else would I go, knowing that this is what God thinks of me, and this is what God has made me, a son forever?

Daughter to Daughter Comparison (Jairus & Jesus)

So Jairus, he had a daughter that he loved and moved his heart, and we can see him willing to throw everything out, lose it all and give it all, for his daughter that he loved. And this word is woven here for us. Jesus ties us together for us to display, this is my daughter who I'm willing to give it all away and do all that I have because I love her. This is my daughter that moves my heart, who's precious in my sight. There's a purpose, there's a reason that these stories are woven together, so that we can look at an earthly father and relate to his heart for his daughter and so we can reflect and see God's heart for his sons and daughters and equally so, and even greater than some, as he'll give his whole life for his sons and daughters who will come to receive him. That's you and that's me, and that's the heart that he has for us.

Leo Tolstoy

The Russian writer Leo Tolstoy tells of the time he was walking down the street and passed a begger. He reached into his pocket, but had nothing to give. He turned to the man and said, 'I'm sorry brother, but I have nothing to give.' The beggar brightened and said, "You have given me more than I asked for - you have called me brother. To the loved, a word of affection is so often a morsel, but to the loved-starved, a word of affection can be a feast. Jesus gave this woman a banquet.

NOT Cessation

And may I make the point to determination in accordance with the scriptures, the gifts, all the gifts of God are still applicable for today. Some would say what they call "cessations," that the gifts have ceased, that God only for a time used tongues and miracles to prove himself, and this is true, but the missing part is they've never ceased. They continue on. And miracles still happen. God still heals. God still does mighty works, raising of the dead, even at that. But because of fear and because of the worry that things can get out of control, people wanna shy away from that and they'd rather just shut it down rather than control in the manner of in accordance with the scriptures, that things be done decently and in order. God still heals. God still does miracles. And if not, I'd be without hope, and I've seen miracles in my life and I can attest to them, and I think you have too, and may God be the glory.

It should be noted, that those who say "cessation", they apply that those who speak in tongues are simply in the flesh. Those who claim miracles performed are in the flesh. The problem with that is that study revival history over the past 2,000 years, and miracles were part of those revivals. Read the Welsh Revival, the Azusa Street Revival, and you read of miracles occurring. So, the problem is if those are the works of the flesh, then they were works of Satan, and the question would be, why would Satan ever want to do something that glorified God, and brought people to Jesus for repentance of sin and eternal salvation? The argument is illogical. And not only illogical, but exactly what Jesus said, that Satan can't be divided against himself. And, the argument follows exactly what the religious leaders said of Jesus, that He is full of the Devil, He does these things because He is the Devil. So, every revival? Was it of Jesus or the Devil?

Mark 3:22-27 (NKJV) ²² And the scribes who came down from Jerusalem said, "He has Beelzebub," and, "By the ruler of the demons He casts out demons." ²³ So He called them to Himself and said to them in parables: "How can Satan cast out Satan? ²⁴ If a kingdom is divided against itself, that kingdom cannot stand. ²⁵ And if a house is divided against itself, that house cannot stand. ²⁶ And if Satan has risen up against himself, and is divided, he cannot stand, but has an end. ²⁷ No one can enter a strong man's house and plunder his goods, unless he first binds the strong man. And then he will plunder his house.

You see, delivering me, you, man from sin unto salvation, is still a miracle, God still does miracles before our eyes today. To heal a broken marriage, to return a wayward child, to break the chains of addiction, all take supernatural working of God. God still does miracles outwardly, including healings and yes even the raising of the dead.

Some Want Church – Some Want God

Some people want church, some want God. They want church their way on their terms in their comfort, and they miss God. Others, they want God, their lives are desperate enough to go outside their comfort zone, to go beyond church as a thing they do, but their heart is to get to God, for to get to God is to touch His power, to hear His heart, to have an experience with God that is real, that is intimate, that is abundant, and overflowing.

- There are no Holy Spirit Churches, only Jesus Churches, because the work of the Holy Spirit is to glorify Jesus Christ. A church that says we come to get the Holy Spirit is in error, for it is not how much of the Holy Spirit we get, but how much the Holy Spirit gets us. For the Holy Spirit lifts up Christ, glorifies Christ before us, and when we see Him, when we come into His presence, the very presence of God, everything changes, nothing can remain the same. We reflect the image of God Himself. Things that are not of God, must flee from the presence of God. But the things of God manifest themselves in us.

John 16:13–14 (NKJV) ¹³ However, when He, the Spirit of truth, has come, He will guide you into all truth; for He will not speak on His own authority, but whatever He hears He will speak; and He will tell you things to come. ¹⁴ He will glorify Me, for He will take of what is Mine and declare it to you.

Mark 5:35 While He was still speaking, some came from the ruler of the synagogue's house who said, "Your daughter is dead. Why trouble the Teacher any further?"

Words of Enemy – God Can't Help you – Give up

The words of the enemy, Jesus can't help you, don't bother, give it up.

Consider Jairus – a 12 Year Long Story (How Long did that Take)

Now, understand and put yourself in the story. Jairus feels Jesus can save his daughter. He's made contact with Jesus, they're on the way to Jairus's house. Every second counts, every moment matters. And then this woman presses in, touches Jesus, and all flow towards Jairus's house is stopped. And then after this woman is healed, she tells her whole story to Jesus. And 12 years of pain and suffering, I don't think her story was but a moment. I believe it would have been lengthy because she was a woman, I mean because it was 12 years long. And here Jairus is listening to the woman's story all the while knowing that his daughter is dying. Imagine what this feels like to Jairus, this woman has interrupted his hope of his daughter being made well.

Interruptions Prepare for What Next

Interruptions prepare us for what's next. God is good all the time, and all the time, God is good.

Jesus Either No Compassion – or In Control

Jesus knows there's a dying daughter. And we can look and we can say that Jesus is either has no compassion or Jesus is in control. We put so much into our time domain because every day is based on a clock for us. And when we see something before us, we feel there's a time limit for it to be taken care of, for it to be solved, for it to be worked through. But what we see here is not for Jesus. He is not constrained by anything in our time domain. And there's a release for us that we can rest in, that even as I set my time, if it should come to pass, it doesn't mean that it's missed because our God will show up and do what he will do when he determines it is the best time and the right time. He's never been late. Oftentimes I see he's never been early. But I know for a fact he's never been late.

Interruptions Prepare for What Next

Interruptions prepare us for what's next. God is good all the time, and all the time, God is good.

Mark 5:36 As soon as Jesus heard the word that was spoken, He said to the ruler of the synagogue, "Do not be afraid; only believe."

Present Imperative

Do not be afraid, only believe.

- Jesus heard. The verb is *parakouō* (παρακουω), "to hear alongside," thus, "to overhear."
- Be not afraid. We have here a present imperative in a prohibition which forbids the continuance of an action already going on. The ruler was fearing. Jesus said, "Stop fearing."
- Only believe. The present imperative speaks of continuous action. "Be believing." The command was for a continued, sustained faith. He was to continue believing, even in the presence of death.

**Wuest, K. S. (1997). Wuest's word studies from the Greek New Testament: for the English reader (Vol. 1, pp. 114–115). Grand Rapids: Eerdmans.*

Mark 5:37 And He permitted no one to follow Him except Peter, James, and John the brother of James.

2-3 Witnesses

We often see these three, Peter, James, and John, getting what we call the inner circle, but it's more than that. What Jesus has said was, "Let nothing be established without two or three witnesses." All these things, when he brings these two or three, is to establish the witness of, "This is true. This is what I saw. This is what happened." That's Deuteronomy 19:15.

Deuteronomy 19:15 (NKJV) ¹⁵ "One witness shall not rise against a man concerning any iniquity or any sin that he commits; by the mouth of two or three witnesses the matter shall be established.

Mark 5:38 Then He came to the house of the ruler of the synagogue, and saw a tumult and those who wept and wailed loudly.

Mark 5:39 When He came in, He said to them, "Why make this commotion and weep? The child is not dead, but sleeping."

Mark 5:40 And they ridiculed Him. But when He had put them all outside, He took the father and the mother of the child, and those who were with Him, and entered where the child was lying.

Wealthy – Many Wailers

The ruler of the synagogue was obviously wealthy. He had hired wailers to cry for his daughters death. In the Oriental culture, it was customary that at the death of a loved one they would hire people to wail and cry to show how much they missed the loved one. The more wailers, the more money a person had.

Sleep – Shall be Awaken

Sleeping is what it says, meaning there's going to be an awakening. I liked that first Corinthians 15

1 Corinthians 15:51–57 (NKJV) ⁵¹ Behold, I tell you a mystery: We shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed—⁵² in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trumpet. For the trumpet will sound, and the dead will be raised incorruptible, and we shall be changed. ⁵³ For this corruptible must put on incorruption, and this mortal must put on immortality. ⁵⁴ So when this corruptible has put on incorruption, and this mortal has put on immortality, then shall be brought to pass the saying that is written: "Death is swallowed up in victory." ⁵⁵ "O Death, where is your sting? O Hades, where is your victory?" ⁵⁶ The sting of death is sin, and the strength of sin is the law. ⁵⁷ But thanks be to God, who gives us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ.

Throws Out – With Force

Jesus throws them out and the word lends to a use of a physical force

Throw Out the Mockers

In verse 40, Jesus throws out the mockers. It's as simple as when he ceased the storm where he said, "Be muzzled, be quiet." And there's a place for us to throw out the mockers. The mockers, they come, they quench the presence of God, they quench the word of God, they quench the spirit of God. They will drown out the move of God in your life. Their voice sets the mood for others, including yourself. We must tell the mockers, we must cast them out, muzzle them so they don't take us into their depths, but we rise to the heights that God would have for us.

Put the mockers out, and Christians, surround yourself with men and women of faith, men and women who can lift you up to the place where Jesus is. Put the mockers out so they don't take you down where the mourners are and the wailers are and where nothing is ever changed, only despair.

Mark 5:41 Then He took the child by the hand, and said to her, "Talitha, cumi," which is translated, "Little girl, I say to you, arise."

Mark 5:42 Immediately the girl arose and walked, for she was twelve years of age. And they were overcome with great amazement.

Mark 5:43 But He commanded them strictly that no one should know it, and said that something should be given her to eat.

Cross Before a King

Verse 43, Jesus says, "Don't tell." He says, "Don't make me king today. I gotta cross before me. That's where I need to go first. Today's not the day to be made king."

Supernatural works in the Midst of the Natural

Then Jesus says here, he gives immediately from the supernatural to the natural. Hey, this girl needs food. The supernatural works in the midst of the natural.

Not everyone is Healed / But on Heavens Shore we Will

And not everyone is healed. Billy Graham's daughter, Annie Graham Lutz, she's been diagnosed with breast cancer. And she said after much prayer, there still came a place, and the doctor said she's gonna need chemotherapy and the likes. She said it's not the answer I had hoped for, but she moves forward with it. Jesus is not teaching a prosperity doctrine with these miracles. He is showing and confirming he is doing what only God can do. And then he did what only God can do so that all would see it was God who went to the cross for the sin of mankind. That is a predominant purpose of these miracles.

And if Jesus didn't go to the cross for sin, sin would never be healed. And the sin that came into the world would kill, and it would kill forever, the fall of the sin by the first Adam.

Jesus proves he is God. And that for God so loved the world that he gave his only begotten son, that whoever should believe in him shall not perish but have ever lasting life.

Isaiah 53 says, "By his stripes, we are healed." And there's a healing that can only come through Jesus Christ, and that may be on heaven's shores, but sometimes it is right here on Earth's shores. We just have to trust God, let his will be done.

Isaiah 53:5-6 (NKJV) ⁵ But He was wounded for our transgressions, He was bruised for our iniquities; The chastisement for our peace was upon Him, And by His stripes we are healed. ⁶ All we like sheep have gone astray; We have turned, every one, to his own way; And the LORD has laid on Him the iniquity of us all.

Speaks in Aramaic

So we have a very rare occurrence in the scriptures when Jesus speaks, and a word is translated for us what it means. The words (Talitha cumi) are the language Aramaic. Many scholars say that it is because Aramaic was the common language that was spoken in Judea at that time, and not Hebrew which was the language among the Nation of Israel. I just wonder why then the title over Jesus at the cross was written in (Hebrew, Greek, and Latin), and not Aramaic if Aramaic was so common.

John 19:19-20 (NKJV) ¹⁹ Now Pilate wrote a title and put it on the cross. And the writing was: JESUS OF NAZARETH, THE KING OF THE JEWS ²⁰ Then many of the Jews read this title, for the place where Jesus was crucified was near the city; and it was written in Hebrew, Greek, and Latin.

And as Jesus speaks, how does all that work? This girl is dead, her soul has departed, to which I would say then she is in Abraham's Bosom where all the others who died would go until the price of sin was paid by Jesus on the cross. How Jesus speaking to her, somehow reached her, pulled her soul back into her body

Luke 16:22-23 (NKJV) ²² So it was that the beggar died, and was carried by the angels to Abraham's bosom. The rich man also died and was buried. ²³ And being in torments in Hades, he lifted up his eyes and saw Abraham afar off, and Lazarus in his bosom.

Ephesians 4:8-10 (NKJV) ⁸ Therefore He says: "When He ascended on high, He led captivity captive, And gave gifts to men." ⁹ (Now this, "He ascended"—what does it mean but that He also first descended into the lower parts of the earth? ¹⁰ He who descended is also the One who ascended far above all the heavens, that He might fill all things.)

We see this again, the Aramaic spoken, and then translated for us, when Jesus was on the cross. So if Aramaic was the common language of the day, these people didn't understand Him because they said hey he is calling for Elijah. Now, after a brutal beating of His face (buffeting), and 6 hours on the cross in the sun with no water, I could easily see how His speech could have been unrecognizable.

Matthew 27:45-49 (NKJV) ⁴⁵ Now from the sixth hour until the ninth hour there was darkness over all the land. ⁴⁶ And about the ninth hour Jesus cried out with a loud voice, saying, "Eli, Eli, lama sabachthani?" that is, "My God, My God, why have You forsaken Me?" ⁴⁷ Some of those who stood there, when they heard that, said, "This Man is calling for Elijah!" ⁴⁸ Immediately one of them ran and took a sponge, filled it with sour wine and put it on a reed, and offered it to Him to drink. ⁴⁹ The rest said, "Let Him alone; let us see if Elijah will come to save Him."

Why did Jesus talk in Aramaic, or at least clearly delineated for us as compared to all the other “words in red”.? Which I can answer. I don't know. There is no scripture that confirms why he spoke in Aramaic. I have seven possibilities of why, all of which I come to, I'd be a fool to try to present them because where the scripture is silent, I need to be silent. Now there's one thing that fits, and that is there's things about God I do not know and will not fully until I see Him face-to-face, there are some things about death I do not know, and there are some things about healing I do not know, but what I do know is where he's at in the midst of these things.

T-R-I-A-L

- T- Timing
- R – Revealing
- I – Instructing
- A – Audience
- L - Loving

When study Jesus' trail in the wilderness for 40 days, we say a picture and promise for us all in our trials. Every trial has a set time in it, and God is the time keeper, therefore His eyes are upon us. And in a trail, God reveals things, deep things, that we would never have known apart from pain and suffering. And, God is instructing us, teaching us, how to respond, and how to teach others. And there is an audience in every trail, as people are watching on, they may never open a Bible, but they are reading us; but more so than any of that, and that is we have an undivided audience with God Himself, whose eye is upon us, as not a sparrow falls to a ground, not a tear of ours will hit the ground because He catches it in His hand and stores it in a bottle (Psalm 56:8). And as we had saw, God's love upon Jesus, as He sent His ministering agents upon Jesus to continually comfort Him and strengthen Him through the trial.

Mark 1:12–14 (NKJV) ¹² Immediately the Spirit drove Him into the wilderness. ¹³ And He was there in the wilderness forty days, tempted by Satan, and was with the wild beasts; and the angels ministered to Him. ¹⁴ Now after John was put in prison, Jesus came to Galilee, preaching the gospel of the kingdom of God,

Psalm 56:8 (NKJV) ⁸ You number my wanderings; Put my tears into Your bottle; Are they not in Your book?

Lots I Don't Understand

There are a lot of things about death and illness that I do not understand, but what I do know, and am sure of, is the God still heals if He chooses based on His Divine Sovereignty, and that I can pray and ask Him to be glorified in the midst of it, and that in the midst of it, He is with me, loving me, cherishing me, calling us sons, calling us daughters.

There is a Prayer Team Available to Pray with and for You

Prayer – Boldly Ask Your God

The Word of God is Living and Powerful, and is ready, and will do a mighty work in our lives.

Hebrews 4:12 (NKJV) ¹² For the word of God is living and powerful, and sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing even to the division of soul and spirit, and of joints and marrow, and is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart.

In Every Study

- Who Is God? (How Great is He?)
- What Does He Think of Me? (How Wonderful Are His Thoughts Towards Me?)
- What Does He Want Me to Do?
- What Can I Boldly Request of Him?
- What Do I Need to Be on Guard of When I Leave Here Today?

Boldly come to the throne of grace, ask God to reveal Himself in a mighty way to you, and to do I might work in you, and through you.

Hebrews 4:16 (NKJV) ¹⁶ Let us therefore come boldly to the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy and find grace to help in time of need.

End of Study

Mark 6
Mark 6:1-13

Timestamp

We are somewhere around one to one and half years from the cross. Jesus' popularity is at the zenith max, everywhere He goes throngs of people gather around Him. Some are coming to see signs and wonders, some are coming to see is this the Messiah promised of God, the one who can rescue me from my sin, and give me new life. Today we pick up in chapter 6, as Jesus returns to His hometown of Nazareth after not being there since what appears to be shortly after His baptism and the beginning of His public ministry.

Outline Mark 6:

- A Prophet is Not Honored in His Hometown (6:1-6)
- Jesus Sends Out the Twelve (6:7-13)
- John the Baptist is Beheaded (6:14-29)
- Jesus Feeds the Five Thousand (6:30-44)
- Jesus Walks on Water (6:45-52)
- Many Touch Jesus and Are Made Well (6:53-56)

Today's Passage

Mark 6:1–13 (NKJV) ¹ Then He went out from there and came to His own country, and His disciples followed Him. ² And when the Sabbath had come, He began to teach in the synagogue. And many hearing Him were astonished, saying, "Where did this Man get these things? And what wisdom is this which is given to Him, that such mighty works are performed by His hands!" ³ Is this not the carpenter, the Son of Mary, and brother of James, Joses, Judas, and Simon? And are not His sisters here with us?" So they were offended at Him. ⁴ But Jesus said to them, "A prophet is not without honor except in his own country, among his own relatives, and in his own house." ⁵ Now He could do no mighty work there, except that He laid His hands on a few sick people and healed them. ⁶ And He marveled because of their unbelief. Then He went about the villages in a circuit, teaching. ⁷ And He called the twelve to Himself, and began to send them out two by two, and gave them power over unclean spirits. ⁸ He commanded them to take nothing for the journey except a staff—no bag, no bread, no copper in their money belts—⁹ but to wear sandals, and not to put on two tunics. ¹⁰ Also He said to them, "In whatever place you enter a house, stay there till you depart from that place. ¹¹ And whoever will not receive you nor hear you, when you depart from there, shake off the dust under your feet as a testimony against them. Assuredly, I say to you, it will be more tolerable for Sodom and Gomorrah in the day of judgment than for that city!" ¹² So they went out and preached that people should repent. ¹³ And they cast out many demons, and anointed with oil many who were sick, and healed them.

Why Listen

Today, the Lord will speak to us about our calling, about our witness to family and friends, and the world; and how to respond, when they respond in unbelief.

There is a Prayer Team Available to Pray with and for You

Prayer – Boldly Ask Your God

The Word of God is Living and Powerful, and is ready, and will do a mighty work in our lives.

Hebrews 4:12 (NKJV) ¹² For the word of God is living and powerful, and sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing even to the division of soul and spirit, and of joints and marrow, and is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart.

In Every Study

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Boldly come to the throne of grace, ask God to reveal Himself in a mighty way to you, and to do I might work in you, and through you.

Hebrews 4:16 (NKJV) ¹⁶ Let us therefore come boldly to the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy and find grace to help in time of need.

A Prophet is Not Honored in His Hometown (6:1-6)

Mark 6:1 Then He went out from there and came to His own country, and His disciples followed Him.

About 21 Miles

So Nazareth is about 21 miles from Capernaum, so about an 8 hour walk. The 12 are with Him, but it doesn't seem like the multitude is following, so maybe Jesus just kind of slipped out of town. Jesus is going home to see his family and friends, and 8 hours to get there, lots to think about. I know for myself when I go visit my family in Florida, their faces are before me, and I look forward to just being with them, hearing how things are, praying for opportunity to minister to them the love of God, to give words of hope in their needs, words of healing in their hurt, to share tears in their sorrow, and joy in their triumphs. I so look forward to family meals again together.

But I also am thinking through some past issues, some past discussions, some things maybe that never got resolved, or just things I know are not going well in their lives. Jesus returning to Nazareth after this year or two away, would be no different.

Luke 4:18-19

As I had said, Jesus is returning, after being away for a year maybe even two. Last time He had been there was shortly after his baptism, the beginning of His public ministry, and we know He had been preaching in the area of Galilee for some time (but not sure how long). He spoke to me some of the sweetest words in the world, words that move me every time I read them, for they are new every morning to me, that he has come to set the captives free, and I being the chief captive, oh the day He set me free. Oh how He set me free, oh how He gave me sight, oh how He healed my broken heart, and He does the same today for He is the same yesterday, today, and tomorrow.

Luke 4:13-30 (NKJV) ¹³ Now when the devil had ended every temptation, he departed from Him until an opportune time. ¹⁴ Then Jesus returned in the power of the Spirit to Galilee, and news of Him went out through all the surrounding region. ¹⁵ And He taught in their synagogues, being glorified by all. ¹⁶ So He came to Nazareth, where He had been brought up. And as His custom was, He went into the synagogue on the Sabbath day, and stood up to read. ¹⁷ And He was handed the book of the prophet Isaiah. And when He had opened the book, He found the place where it was written: ¹⁸ *"The Spirit of the LORD is upon Me, Because He has anointed Me To preach the gospel to the poor; He has sent Me to heal the brokenhearted, To proclaim liberty to the captives And recovery of sight to the blind, To set at liberty those who are oppressed; ¹⁹ To proclaim the acceptable year of the LORD."* ²⁰ Then He closed the book, and gave it back to the attendant and sat down. And the eyes of all who were in the synagogue were fixed on Him. ²¹ And He began to say to them, "Today this Scripture is fulfilled in your hearing." ²² So all bore witness to Him, and marveled at the gracious words which proceeded out of His mouth. And they said, "Is this not Joseph's son?" ²³ He said to them, "You will surely say this proverb to Me, 'Physician, heal yourself! Whatever we have heard done in Capernaum, do also here in Your country.'" ²⁴ Then He said, "Assuredly, I say to you, no prophet is accepted in his own country. ²⁵ But I tell you truly, many widows were in Israel in the days of Elijah, when the heaven was shut up three years and six months, and there was a great famine throughout all the land; ²⁶ but to none of them was Elijah sent except to Zarephath, in the region of Sidon, to a woman who was a widow. ²⁷ And many lepers were in Israel in the time of Elisha the prophet, and none of them was cleansed except Naaman the Syrian." ²⁸ So all those in the synagogue, when they heard these things, were filled with wrath, ²⁹ and rose up and thrust Him out of the city; and they led Him to the brow of the hill on which their city was built, that they might throw Him down over the cliff. ³⁰ Then passing through the midst of them, He went His way.

Hebrews 13:8 (NKJV) ⁸ *Jesus Christ is the same yesterday, today, and forever.*

They Tried to Kill Him Last Visit

But, even after those words, the people of Nazareth, His people, it was a small town, they knew Him, yet not only do they reject His words, they thrust Him out of the city, they herded him like cattle to the top of a hill, and they had plans to throw Him off the cliff to kill Him. But Jesus was in the Father's hands, and time, as are you, and nothing could touch Him and stop the works of God until it was time.

Jesus Comes Back for You

And maybe there was time where you heard Jesus speaking to your heart to come unto Him, but you rejected Him, even in a hostile way, see here today that He is a God of love, and He comes back, and He will and has come back to you and for you. You can receive Him today, reconcile to Him today. Even after trying to kill Him, He comes back to them. There is nothing that you have done that He will not forgive you of, and He comes back to you today, to say, come unto Me, receive Me, walk with Me. I love You.

My Point – We Must Go Back / God Wishes None to Perish

My point that I start with, and will end with today, is that even still with hostility and rejection, Jesus came back to minister to them again. And as Jesus models for us, we must go back to them again, even if they have rejected us, even if there is hostility towards us, we go back because God never gives up on anybody, for He wishes that all should repent, and none should perish. May we take on that attitude in our lives, our family, our coworkers, our neighbors, or friends on campus, that God wishes that none should perish but that all should seek repentance.

2 Peter 3:9 (NKJV) ⁹ *The Lord is not slack concerning His promise, as some count slackness, but is longsuffering toward us, not willing that any should perish but that all should come to repentance.*

Disciples Followed

It says that His disciples followed Him. Jesus where are we going, back to Nazareth He says. Wait, didn't I hear you say last there they tried to kill You? That is correct, as He walks past the street sign saying Nazareth 21 miles. Ok, where You go I will follow, maybe with the image of those pigs going off the cliff in Gaderes, and they thinking we are next. But they follow, for that is what a disciple does, they turn and follow wherever Jesus is going. They had a choice, and they chose to follow.

Mark 6:2 *And when the Sabbath had come, He began to teach in the synagogue. And many hearing Him were astonished, saying, "Where did this Man get these things? And what wisdom is this which is given to Him, that such mighty works are performed by His hands!"*

Mark 6:3 *Is this not the carpenter, the Son of Mary, and brother of James, Joses, Judas, and Simon? And are not His sisters here with us?" So they were offended at Him.*

Just a Carpenter – Not Qualified / Having Been with Jesus

You are just a carpenter they say, you had no formal training, you didn't sit under a great rabbi. You are not qualified, you don't have a degree. Ever hear that one as you share Christ. There is but one requirement to the ministry,..... having been with Jesus.

Acts 4:13 (NKJV) ¹³ *Now when they saw the boldness of Peter and John, and perceived that they were uneducated and untrained men, they marveled. And they realized that they had been with Jesus.*

Son of Mary - Insult

But they not only called Jesus "the carpenter" - they called Him, "the Son of Mary." This was an insult, not a compliment... In ancient Israel men were referred to by the patriarch's name - even if the father was deceased. By calling Jesus the "the Son of Mary" they were questioning His parentage. Jesus' hometown crowd remembered the scandal surrounding His birth. Mary had turned up pregnant before her marriage to Joseph, and few people believed her explanation of a miracle. By calling Jesus, "the Son of Mary," the Nazarenes were saying, "We don't know who His father was?"

Mary had Children

By the way, the Roman Catholics teach Mary remained a virgin the rest of her life. They call it her perpetual virginity. I think perpetual fertility is more like it. After Jesus was born, Mary had a minimum of six kids - four boys, and at least two girls. Matthew 1 tells us that Joseph did not know Mary (regarding physical relations) "until after" Jesus was born. Let the scriptures declare the scriptures, least people get carried away with manmade doctrine; such as Mary was sinless, pure, and thus she too has redeeming rights, and intercessory pray. Mary was an incredible woman of God, let that never be missed either, but she herself would call herself, a servant of God, and greatly blessed to be. Mary was a woman, not divinity, and she shows that it can be done, that a woman can live a life set apart from this world (for Nazareth was not a religious town), and live fully unto the Lord, at probably of her time of birthing Jesus she is around 15 years old. You youth, it can be done, I challenge you today, to draw that line today, that I will live for God today, regardless what the culture says is the way to go.

Matthew 1:24–25 (NKJV) ²⁴ *Then Joseph, being aroused from sleep, did as the angel of the Lord commanded him and took to him his wife, ²⁵ and did not know her till she had brought forth her firstborn Son. And he called His name JESUS.*

Luke 1:48 (NKJV) ⁴⁸ *For He has regarded the lowly state of His maidservant; For behold, henceforth all generations will call me blessed.*

Offended – Stumble - Scandal

Offended at Him - means to cause stumble, it is the Greek word (skandalizo), it is where we get our English word "scandal". This news, is it true or a lie, for some what they once believed they can no longer because of this "scandal". This is prophecy fulfilled: Isaiah 8:14.

Isaiah 8:14 (NKJV) ¹⁴ He will be as a sanctuary, But a stone of stumbling and a rock of offense To both the houses of Israel, As a trap and a snare to the inhabitants of Jerusalem.

Familiarity Breeds Disrespect

So often familiarity breeds disrespect. The people thought they knew Him. We can gather up the meaning of this whole account in just a few words:

Limited Views mean Limited Lives.

That is, if your view of life is so narrow and limited, so withered and shrunken as to include nothing but what you can see and feel and taste and smell and hear and reason, then your life is going to be horribly deprived and poverty-stricken.

This is how it was in Nazareth. Jesus had been in Nazareth the year or so before. They tried to kill him on that occasion, because he would not do what they wanted. Now he comes back again and teaches in the synagogue, and they are astonished. They ask the right questions:

- "Where did this man get all this?
- What is the wisdom given to him?
- What mighty works are wrought by his hands!" For reports had come to them.

But their answers to their own questions are horribly limited.

- "Who is this? Is this not the carpenter?
- Why, he made the table in our house. I remember when we used to feed him tea and sandwiches for lunch when he came to help us build the house where I live! He was just a carpenter!
- And his brothers and sisters live here -- we know the whole family!

He is more than a carpenter, He is the Great I Am, who can speak and a world comes into existence. He is more than the Son of Mary, He is the Son of God by virgin birth. He wrought these mighty works, because the power of God surges through His veins. Their Limited View, Limited their Lives.

Why, he couldn't be this powerful a man!" And they did the incredible -- **they took refuge in that final resort of all weak and small minds -- they ridiculed him.** They took offense at him, and began to discount all he had done and said: "He can't be anything, because we know him. We know his beginnings, his family, where he came from."

Nazareth was a poor town, extremely poor, and they just got poorer because of their limited view. And so too will any and all that take such a limited view of Jesus.

Mark 6:4 But Jesus said to them, "A prophet is not without honor except in his own country, among his own relatives, and in his own house."

Not Bible Proof to Not Witness / Start at Family – then Move Outward – then Return to Family

This isn't Bible proof that we shouldn't go share the gospel with our friends and family. This is the second time we have seen Jesus come to his hometown to preach. Just a few verses ago we have seen Jesus send the man from Gadarenes to go witness to his friends. I believe we should start with our family and friends, then move out to others, then come back to our family and friends. We should simply just witness to everybody God puts in our life.

Just scatter the seed and let God do what he will do with it supernaturally as we had studied back in chapter 4:

Mark 4:26–29 (NKJV) ²⁶ And He said, "The kingdom of God is as if a man should scatter seed on the ground, ²⁷ and should sleep by night and rise by day, and the seed should sprout and grow, he himself does not know how. ²⁸ For the earth yields crops by itself: first the blade, then the head, after that the full grain in the head. ²⁹ But when the grain ripens, immediately he puts in the sickle, because the harvest has come."

I need passages of scriptures to remind me, just keep scattering seed. Whether it is handing a tract to the worker at the counter, a business card to invite someone to church, or a conversation with someone that I ask them what can I pray for you about today. I need to be reminded that there is a world that is desperate, regardless how sure and satisfied they seem.

Funny – Must be the Hair

And anytime I see someone sharing their faith, I go and encourage them by saying how awesome it is that they are do what they do. But, I am very aware after all these years, what come next for some reason regarding me. For instance, I was getting a coffee on Tuesday and there a man came and left a track in the tip jar (with a tip). So I went up to him and said my name is ray and I pastor a church here, please tell me about your evangelism ministry. I just think it is awesome just scattering seeds of the Gospel, not worrying where they may fall, just trusting the Lord to do something supernaturally. But, it is funny, every time I do go up to someone to commend and encourage them, they wont accept that I am saved. They always have to preach to me. Even after I confirm the Gospel they still preach it back to me again. It must be my hair or something, I don't know. I remember years and years ago, like 25 years ago there were these guys witnessing on the street, and they would carry this big 10 foot cross and hand out tracts and share the gospel. So I am a new believer and all fired up about anything Jesus, and I come over to them saying this is awesome, how is it going, and the guy immediately starts to preach to me. I say yes I am saved, I gave my life to the Lord, etc, et, and then he stops and looks me in the eye and says, so how long have you been backslidden brother? Like I said, it must be the hair or something.

But anyways, just scatter seed, and let God do what he does supernaturally. Often we get “numb” to witnessing to our family because we think they don't want to hear it anymore. Jesus shows us to keep going back.

Mark 6:5 Now He could do no mighty work there, except that He laid His hands on a few sick people and healed them.

The Damage Spreads

It started in the synagogue, and the damage spreads itself like a fire. So these people with their unbelief and criticism of Jesus affects others, and the others affect others, until it has spread and poisoned the whole town. Jesus could do no great work there, even though there were many people who needed His touch. And, there were not just many, but every last person in need of salvation.

Today, Christians tear down Christians, they tear down ministries, they tear down pastors, they do character attacks, and they do it for carnal reasons, and feel justified, and they take joy in their success, I've drawn another one away from the pastor or church I hate. Not caring, really not seeing because they can only see themselves, that others who are being blessed, or could be blessed by that ministry, are drawn away and left empty. When Jesus leaves Nazareth, so does all hope. And people who tear down and destroy other pastors and ministries, have no idea the damage they do to others, to other families, to other marriages, to others suffering, to others who had no hope, and now they look and say listening to all this it doesn't sound like Jesus or Church has any hope for me either.

When a person starts to tear and destroy the work of Jesus, you cant join the crowd like hear in Nazareth, whether it is adding words, or allowing the poison an audience. You must say stop, I will not be part of tearing down the work of Jesus.

[Romans 14:4 \(NKJV\)](#) ⁴ Who are you to judge another's servant? To his own master he stands or falls. Indeed, he will be made to stand, for God is able to make him stand.

But here in Nazareth, its feeds upon itself, and a town that was poor, becomes even poorer, for everywhere Jesus is not received, is always left impoverished.

Mark 6:6 And He marveled because of their unbelief. Then He went about the villages in a circuit, teaching.

Circuit Preaching

So Jesus leaves and goes on a circuit, which was to go to a city/town and preach, and then go to the next, then to the next, and preach kind of in a circle or a loop to where they first started. Then do the loop all over again. Circuit preaching was foundational here in USA, the Christian foundation can be traced back to the faithfulness of circuit preachers. John Wesley was one of the greatest circuit preachers, and it was figured that he traveled 250,000 miles on horseback and preached over 30,000 sermons. He along many others were vital pieces God used for the Great Awakening Revival of the early 1700's which formed and shaped this Nation into what it is today. If you want to watch a great movie about circuit riders, watch a true story of a movie called "Sheffey", of the circuit preacher Robert Sheffey of the 1800's. It is a great family movie. In those days after the circuit preaching for a whole year, areas would come for "camp meetings" and it was a time of preaching and worship and fellowship, as people would come from all over as a family time and a rest time from work, and rest with the Lord. Many people got saved in those camp meetings. You can get a great flavor of that watching the movie Sheffey.

Unbelief Stops Work of God

But back to our story here, we see that Unbelief can hinder God's work, not that He can't work, but people of unbelief don't want to see His work.

But Jesus Continues – Even After Rejection

But notice, Jesus continues on, regardless of acceptance or rejection. Jesus wasn't honored in His own town, but you know really, every place He went, he never received the honor He truly deserved. He is God, yet people still refused to recognize Him for all that He was.

Jim Thorpe

But there is a personal application I feel necessary to exhort today, and that is how we so often can respond to being rejected, or not recognized for who we are, what we have done.

Jim Thorpe. a great American athlete born around 1900. A member of the U.S. track and field team at the Olympic Games of 1912, Thorpe achieved World-Wide recognition as the world's greatest all around athlete by winning both the pentathlon and the decathlon. Early in 1913, however, the Amateur Athletic Union, having learned that he had played semiprofessional baseball (where he earned 2 dollars a game), voided his amateur status and disallowed his Olympic victories.

In 1950 nearly 400 American sportswriters and broadcasters selected Thorpe as the greatest all-around athlete and football player of the first half of the 20th century. Jim Thorpe was the greatest athlete of the first half of this century, maybe even the whole century. But because man took away his achievement, he always struggled with that, and at the age of 53, the greatest athlete in the world died in a rundown trailer park, financially broke, an alcoholic. In 1982 the International Olympic Committee posthumously restored both his amateur status and his two Olympic medals.

Some Personal Applications for You

Here's some personal application for you. We all like to be complimented for our accomplishments; we like to hear people say "good job, well done". But the fact is, we will never receive the recognition due for all that we do. It is important to recognize this up front, or we can find ourselves constantly being bitter and resentful.

What can it cause you?

- Break-up a family: my dad didn't say great game son. He doesn't care about me, he is always telling my brother or sister how great they are. I'll show him. Then distance begins, and next thing you know, 2 years, then 4, then 8 years since you and dad were close. Building up a lifetime of regrets.
- Churches- The Pastor doesn't see how much I do here, I'm going to a church that recognizes me. But before they do they back stab the pastor and people cause discontent amongst the body, trying to take as

many with them as possible. And they do, unto another church, causing the same disease to poison that church

- **Friendship** - some friend, I make a big deal about their accomplishments, but don't care about mine. Well I'm not praising his anymore. Then the cycle begins that I'm not being good to you, and back and forth until eventually the friendship dies.
- **Employment** - my boss only cares about the company, I'm not working hard anymore. Then you join the group at the break room complaining about the company. They poison you, and you poison them, and the cycle continues until work becomes a miserable place you go to for 40 hours a week, and worse, then you take it home to your family.

Colossians 3:23–24 (NKJV) ²³ And whatever you do, do it heartily, as to the Lord and not to men, ²⁴ knowing that from the Lord you will receive the reward of the inheritance; for you serve the Lord Christ.

Given Talents – Doesn't Mean Recognized Talents

Matthew 25:14-29 is the parable of using the "talents" that God gives us. Again, when we use our talents, don't expect that you will always be recognized for it.

Matthew 25:14–15 (NKJV) ¹⁴ "For the kingdom of heaven is like a man traveling to a far country, who called his own servants and delivered his goods to them. ¹⁵ And to one he gave five talents, to another two, and to another one, to each according to his own ability; and immediately he went on a journey.

Timing is Purposeful

Jesus is going to send His disciples out in our upcoming verses, and the timing of His rejection, and their sending is purposeful. For many that are sent, quit because of rejection or not being recognized for all they do. These disciples will be sent out, on the heels of Jesus Himself being rejected. It will be fresh in their minds, and real to them, not everyone is going to gladly receive us with this message, regardless of how good of news it is.

Old Missionary Couple

An old missionary couple had been working in Africa for years, and they were returning to New York City to retire. They had no pension; their health was broken; they were defeated, discouraged, and afraid. They discovered they were booked on the same ship as President Teddy Roosevelt, who was returning from one of his big-game hunting expeditions.

No one paid much attention to them. They watched the fanfare that accompanied the President's entourage, with passengers trying to catch a glimpse of the great man. As the ship moved across the ocean, the old missionary said to his wife, "Something is wrong. Why should we have given our lives in faithful service for God in Africa all these many years and have no one care a thing about us? Here this man comes back from a hunting trip and everybody makes much over him, but nobody gives two hoots about us."

"Dear, you shouldn't feel that way," his wife said. "I can't help it; it doesn't seem right."

When the ship docked in New York, a band was waiting to greet the President. The mayor and other dignitaries were there. The papers were full of the President's arrival, but no one noticed this missionary couple. They slipped off the ship and found a cheap flat on the East side, hoping the next day to see what they could do to make a living in the city.

That night, the man's spirit broke. He said to his wife, "I can't take this; God is not treating us fairly." His wife replied, "Why don't you go into the bedroom and tell that to the Lord?" A short time later he came out from the bedroom, but now his face was completely different. His wife asked, "Dear, what happened?" "The Lord settled it with me," he said. "I told him how bitter I was that the President should receive this tremendous homecoming, when no one met us as we returned home. And when I finished, it seemed as though the Lord put his hand on my shoulder and simply said, 'But you're not home yet!'"

From Talking To My Father, by Ray Stedman. Barbour & Co. 1997.

Christian – What and How Will You Respond if not Recognized

What will you do if your recognition is not given, or worse, taken away. Whether you are recognized by man or not doesn't take away from what you have achieved or accomplished. An accomplishment can never be taken away from you, because you know you have done it, and God knows it too.

Jesus Sends Out the Twelve (6:7-13)

Mark 6:7 And He called the twelve to Himself, and began to send them out two by two, and gave them power over unclean spirits.

1st Missionary Journey / Going for 2,000 Years Now

This is the First Missionary journey. 2000 years later Jesus is still sending people. Is He sending you

Apostello – Sent One

Send means “Apostello” - Apostle, to send someone with a special commission, to represent another and accomplish his works.

Called – Then Empowered / When God Calls – He Empowers

Notice: They were called, then sent, and empowered. Any work we do for God we must first receive His calling, and then be sent forth by God, not man. And for any work to be fruitful we must be empowered by God.

Sent them out two by Two

When you serve the Lord take a pal. One of you can pray, while the other talks. You can watch each other's back.

(Ecclesiastes 4:9-12 NKJV) Two are better than one, Because they have a good reward for their labor. For if they fall, one will lift up his companion. But woe to him who is alone when he falls, For he has no one to help him up. Again, if two lie down together, they will keep warm; But how can one be warm alone? Though one may be overpowered by another, two can withstand him. And a threefold cord is not quickly broken.

Mark 6:8 He commanded them to take nothing for the journey except a staff—no bag, no bread, no copper in their money belts—

Mark 6:9 but to wear sandals, and not to put on two tunics.

Keep It Simple

The connection between power and simplicity is undeniable. Jesus gave His disciples power as He sent them out in simplicity. He is saying don't take a lot of stuff with you, and don't organize and organize and organize some more before you go, just keep it simple. You can travel miles and miles, years and years, on simplicity.

Just grab a walking stick and start walking. Lord should we get a cart pulled by 4 donkeys, with a band playing? No, just start walking, scattering seed as you go. Are church vans and church bands a good thing, sure, they just are not a prerequisite for taking the Gospel across the street or across the sea.

You can travel miles and miles, years and years, on simplicity.

And then we have the references for things regarding money (no bag, no bread, no copper in the money belts). And the Lord is making the point that where God guides (aka sends), He will provide. Too often we limit God by saying I guess we can't do this, or can't go there, because I don't have the money in my money belt (aka wallet). God may say you start going, and I'll start providing as you go. That is a good word for those thinking missions, or those thinking about going out somewhere to plant a church. And regarding this “no bag”, some of the language commentaries I have said this bag was called a “beggars bag”, and it is what pagan priest wore at pagan temples, so people knew, pony up the money if you want this work to continue. God I believe is very displeased when His people who say He is Jehovah-Jira, the Lord God who provides, but then poor mouth Him, or the mission, or the church. I think one of the way God does guide, is to not provide, and I believe one of the ways God guides, is to provide, and we can rest in that. And if you want to go on a mission trip and the funds don't come in, it does not mean that God is displeased with you, He just has something else for you.

Wear sandals and take only one tunic, not two – God is saying stay mobile, travel light.

You can travel miles and miles, years and years, on simplicity.

Mark 6:10 Also He said to them, “In whatever place you enter a house, stay there till you depart from that place.

Mark 6:11 And whoever will not receive you nor hear you, when you depart from there, shake off the dust under your feet as a testimony against them. Assuredly, I say to you, it will be more tolerable for Sodom and Gomorrah in the day of judgment than for that city!”

Hospitality & Hostility / Preconceived Ideas – We Messed Up /

These two verses are saying they would encounter both hospitality and hostility, both friends and enemies. Why is this important to point out? If we enter the ministry with our preconceived ideas, and then they don't work out the way we thought they would, we think God is not in it, or we messed it up, and then we want to quit. God is telling us ahead of time that not everybody is going to like us.

Don't Get Bugged Down in Bitterness

Forget it and move on. Don't stand around feeling sorry for yourself while folks need saving elsewhere. Don't get bogged down in bitterness. Wipe the dust off your soles - and move on to other souls. God will deal with the resisters.

Mark 6:12 So they went out and preached that people should repent.

Mark 6:13 And they cast out many demons, and anointed with oil many who were sick, and healed them.

Called – Sent - Empowered

They were called, then sent, and empowered

There is a Day of Judgment

Sodom and Gomorrah was judged for their sin, for their unwillingness to repent. And Jesus clearly says that there is a Day of Judgement that man will give an account for their sin before the Holy God.

They Preached Repentance / Many Afraid to Offend People

What did they preach? They preached Repentance. Repentance means to turn and follow. They didn't preach about here's the way to peace and happiness (which it is, but they are only by-products of a personal relationship with Jesus Christ). If a minister is not preaching Repentance on a regular basis, or if the minister does not preach repentance when giving a salvation message, I believe that person should not be preaching. Failure to preach repentance makes false converts. If you tell people that they have to turn from their sin if they are to have relationship with Christ, then you will see their true heart condition. For if a person has to give up their sin in order to be saved, many say no thanks I enjoy me sin too much. The tragedy is that many preachers are afraid to offend people by telling them they are in sin and they have to turn from sin; so they leave it out of the message so everybody will like them - shame on them. The disciples went out and preached that people should repent.

The Message is Repentance

The Gospel is not the Gospel, without the calling to repent. I talk about the principal of first mention, well John the Baptist first words in preaching was repent, Jesus' first word was repent, the disciples first missionary trip was preach repent, Peter's first sermon on the Day of Pentecost was repent, and repentance is woven all the way through the scriptures, and when you get to Revelation, the letter to the first church (Ephesus) was repent.

Matthew 3:1–2 (NKJV) ¹ In those days John the Baptist came preaching in the wilderness of Judea, ² and saying, “Repent, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand!”

Matthew 4:17 (NKJV) ¹⁷ From that time Jesus began to preach and to say, “Repent, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand.”

Mark 6:12 (NKJV) ¹² So they went out and preached that people should repent.

Acts 2:38 (NKJV) ³⁸ Then Peter said to them, "Repent, and let every one of you be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins; and you shall receive the gift of the Holy Spirit.

Revelation 2:4–5 (NKJV) ⁴ Nevertheless I have this against you, that you have left your first love. ⁵ Remember therefore from where you have fallen; repent and do the first works, or else I will come to you quickly and remove your lampstand from its place—unless you repent.

Repentance is Freedom!

Oh repentance is freedom, I can take God's word and say, this is what it says, and it says it because He loves me, He cares for me, He proved His love and care for me on the cross, therefore I know His words are for me, for they come from the very heart of God. And I am set free, for the word is written to protect and to provide for me. And when I turn and follow, I find out how free I am really am, because I then can see how those things God tells me to turn from, how much they bound me, enslaved me, and when I turn from them (repent) I am set free, and walking in freedom.

Matthew 11:28–30 (NKJV) ²⁸ Come to Me, all you who labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. ²⁹ Take My yoke upon you and learn from Me, for I am gentle and lowly in heart, and you will find rest for your souls. ³⁰ For My yoke is easy and My burden is light."

"Tekton" the root of our word "technical" is the Greek term translated "carpenter." A tekton was a technical carpenter. In contrast to framing houses, He made furniture or tools. He was a detailed craftsman. There's a legend that says Jesus' specialty was wooden yokes. A wooden harness had to be an exact fit - or it would rub and irritate the animal. This added meaning to His words, "My yoke is easy..." The legend has it that a sign hung over His carpenter shop, "The Best Fitting Yokes Made Here." I don't know about that legend, but an early church father (Justin Martyr), said Jesus's specialty was making yokes.

The yokes Jesus crafted were perfect fits... and they still are! When Jesus asks you to climb into His harness, and submit your life to His will it's a perfect fit. What He calls you to do, He has and will equip you to do! Along with the task will come a love for the task. If today, you're under a heavy burden... it didn't come from Jesus. His burden is light. His yoke is easy

I Just Had My Book Printed

Please lock in with me as I share and close with the Good News of the Gospel. Many years ago I wrote a short booklet on America (its only like 60 pages). I trace American history from before Columbus, to the signing of the Constitution, and tell amazing and miraculous stories of how God's hand was upon it all the way. It took hundreds of hours of research, but oh what a blessed journey along the way. The digital copy is available for free on our webpage, and is definitely a great homeschool addition, and for anyone else for that matter. But this week I wanted to get some paperback versions made again so I can hand them out. So in sixty minutes, I had a book ready for print-on-demand, amazing technology in the days we live. So when I got my paperback book, I will be honest, I felt proud of the work (but not prideful – all glory to God). I stared at and Lord you are too good when I saw my name on that cover. Here is a book written by Ray Bollas.

Then I thought of Malachi 3, and thought, so there is a book of remembrance, and of course the Book of Life.

Malachi 3:16 (NKJV) ¹⁶ Then those who feared the LORD spoke to one another, And the LORD listened and heard them; So a book of remembrance was written before Him For those who fear the LORD And who meditate on His name.

Revelation 20:11–15 (NKJV) ¹¹ Then I saw a great white throne and Him who sat on it, from whose face the earth and the heaven fled away. And there was found no place for them. ¹² And I saw the dead, small and great, standing before God, and books were opened. And another book was opened, which is the Book of Life. And the dead were judged according to their works, by the things which were written in the books. ¹³ The sea gave up the dead who were in it, and Death and Hades delivered up the dead who were in them. And they were judged, each one according to his works. ¹⁴ Then Death and Hades were cast into the lake of fire. This is the second death. ¹⁵ And anyone not found written in the Book of Life was cast into the lake of fire.

And I thought the most horrible thought, a book of my life, of all my sins, every sin, every last sin I have committed before the Holy God. The thought of you reading it, would send me to the ends of the earth in shame to never show my face, not just wicked deeds, but wretched thoughts, oh who could bear such a book.

But there is such a book, it is written in heaven, and I will be judged according to my works, you will be judged according to your works, and there is nothing that can be hidden, and all things shall be naked and open before His eyes. And next to my book is this Book the Holy Bible, and it is the Light that reveals my sin before THE HOLY GOD, and leaves me guilty. These gospels show us the life of Christ and shows that obedience is a choice, but we chose otherwise. Jesus lived the perfect and spotless life, and was pleasing to the Father, who would say this is my Beloved Son in whom I am well pleased. And then Jesus said the most amazing thing to me, to you, I'll trade you. I will take the content of your book, and make it my life story, all the way to the cross. And you can take my life story, and make it your own. And for any who will receive this offer of trade, he trades the contents of the books. And now with Christ in me, I can walk, I can live victoriously, I can repent, turn and follow, because Christ's life is in me, leading and guiding me. Oh what a glorious trade, what a glorious Gospel, what a glorious invitation to any who would take it.

Hebrews 4:12–13 (NKJV) ¹² For the word of God *is* living and powerful, and sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing even to the division of soul and spirit, and of joints and marrow, and is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart. ¹³ And there is no creature hidden from His sight, but all things *are* naked and open to the eyes of Him to whom we *must give* account.

Matthew 17:5 (NKJV) ⁵ While he was still speaking, behold, a bright cloud overshadowed them; and suddenly a voice came out of the cloud, saying, "This is My beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased. Hear Him!"

Colossians 1:27–28 (NKJV) ²⁷ To them God willed to make known what are the riches of the glory of this mystery among the Gentiles: which is Christ in you, the hope of glory. ²⁸ Him we preach, warning every man and teaching every man in all wisdom, that we may present every man perfect in Christ Jesus.

Conclusion

There is a Prayer Team Available to Pray with and for You

Prayer – Boldly Ask Your God

The Word of God is Living and Powerful, and is ready, and will do a mighty work in our lives.

Hebrews 4:12 (NKJV) ¹² For the word of God *is* living and powerful, and sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing even to the division of soul and spirit, and of joints and marrow, and is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart.

In Every Study

- Who Is God? (How Great is He?)
- What Does He Think of Me? (How Wonderful Are His Thoughts Towards Me?)
- What Does He Want Me to Do?
- What Can I Boldly Request of Him?
- What Do I Need to Be on Guard of When I Leave Here Today?

Boldly come to the throne of grace, ask God to reveal Himself in a mighty way to you, and to do I might work in you, and through you.

Hebrews 4:16 (NKJV) ¹⁶ Let us therefore come boldly to the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy and find grace to help in time of need.

End of Study

Mark 6:14-29

Satan's Trophy Room (Mark 6:17-29)

John the Baptist is Beheaded (6:14-29)

Mark 6:14 Now King Herod heard of Him, for His name had become well known. And he said, "John the Baptist is risen from the dead, and therefore these powers are at work in him."

Mark 6:15 Others said, "It is Elijah." And others said, "It is the Prophet, or like one of the prophets."

Mark 6:16 But when Herod heard, he said, "This is John, whom I beheaded; he has been raised from the dead!"

Mark 6:17 For Herod himself had sent and laid hold of John, and bound him in prison for the sake of Herodias, his brother Philip's wife; for he had married her.

Mark 6:18 Because John had said to Herod, "It is not lawful for you to have your brother's wife."

Mark 6:19 Therefore Herodias held it against him and wanted to kill him, but she could not;

Mark 6:20 for Herod feared John, knowing that he was a just and holy man, and he protected him. And when he heard him, he did many things, and heard him gladly.

Mark 6:21 Then an opportune day came when Herod on his birthday gave a feast for his nobles, the high officers, and the chief men of Galilee.

Mark 6:22 And when Herodias' daughter herself came in and danced, and pleased Herod and those who sat with him, the king said to the girl, "Ask me whatever you want, and I will give it to you."

Mark 6:23 He also swore to her, "Whatever you ask me, I will give you, up to half my kingdom."

Mark 6:24 So she went out and said to her mother, "What shall I ask?" And she said, "The head of John the Baptist!"

Mark 6:25 Immediately she came in with haste to the king and asked, saying, "I want you to give me at once the head of John the Baptist on a platter."

Mark 6:26 And the king was exceedingly sorry; yet, because of the oaths and because of those who sat with him, he did not want to refuse her.

Mark 6:27 Immediately the king sent an executioner and commanded his head to be brought. And he went and beheaded him in prison,

Mark 6:28 brought his head on a platter, and gave it to the girl; and the girl gave it to her mother.

Mark 6:29 When his disciples heard of it, they came and took away his corpse and laid it in a tomb.

Introduction / Turning Defeats into Victories

These verses give the account of the beheading of John the Baptist. This isn't a message so much on spiritual warfare, rather a message on turning defeats or low points into victories. This is message for you on taking your lowest moment or your greatest mistake – and letting God turn it into your greatest victory.

Whether Sin, Tragedy, Circumstance / It's Over I Can't Go On

Whether it is sin, tragedy or circumstances – there are moments in our life where we feel it's over, we can't go on.

- Maybe your marriage is over.
- Maybe through your own sin you have deeply hurt your family.
- Maybe through your self-desires for drinking or drugs you have made a mess of your life.
- Or maybe for you singles your desire for purity has been spoiled.
- Maybe through no fault of your own your unemployed.
- Or you have just been diagnosed with a serious illness and the future looks uncertain.
- Maybe, your lowest moment, is still yet future, may this study flood back to you and you be encouraged to get back up and move forward for the glory of God¹

Whatever the case,

- you may feel you are just too beaten to get back up,
- you may feel you have blown it too bad to ever be used by God again,
- you may even feel like life isn't worth living anymore,

Then this message is for you, for God wants to turn your lowest moments or greatest defeat, into **HIS** great victory.

*******God will tell you, "It's always too soon to quit."*******

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There is a Prayer Team Available to Pray with and for You

Let's get into the story, get some background, **and then watch God turn the tables on Satan**

Mark 6:14 Now King Herod heard of Him, for His name had become well known. And he said, "John the Baptist is risen from the dead, and therefore these powers are at work in him."

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Mark 6:16 But when Herod heard, he said, "This is John, whom I beheaded; he has been raised from the dead!"

Herod Antipas – Not Herod the Great

This is not Herod the great who ordered the killing of all the babies of Bethlehem, who told the Wise man to find the Babe so he may worship Him. This is Herod Antipas, who was one of the three sons of Herod the Great, and when Herod the Great died, the Roman Empire divided the land of Israel up into four sections, and Herod Antipas ruled the area up in Galilee. Officially he was not made or called a king by the Roman empire, but in Herod Antipas' ambition he always identified himself as a king, so Mark is reflecting the local custom of Galilee of calling Herod a king.

Matthew 2:13 (NKJV) ¹³ Now when they had departed, behold, an angel of the Lord appeared to Joseph in a dream, saying, "Arise, take the young Child and His mother, flee to Egypt, and stay there until I bring you word; for Herod will seek the young Child to destroy Him."

Interestingly Believes in the Resurrection

Herod killed John the Baptist. I find it interesting that Herod believes in the resurrection of the dead. It gives us some insight to his spiritual understanding, that helps shape personal application to the story we read today.

John Baptist / Elijah / Prophet

So some say it was John the Baptist risen from the dead. Some think Jesus is Elijah because it was prophesied that Elijah would come before the Messiah did (Malachi 4:5). Others thought He was the Prophet whom Moses said would come after him (Deuteronomy 18:15). These prophetic words will be fulfilled, but obviously Jesus was not Elijah, and He was not just another of the prophets, He was the Prophet (Acts 3:17-26) spoken of by Moses as we are told in Acts 3. So the ones who said Jesus is the "Prophet" spoken of by Moses were right, but it didn't matter to Herod, he thought it was John the Baptist whom he had murdered. No doubt the guilty conscience is stirring here, as Herod knew what he did was wrong. It's interesting, Herod had wealth, power, and luxury, but he was tormented. He was tortured by guilt...A guilty conscience is defined, "As the part of you that hurts when everything else feels good." A condemned conscience prohibits us from enjoying life. It's also said, "A bad conscience has a good memory."

Matthew 11:13–15 (NKJV) ¹³ For all the prophets and the law prophesied until John. ¹⁴ And if you are willing to receive it, he is Elijah who is to come. ¹⁵ He who has ears to hear, let him hear!

Malachi 4:5 (NKJV) ⁵ Behold, I will send you Elijah the prophet Before the coming of the great and dreadful day of the LORD.

Deuteronomy 18:15 (NKJV) ¹⁵ "The LORD your God will raise up for you a Prophet like me from your midst, from your brethren. Him you shall hear,

Acts 3:17–26 (NKJV) ¹⁷ "Yet now, brethren, I know that you did it in ignorance, as did also your rulers. ¹⁸ But those things which God foretold by the mouth of all His prophets, that the Christ would suffer, He has thus fulfilled. ¹⁹ Repent therefore and be converted, that your sins may be blotted out, so that times of refreshing may come from the presence of the Lord, ²⁰ and that He may send Jesus Christ, who was preached to you before, ²¹ whom heaven must receive until the times of restoration of all things, which God has spoken by the mouth of all His holy prophets since the world began. ²² For Moses truly said to the fathers, "The LORD your God will raise up for you a Prophet like me from your brethren. Him you shall hear in all things, whatever He says to you. ²³ And it shall be that every soul who will not hear that Prophet shall be utterly destroyed from among the people." ²⁴ Yes, and all the prophets, from Samuel and those who follow, as many as have spoken, have also foretold these days. ²⁵ You are sons of the prophets, and of the covenant which God made with our fathers, saying to Abraham, "And in your seed all the families of the earth shall be blessed." ²⁶ To you first, God, having raised up His Servant Jesus, sent Him to bless you, in turning away every one of you from your iniquities."

(Mark 6:17 NKJV) For Herod himself had sent and laid hold of John, and bound him in prison for the sake of Herodias, his brother Philip's wife; for he had married her.

(Mark 6:18 NKJV) For John had said to Herod, "It is not lawful for you to have your brother's wife."

John Calls Sin – Sin / Obviously didn't Read the Book how to Win Friends

King Herod married his brother's wife. John called it for what it was – sin.

Obviously, John didn't read "How to win friends and influence people". Ohh John you blew it, see you came on too strong. You should have come to the evangelism seminar and learned how to witness. You should have made friends first, gained their confidence, had dinner with them, said you two make a cute couple. Then after awhile laid the gospel on them. John don't you know how much influence you could have on city by being seen with the King, you could be his spiritual advisor, and become famous and have a mighty ministry - John chose to call it sin, and ended up in jail.

(Mark 6:19 NKJV) Therefore Herodias held it against him and wanted to kill him, but she could not;

(Mark 6:20 NKJV) for Herod feared John, knowing that he was a just and holy man, and he protected him. And when he heard him, he did many things, and heard him gladly.

Accept it / John 3:20

Held it against him: It is a fact, get use to it, people will hold your witness against you. Those who love their sin will not like you for preaching the truth. When faced with repentance, a persons true heart will come out.

John 3:16–21 (NKJV) ¹⁶ For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have everlasting life. ¹⁷ For God did not send His Son into the world to condemn the world, but that the world through Him might be saved. ¹⁸ "He who believes in Him is not condemned; but he who does not believe is condemned already, because he has not believed in the name of the only begotten Son of God. ¹⁹ And this is the condemnation, that the light has come into the world, and men loved darkness rather than light, because their deeds were evil. ²⁰ For everyone practicing evil hates the light and does not come to the light, lest his deeds should be exposed. ²¹ But he who does the truth comes to the light, that his deeds may be clearly seen, that they have been done in God."

But Couldn't Deny – John was Just & Holy

As much as Herod hated John's witness, he could lay no charge against him, he knew he was a just and holy man. If people speak evilly of you, let it be something they had to make up. Nothing hurts me more than when they don't have to lie. Oh Lord that the world would say I am a just and holy man, let our walk be a living testimony.

(Mark 6:21 NKJV) Then an opportune day came when Herod on his birthday gave a feast for his nobles, the high officers, and the chief men of Galilee.

Satan has Patience

Don't fool yourself Christian, Satan has patience. Look, he waited for the opportune day, then he struck. We as Christians can never let our guard down in prayer and the study of the Word, for Satan is always looking and waiting for that opportune time —and more time than not, it comes when we let our guard down.

(Mark 6:22 NKJV) And when Herodias' daughter herself came in and danced, and pleased Herod and those who sat with him, the king said to the girl, "Ask me whatever you want, and I will give it to you."

(Mark 6:23 NKJV) He also swore to her, "Whatever you ask me, I will give you, up to half of my kingdom."

Must have Been Some Dance / ½ Kingdom / Control Flesh – Else it Control You

It must have been some dance, half the kingdom. Don't think that the Playboy channel is something new. Think about it, half the kingdom. Beloved, control the flesh, or the flesh will control you. Lust will make you do foolish things – Herod offers something he later regrets. A great lie of the devil is that lust is a physical war, but the physical part is just a symptom of what lies beneath. The battle is spiritual, there is a spiritual war going on, and Satan uses the physical to destroy the knowledge, the purposes, the plans, the image of God in your life. The battle is in the mind, whether you see or not, and thus every thought must be taken captive, before it can plant a seed and produce crop. Just as God scatters His seed, so does the devil.

2 Corinthians 10:3-6 (NKJV) ³ For though we walk in the flesh, we do not war according to the flesh. ⁴ For the weapons of our warfare are not carnal but mighty in God for pulling down strongholds, ⁵ casting down arguments and every high thing that exalts itself against the knowledge of God, bringing every thought into captivity to the obedience of Christ, ⁶ and being ready to punish all disobedience when your obedience is fulfilled.

(Mark 6:24 NKJV) So she went out and said to her mother, "What shall I ask?" And she said, "The head of John the Baptist!"

How Bad hate John / It's Not Your Witness is Too Strong

How bad did Herodias hate John the Baptist? So bad that she would pass up half the kingdom. Christian people will hate you for preaching the truth. Satan tells us that our witness is too strong if people are offended, but that is not true. When faced with repentance people will show their true heart. Their true heart may be hatred, guilt, or revenge. These feelings may lash out on you.

She was a Pawn / Satan Places Pawns – for an Opportune Time

She was a pawn used by Satan. A pawn put in place that at an opportune time, Satan would strike. Satan puts pawns in your life, people he hopes to work through so as to get to you.

A pawn may be:

- that pretty girl at work who always gives special attention to you,
- or Joe Buffed at the gym, even though you are married.
- Or maybe that boss who will just make your life miserable, so miserable you take it home to your family.
- Or that friend that calls you for just that one beer, like ole times.
- For you youth, that friend that says just try it once, its no big deal.

Watch out for them, don't put your guard down, Satan is waiting for that opportune time.

(Mark 6:25 NKJV) Immediately she came in with haste to the king and asked, saying, "I want you to give me at once the head of John the Baptist on a platter."

(Mark 6:26 NKJV) And the king was exceedingly sorry; yet, because of the oaths and because of those who sat with him, he did not want to refuse her.

Herod not Courageous to Obey John's Word / Now has Obey His Own – His Pride led him to Hell

Herod was not courageous enough to obey John's word, but now he had to obey his own word. Pride can lead you to make foolish decisions in your life, in Herod's case it led him straight to hell.

In Luke 23:6-12 when they brought Jesus before this very same Herod, Jesus would not even speak to him or answer him. If you want an example of the unpardonable sin, I think this is one. It wasn't the beheading of John the Baptist, but the rejection of the Word. Herod had rejected the Word so much, that God would not even respond to him.

Herod eventually ended up losing his kingdom and was forced into exile. Mark 8: 36 *For what shall it profit a man, if he shall gain the whole world, and lose his own soul?*

Luke 23:8–9 (NKJV) ⁸ Now when Herod saw Jesus, he was exceedingly glad; for he had desired for a long time to see Him, because he had heard many things about Him, and he hoped to see some miracle done by Him. ⁹ Then he questioned Him with many words, but He answered him nothing.

Mark 8:34–38 (NKJV) ³⁴ When He had called the people to Himself, with His disciples also, He said to them, “Whoever desires to come after Me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross, and follow Me. ³⁵ For whoever desires to save his life will lose it, but whoever loses his life for My sake and the gospel’s will save it. ³⁶ For what will it profit a man if he gains the whole world, and loses his own soul? ³⁷ Or what will a man give in exchange for his soul? ³⁸ For whoever is ashamed of Me and My words in this adulterous and sinful generation, of him the Son of Man also will be ashamed when He comes in the glory of His Father with the holy angels.”

(Mark 6:27 NKJV) Immediately the king sent an executioner and commanded his head to be brought. And he went and beheaded him in prison,

(Mark 6:28 NKJV) brought his head on a platter, and gave it to the girl; and the girl gave it to her mother.

Beheaded for Preaching / We Quit because Mocked

Beheaded for preaching, yet we are ready to quit because we get rejected

Do you realize John probably could have said “wait I was wrong, it’s ok what your doing, lets be friends.” But John stood for the truth until the end, even to the point of death. How are we doing when it comes to standing for the truth. 2 Timothy 3:12 *Yea, and all that will live godly in Christ Jesus shall suffer persecution.* Christian if you share the Gospel in Love, then stand firm and know that you did what the Lord called you to do.

2 Timothy 3:12 (NKJV) ¹² Yes, and all who desire to live godly in Christ Jesus will suffer persecution.

Greatest Prophet – Ended by Dancing Girl

John the Baptist beheaded because of a little dancing girl, little Brittney Herodias. Jesus speaking of John said:

(Luke 7:28 NKJV) ²⁸ For I say to you, among those born of women there is not a greater prophet than John the Baptist;.....

The greatest prophet because he said, what no other prophet could say and point to, Jesus Christ the Lamb of God who would take away the sin of the world. He was the greatest prophet, because he had the greatest message!

John 1:29 (NKJV) ²⁹ The next day John saw Jesus coming toward him, and said, “Behold! The Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world!

The greatest prophet of all times brought down because of a dancing girl.

Brethren, bad things happen to good people; but of course, we are only good because of Jesus Christ.

Satan Smiles – Victory / 400 Years of Silence

And here is where Satan stands back and smiles in his victory. John the Baptist – taken out.

Man had gone 400 years without hearing from God. 400 years from Malachi to John the Baptist. Consider this, in the beginning:

- Adam walked with God in the garden,
- Enoch walked with God and had sons and daughters,
- Noah walked with God, and foretold Gods judgment to come,
- Abraham, Isaac and Jacob proclaimed his promises to the people,
- Moses went into Pharaoh’s court and said the Great I Am” has sent me for His people,
- God gave them judges, then kings, and prophets for years and years, and years.....

And Then God gave them silence – for 400 years, Malachi to Matthew. As years turned into decades, and decades into centuries, Hope turned into hopelessness, they had not heard from God; then God spoke again through John the Baptist. The resultant was a great revival as people repented. John came in the power and authority of the great prophet Elijah. John introduced the Messiah to the world, He said “Behold the lamb of God who takes away

the sins of the world.” John baptized Jesus Christ, imagine what that must have been like. Imagine reading John’s newsletter that week.

Now he is dead, and Satan feels exalted. The greatest prophet of all times brought down because of a dancing girl. Satan lavishes in his victory.

The Platter / Victory over an Opponent

In February the coveted Lombardi Trophy (Super Bowl Champs) raised high. In May somebody will hold a Silver Platter over their head at Wimbledon. And in June the Stanley Cup Trophy (Hockey Champs) will be skated around some hockey arena, and in October the trophy will be lifted for the World Series Champion.

All trophies will symbolize a victory over an opponent. ***They will symbolize that on that day and that time the holder of that trophy had victory over their opponent.***

Satan’s Trophy Room

I wonder if Satan, with his arrogance (I will exalt my throne above the stars of God I will be like the Most High (Isaiah 14:12-15)) has a trophy room. Some symbols to remind him of past victories over God’s chosen.

Isaiah 14:12-15 (NKJV) ¹² “How you are fallen from heaven, O Lucifer, son of the morning! How you are cut down to the ground, You who weakened the nations! ¹³ For you have said in your heart: ‘I will ascend into heaven, I will exalt my throne above the stars of God; I will also sit on the mount of the congregation On the farthest sides of the north; ¹⁴ I will ascend above the heights of the clouds, I will be like the Most High.’ ¹⁵ Yet you shall be brought down to Sheol, To the lowest depths of the Pit.

If he does,

- I imagine this platter hung on the wall with an inscription “32 AD - John the Baptist goes down” – God’s spokesman silenced.
- There would be some coats and stones there. The coats that Saul of Tarsus held, and the stones used to kill Stephen.
- There would be the fire that Peter warmed himself by as he denied the Lord 3 times.
- There would be platters and memorabilia of the many Ministers and Christians that Satan has taken down. Some of the memorabilia may be:
 - bottles of alcohol,
 - drug needles,
 - pornographic magazines,
 - big fat paychecks with tons of overtime logged on it – laying on empty church seats
 - or computers that were used to go places on the Internet that Christians should not go.
 - wedding bands with broken vows

What I Like – Trophies Disappear

But you know what I like about Satan’s trophy room? Trophies disappear from his trophy room. You see many of his trophies are only temporary.

- ***John the Baptist*** - For the platter of John the Baptist was only a temporary victory. Quick, who was the first martyr for Jesus Christ? How many of you said Stephen? But truly John the Baptist was the first New Testament martyr for Christ. We may be oblivious to it, but tens of thousands of Christians are martyred every year in this world because of their faith. How many of the millions of martyred Christians gained strength from the story of John the Baptist. How many have looked at John’s example of preaching the truth even to the point of death and it gave them strength to stand firm like John did, and in turn brought many people into the Kingdom. The platter of John the Baptist is now in Jesus’ trophy room - it is a jewel, a crown that will be thrown at His feet. ***Satan – you can kill the messenger, but the message will never die***
- ***Stephan*** - The coats and stones from Stephen’s death are now jewels that will be thrown at Jesus’ feet also. I believe as Saul held those coats and watched Stephen get stoned, he also saw Stephen’s face as Stephen saw Jesus standing at the right hand of the Father ready to receive him. I believe this affected Saul greatly. Saul’s heart was now prepared to meet the Lord on the road to Damascus. The coats and

stones became symbols of victory as Paul went on to become the second greatest evangelist to ever walk on this earth. **Satan – you can kill the messenger, but a new messenger will take his/her place.**

- **Peter's Fire Failing** - The fire would represent God grace and love, the Good of second, thirds, and 500 hundredth chances, as Peter would be restored and become a pillar in the early church. **Satan – you can humble for a moment, but God can raise to a legacy of greatness.**

Some Only Last 3 Day

And there are some trophies that only stayed in Satan's trophy room for 3 days:

- **The whip** that was used to strike Our Lord 40 times,
- **the bag** that was put over His head to buffet Him,
- **the robe** the soldiers cast lots for,
- **the reed** they mockingly made Him carry, and struck Him with,
- **the crown of thorns** crushed into His head,
- **the sign** that read "This is Jesus, the King of the Jesus",
- **the nails** that pierced His hands and feet,
- **and the cross** used to crucify Him.

What Looked Like Victory – was the Ultimate Defeat

What looked like victory for Satan, "the Messiah silenced, crucified on a rugged cross on some hill in Palestine", became Satan's ultimate defeat. It became God's greatest victory. For by way of the cross, sinful man may come before the Holy God, received and accepted into His arms of love.

Christian - It is Only a Defeat – If You Don't Get Back Up / Use Your Past Defeats

Christian it is only a trophy to Satan if it is a defeat. A defeat is where you don't get up, and where you quit and give up. Where you don't "rise back up", like Jesus did. Christian use your past failures as a place to claim a victory, a place where you got up and went on to do great and mighty things for the Lord

Christian, if Satan has your name on a trophy in his trophy room, then today you go get it back.

Don't Let Past Failures Keep you Down / Write a New Testimony

Do not let the past failures keep you down. Today Church let's begin to write a new testimony. A testimony of how we took our lowest moment or our worse defeat and let God turn it into our greatest comeback. A testimony of

- A new Christ Centered marriage
- Of sexual purity,
- Of drug and alcohol freedom
- An illness that brought people to Christ
- A job loss that drew you closer to Christ and His power
- You fill in the blank _____

Whatever it is, let it not take you to defeat and depression, but to joy and victory as God turns the table on Satan. And does a great work in your life.

Conclusion:

This isn't a speech to just get you all excited. It is a call to war. You can't just stroll into satans trophy room and take what you want, you have to be ready to fight for it, go to war for it. If you want peace from the things that trouble you, you have to fight for it.

There is a peace that can only be found on the other side of war. If there has to be a fight, then let it begin here and today.

The Lord is ready to go to war with you and for you, He is rolling up His sleeve

(Isa 52:10 NRSV) The LORD has bared his holy arm before the eyes of all the nations; and all the ends of the earth shall see the salvation of our God.

Remember Christian we are fighting from victory, not to victory. The victory was settled at the cross. Go with the Lord, and watch Him turn the table.

There is a Prayer Team Available to Pray with and for You

Prayer – Boldly Ask Your God

The Word of God is Living and Powerful, and is ready, and will do a mighty work in our lives.

Hebrews 4:12 (NKJV) ¹² For the word of God is living and powerful, and sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing even to the division of soul and spirit, and of joints and marrow, and is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart.

In Every Study

- Who Is God? (How Great is He?)
- What Does He Think of Me? (How Wonderful Are His Thoughts Towards Me?)
- What Does He Want Me to Do?
- What Can I Boldly Request of Him?
- What Do I Need to Be on Guard of When I Leave Here Today?

Boldly come to the throne of grace, ask God to reveal Himself in a mighty way to you, and to do I might work in you, and through you.

Hebrews 4:16 (NKJV) ¹⁶ Let us therefore come boldly to the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy and find grace to help in time of need.

End of Study

Mark 6:29

Mark 6:29 (NKJV) ²⁹ When his disciples heard *of it*, they came and took away his corpse and laid it in a tomb.

Today, just one verse, I think I have more than a teaching, but a burden, a calling..... what are we to do when the Devil takes down, takes out, one of our own?

Soldiers Die in Battles

It has been said, that soldiers don't die in wars, they die in battles. What are we to do when the Devil takes down, takes our, one of our own, as they lose their battle and walk with us no more. Many of those that once walked among us, walk no more, as they have taken down and out by the enemy.

Let's recap the story,

Mark 6:14–29 (NKJV) ¹⁴ Now King Herod heard *of Him*, for His name had become well known. And he said, "John the Baptist is risen from the dead, and therefore these powers are at work in him." ¹⁵ Others said, "It is Elijah." And others said, "It is the Prophet, or like one of the prophets." ¹⁶ But when Herod heard, he said, "This is John, whom I beheaded; he has been raised from the dead!" ¹⁷ For Herod himself had sent and laid hold of John, and bound him in prison for the sake of Herodias, his brother Philip's wife; for he had married her. ¹⁸ Because John had said to Herod, "It is not lawful for you to have your brother's wife." ¹⁹ Therefore Herodias held it against him and wanted to kill him, but she could not; ²⁰ for Herod feared John, knowing that he was a just and holy man, and he protected him. And when he heard him, he did many things, and heard him gladly. ²¹ Then an opportune day came when Herod on his birthday gave a feast for his nobles, the high officers, and the chief *men* of Galilee. ²² And when Herodias' daughter herself came in and danced, and pleased Herod and those who sat with him, the king said to the girl, "Ask me whatever you want, and I will give *it* to you." ²³ He also swore to her, "Whatever you ask me, I will give you, up to half my kingdom." ²⁴ So she went out and said to her mother, "What shall I ask?" And she said, "The head of John the Baptist!" ²⁵ Immediately she came in with haste to the king and asked, saying, "I want you to give me at once the head of John the Baptist on a platter." ²⁶ And the king was exceedingly sorry; *yet*, because of the oaths and because of those who sat with him, he did not want to refuse her. ²⁷ Immediately the king sent an executioner and commanded his head to be brought. And he went and beheaded him in prison, ²⁸ brought his head on a platter, and gave it to the girl; and the girl gave it to her mother. ²⁹ When his disciples heard *of it*, they came and took away his corpse and laid it in a tomb.

Intro

Recapping the Life of John the Baptist. We see that he was a righteous man, and faithful witness for Christ. He was so sold out, that his witness for Christ cost him his life. Yet what we talked about last time, what looks like Satan's greatest victory, God turns the tables into Satan's greatest defeats, and God's greatest victory. John would be the first martyr for Jesus Christ, and his story would bring strength to many martyrs to follow. Yet, no doubt how shocking this was to those who heard of John's end. How they may have been confused, scared, ready to say this must not be it, this Jesus he pointed to. But God raised up faithful men, to go get the body of John, to declare his worth, and his cause and calling. Yes, to whom John point, Jesus, was and is worth it. And the battle is long form being over.

So I ask you look around the church, you'll notice that many people who were here a year ago, are no longer – some have moved on to another city or fellowship, but for many, they have fallen away, fallen back into the world.

When I first got saved, there were 8 of us that always hung out together, all excited about the Lord, desiring to serve Him. Today, there are only 2 of us still walking with the Lord.

It is a hard walk isn't it, it is a long walk. This message may apply today, it may not - but it will apply someday.

Well today's study is, what are we to do if one of our brothers or sisters is taken down by the enemy. We will see 4 things of what disciples did when one of their brethren had fallen, 4 examples of what we can do should we see one of our loved ones fall.

After the Death of John the Baptist, his Disciples:

1. They Heard
2. They Came
3. They Took
4. They Told

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John Taken Down – Let's look at Disciples Did

So, John has just been taken down, and verse 29. We won't focus on John, but what his disciples did after he was taken down, and what are we to do when one of our own are taken out by the Devil

Point 1 - After the Death of John the Baptist, his Disciples – They Heard

Mark 6:29 (NKJV) ²⁹ When his disciples heard of it, they came and took away his corpse and laid it in a tomb.

When Hear – It is Decision Time

When they heard, they had to make a decision, what are we going to do about this.

When we hear of a brother taken down, we are immediately faced with a decision, what am I going to do about it. We see what the disciples did, they took immediate action.

Now we have to understand this, this is war, and there is always a high risk involved in going to war. John had just been beheaded, before that he was imprisoned, before that he was hated by the King's wife, and before that he was hated by the religious Pharisees. For these disciples to go to him, was high risk. If the vengeance and hatred all these people had against him wasn't satisfied in his beheading, then these men were prime target for more. May I point out to you, John had no trial, wrongly imprisoned and illegally murdered according to Roman law. There would be no law to protect these men either, yet they went, willing to risk life and limb to get him.

If you chose to go, Satan will be waiting for you too. His vengeance and hatred were not satisfied on the cross, his hatred for Jesus will be spilled out on you. He knows time is short for him. He will be waiting for you because he considers that brethren, he has just taken down a prize, a trophy for his trophy room. He is wallowing in his victory and laughing at God and the saints of God.

The risks are there if you are going to go. It could be physical, use wisdom, or you may be humiliated. You may go and actually be rejected by that brother or sister. The so-called religious may say look who he buddies with. Yet the disciple went.

And, may I add, it could get messy. We have to beware of what we are entering into, and be prepared accordingly, hence 4 points of our study today. We need all 4 points before, during, and after. These disciples are going for a body that has been beheaded. Things can get bloody when we go. John wasn't just a bible teacher, evangelist, prophet..... he was their friend; their hearts were connected. When you go, and see their state, physically and spiritually, it will get emotional. I hope it does, if there isn't emotional attachment, I don't we will go for them.

Point 2 - After the Death of John the Baptist, his Disciples – They Came

Mark 6:29 (NKJV) ²⁹ When his disciples heard of it, they came and took away his corpse and laid it in a tomb.

Who Will we Come For

They heard, then they came.

Who will we be coming for? Just look around you, every person in this room has the potential of falling, and /or falling away

- **Singles**- it can get real lonely being single. Its hard be sexually pure. It is easy to find ourselves spending more time with non-believers, because we like the company and would rather not be alone. But then gradually we find ourselves drifting away. It is probably easier for singles to slip by more so than anyone else, because they have the least accountability. Singles need to look out for each other
- **Our Elderly Brothers/Sisters**: They can be the Golden years, or, the lonely years. The years of enjoying retirement or looking back on regrets missed opportunities, lost relationships.
- **Substance users** – drugs and alcohol. If substance use was a big part of your past life, it is a powerful draw, that always seems to keep calling you. Have you ever had a mountain top experience with the Lord, and then find yourself the next day being drawn back, it is unexplainable. Or how about those times in the valley, where you just felt like checking out for a few days. Giving up, taking the so-called easy road. If you do, then you know how easy it is to fall back into it.
- **How about unequally yoked marriages**. Never being understood, never connecting in the fullest, the frustrations, and heartaches. It is easy to quit.
- **How about those parents of teens?** You pour your life into them, but you have to compete against Hollywood, teen magazine, and the WWF – its easy for them to be lured away by the shiny packaging of the world. And you feel defeated, and just want to quit.
- **But here is quite possibly the hardest fall**. The person who was so strong. That man or women who was faithfully serving at the church, witnessing on the job site. The one the Pastor said I can see God raising you up and using you for great and mighty things. But then they fall, and they seem to fall harder and farther then all the above, because they never thought it would happen to them.

When Person Come Forward / Baptized

It is a hard walk and we need to constantly be looking out for each other. When a person comes forward, or are baptized, or married before us, they are saying I am taking a stand for Christ, and we are saying we will stand beside you.

But Somehow, someday, people slip by us every day. I think we get so wrapped up in our busy lives, we don't take time to look around and see all that is happening to our brothers and sisters. Way too many times a beloved one gets taken out, and they are left on their own, no one goes to them.

Mogadishu Somalia

Oct. 3, 1993, Mogadishu, Somalia, the longest sustained firefight U.S. forces have engaged in since Vietnam. In 15 hours of horrendous street combat, 18 American troops were killed and 73 wounded. On the Somalia side 500 dead and 500 wounded.

The previous year 20,000 U.S. troops initially stopped a famine in late 1992 by taking control from feuding warlords

On that day in October 1993, a small U.S. force of 160 men with 19 aircraft and a dozen vehicles staged a midday assault into the busiest marketplace of a city of 1 million on the coast of Africa. Somehow, the Americans thought it could be done antiseptically. The plan was to get in and out quickly, capturing two top lieutenants of warlord Mohamed Farah Aidid, head of the powerful Habr Gidr clan and a man definitely not interested in any coalition-building.

But what happened that day was unimaginable, maybe you remember the footage on CNN. American soldiers mutilated bodies being paraded through the street of Mogadishu

They were our elite U.S. Army Rangers and special Delta Force secret operatives swept in aboard their powerful Black Hawk helicopters, hundreds of Aidid's gunmen began converging.

All wore desert camouflage fatigues, with Kevlar vests and helmets and about 50 pounds of equipment and ammo. All had goggles and thick leather gloves. Those layers of gear made even the slightest of them look bulky, robotic, and intimidating.

Soon the Americans were fighting a pitched battle. Then one of the Black Hawks went down, and another. U.S. pilot Mike Durant was captured by the mob, a rescue convoy ambushed and shot to pieces. After a night of desperate combat, the Americans were finally pulled out by a large U.N. force.

The enemy was able to make strategic moves, position soldiers in key places, because they knew there was one thing they could bank on. And it is the one thing every military commander who fights American forces know. American Armed Forces always come back for their own, they never leave them to fight a battle on their own.

Soldier's Creed – US Army

- I am an American Soldier.
- I am a warrior and a member of a team.
- I serve the people of the United States, and live the Army Values.
- I will always place the mission first.
- I will never accept defeat.
- I will never quit.
- I will never leave a fallen comrade.
- I am disciplined, physically and mentally tough, trained and proficient in my warrior tasks and drills.
- I always maintain my arms, my equipment and myself.
- I am an expert and I am a professional.
- I stand ready to deploy, engage, and destroy, the enemies of the United States of America in close combat.
- I am a guardian of freedom and the American way of life.
- I am an American Soldier.

I pray every enemy of God will always know this, that we will be coming back for our own, we will not let them fight the battle alone, we will come to them at whatever the cost or risk, WE ARE COMING BACK FOR OUR OWN.

Point 3 - After the Death of John the Baptist, his Disciples – They Took

Mark 6:29 (NKJV) ²⁹ When his disciples heard of it, they came and took away his corpse and laid it in a tomb.

Coming for What Belongs to Father

They heard, they came, now they take. We are coming to take back what rightly belongs to our Father. And when we “get” them back, we have just established something that is mighty and powerful, asa tremendous demonstration and testimony of love that can never be challenged by the enemy..... as the person will say, wow.... You came back for me.

The Greatest Demonstration of Love – to the Person

And what a great demonstration of love. To the Person we go to, coming to a brother/sister in their lowest moment is one of the greatest demonstrations of love we can show for another.

People must always know that no matter what they have done, this church will accept them and love them. For those seeking acceptance, that CCAAC is the place to go. Some will come to church, and CCAAC is their last hope of being accepted.

Time to come is not when they are back in church, but when they “slip-back”. Years ago, when I lived in Florida, was a single man, and had a job that would put me on the road for weeks at a time. Which I might add, even on the road I went to church every Sunday somewhere, and midweek when possible. But often, more times than once, several times, I would come back from the road, go to my home church, and some spiritual person would say Ray we haven’t seen you for awhile, where have you been, and as I looked them in the eyes as I walked by and say, backslidden, thanks for calling. The time to come to them is not when they are back in church, but when they slip-back, backslide, drift away, go lukewarm, become casual.

Don’t Forsake Assembly of Brethren

You know one of the signs of the Last Days will be the believers forsaking the assembly of the brethren. I am making a plea from my heart, the heart of God Himself, Christian don’t forsake this assembly of the brethren. The Devil wants to separate you, and as a coal separate from the other hot coals of the fire, a separate coal eventually grows cold, loses its fire. And while you are here, connect with people. We will never know who is gone, if we don’t know who was here. And that goes even for the strong, how will anyone know if you are gone, if nobody knew you were here.

Hebrews 10:23–25 (NKJV) ²³ Let us hold fast the confession of our hope without wavering, for He who promised is faithful. ²⁴ And let us consider one another in order to stir up love and good works, ²⁵ not forsaking the assembling of ourselves together, as is the manner of some, but exhorting one another, and so much the more as you see the Day approaching.

The Greatest Demonstration of Love – to the World

And, one of the greatest demonstrations of love for the world to see, is our love one for another. It has been said “Great thoughts speak only to the thoughtful mind, but great actions speak to all mankind - Emily Bissell”.

John 13:35 (NKJV) ³⁵ By this all will know that you are My disciples, if you have love for one another.”

The world will see our love one for another and know there is something special we have.

The Death of Stephen / Devout Men Came for Him

The example set by John’s disciples, carried over to Stephen’s friends.

Acts 7:59–8:2 (NKJV) ⁵⁹ And they stoned Stephen as he was calling on God and saying, “Lord Jesus, receive my spirit.” ⁶⁰ Then he knelt down and cried out with a loud voice, “Lord, do not charge them with this sin.” And when he had said this, he fell asleep. ¹ Now Saul was consenting to his death. At that time a great persecution arose against the church which was at Jerusalem; and they were all scattered throughout the regions of Judea and Samaria, except the apostles. ² And devout men carried Stephen to his burial, and made great lamentation over him.

It is interesting that John is the first martyr, and his disciples came for him, and the second martyr, Stephen, his disciples came for him.

Notice in verse 2, God calls those who come to get a fallen brother as “devout”

Vines definition of Devout. “To taking hold of well”. And, “Careful as to the realization of the presence of God”. When you go to take hold of well (that brother or sister), you will realize the presence of God, because God will go with you, because He desires to rescue them, for they are His possession, they are image bearers, and they are bought with a price, the precious blood of His Son, and what one is willing to pay for something, shows and determines its worth. That brother or sister are priceless, for look at their purchase price.

The Death of Saul / Valiant Men

When Saul and his sons were killed in battle by the Philistines, we read of how the Philistines took their bodies, cut off the head of at least Saul, stripped him of his armor, and fastened his body (and his sons) to a wall for all to see, as if hoisting a trophy. And it says that ‘Valiant Men’ arose, traveled all night, and took their bodies down and brought them back into the land. I like that, we read of devout men, and now we read of valiant men. Valiant

means, “mighty, those of strength, and power”. Simply those who wont accept defeat, and come at whatever the price, ready and willing for a fight with the enemy, to get the Father’s possessions back.

1 Samuel 31:8–13 (NKJV) ⁸ So it happened the next day, when the Philistines came to strip the slain, that they found Saul and his three sons fallen on Mount Gilboa. ⁹ And they cut off his head and stripped off his armor, and sent word throughout the land of the Philistines, to proclaim it in the temple of their idols and among the people. ¹⁰ Then they put his armor in the temple of the Ashtoreths, and they fastened his body to the wall of Beth Shan. ¹¹ Now when the inhabitants of Jabesh Gilead heard what the Philistines had done to Saul, ¹² all the valiant men arose and traveled all night, and took the body of Saul and the bodies of his sons from the wall of Beth Shan; and they came to Jabesh and burned them there. ¹³ Then they took their bones and buried them under the tamarisk tree at Jabesh, and fasted seven days.

World Doesn’t Need to Know Details

And by the way, when a brother or sister are taken down, taken out, the world doesn’t need to know the details. This is a family affair and is family business, and none of their business.

When Go – You have Special Bond

When you go, there is a special bond that is built. You will earn the right to speak into their life.

Devout & Valiant – GO!

Devout and Valiant Brothers and Sisters Go!

Point 4 - After the Death of John the Baptist, his Disciples – They Told

Mark 6:29 (NKJV) ²⁹ When his disciples heard of it, they came and took away his corpse and laid it in a tomb.

They heard, they went, they took, and now.....

Matthew’s Account

In Matthew’s account, we are told that after they went and got the body of John the Baptist, they then went and told Jesus.

Matthew 14:10–12 (NKJV) ¹⁰ So he sent and had John beheaded in prison. ¹¹ And his head was brought on a platter and given to the girl, and she brought it to her mother. ¹² Then his disciples came and took away the body and buried it, and went and told Jesus.

Power of Intercession

They told Jesus. Intercession, there is a power in intercession.

There will be times, there will be situation, where you cant reach them, or they wont respond to you, or maybe even reject you because they don’t want to repent. Take them to Jesus.

What a privilege we have to approach the throne of God and take them before Him. What power there is to intercede and battle the Devil where the battle really wages, in the spiritual realm. This is a spiritual battle beloved, we see the physical results, and think this is a physical battle, but the physical is only the visible of what is and has happened in the spiritual realm. Let us fight for them in the spiritual realm. But let never be underestimated, when you go into the spiritual realm, there will be a price to pay, we like to say there is a price to pay, to which I say there is a price to pay, and prayer will come will the forces of hell not willing to let that person go, to give them back, for Satan loves destroying image-bearers. But beloved, this is where the battle is fought, in the spiritual realm, so you and I have to go tell Jesus about what has happened.

2 Corinthians 10:3–6 (NKJV) ³ For though we walk in the flesh, we do not war according to the flesh. ⁴ For the weapons of our warfare are not carnal but mighty in God for pulling down strongholds, ⁵ casting down arguments and every high thing that exalts itself against the knowledge of God, bringing every thought into captivity to the obedience of Christ, ⁶ and being ready to punish all disobedience when your obedience is fulfilled.

Ephesians 6:10–13 (NKJV) ¹⁰ Finally, my brethren, be strong in the Lord and in the power of His might. ¹¹ Put on the whole armor of God, that you may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil. ¹² For we do not wrestle against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this age, against spiritual hosts of wickedness in the heavenly places. ¹³ Therefore take up the whole armor of God, that you may be able to withstand in the evil day, and having done all, to stand.

Pray for them by Name – and In the Name of Jesus (from Peter Lord's 29:59 Prayer Book)

Here is a remarkable testimony which should be of real help to many. Since the nature of the testimony is personal, the writer requested that her name be withheld.

The letter accompanying this testimony says in part: "This is the result of my search for the right way of praying for the unsaved. I have found it to produce amazing results in a very short time. After more than 20 years of fruitless praying, it seemed that there was no possible chance for my loved ones to ever return to the faith. But after only a few weeks of the type of praying that I have outlined here, I have seen them studying the Bible by the hour and attending every church service possible. Also, their whole attitude toward Christianity has changed, and all resistance seems to be gone. I have taken my place of authority in Christ and am using it against the enemy. I have not looked at myself to see if I am fit or not; I have just taken my place and have prayed that the Holy Spirit may do His convicting work. If each and every member of the Body of Christ would do this, what a change would be made in this world."

Believers everywhere are burdened for unsaved or backsliding loved ones. However, many are praying in the spirit of fear and worry instead of in faith.

This has caused me to seek for definite light on how to pray, feeling the need of praying the right prayer and also the need for a definite promise or word from God on which to base my faith when praying for the unsaved. Praise God - He never fails to give such needed help.

Perhaps because the salvation of some seemed to me to be an impossibility, the first verse of Scripture that was given to me was Mark 10:27: "With God all things are possible."

The next Scripture verse had occupied my attention for some time, but it took on a new meaning: "For the weapons of our warfare are not carnal, but mighty through God to the pulling down of strong holds, casting down imaginations (speculations) and every high thing that exalteth itself against the knowledge of God and bringing into captivity every thought to the obedience of Christ." (II Cor. 10:4, 5) This shows the mighty power of our spiritual weapons. We must pray that all of this will be accomplished in the ones for whom we are concerned; that is, that the works of the Enemy will be torn down.

Finally, I was given the solid foundation for my prayers - the basis of redemption. In reality, Christ's redemption purchased all mankind, so that we may say that each one is actually God's purchased possession, although he is still held by the Enemy. We must, through the prayer of faith, claim and take for God, in the name of the Lord Jesus, that which is rightfully His. This can be done only on the basis of redemption. This is not meant to imply that, because all persons have been purchased by God through redemption, they are automatically saved. They must believe and accept the gospel for themselves; our intercession enables them to do this.

To pray in the name of the Lord Jesus is to ask for, or to claim, the things which the blood of Christ has secured. Therefore, each individual for whom prayer is made should be claimed by name as God's purchased possession, in the name of the Lord Jesus and on the basis of His shed blood.

We should claim the tearing down of all the works of Satan, such as false doctrine, unbelief, atheistic teaching and hatred, which the enemy may have built up in their thinking. We must pray that their very thoughts will be brought into captivity to the obedience of Christ.

With the authority of the name of the Lord Jesus, we must claim their deliverance from the power and persuasion of the Evil One and from the love of the world and the lust of the flesh. We should also pray that their conscience may be convicted, that God may bring them to the point of repentance and that they may listen and believe as they hear or read the Word of God. Our prayer must be that God's will and purposes may be accomplished in and through them.

Intercession must be persistent- not to persuade God, for redemption is by God, but because of the Enemy. Our prayer and resistance are against the enemy- the awful powers and rulers of dark ness. It is our duty before God to fight for the souls for whom Christ died. Just as some must preach to them the good news of redemption, others must fight the powers of darkness on their behalf through prayer.

Satan yields only what and when he must, and he renews his attacks in subtle ways. Therefore, prayer must be definite and persistent, even long after definite results are seen. And we must pray for the new Christian even after he begins to be established in the faith.

We will find that as we pray, the Holy Spirit will give new directions. At one time I was interceding for a soul and began to feel that my prayers were largely ineffective. Then the Holy Spirit inspired me to begin presenting that person to God in the name of the Lord Jesus. As I obeyed this leading, praying, "I present so-and-so to God in the name of the Lord Jesus," I felt that my prayers were gradually becoming more effective. It seemed that I was drawing that person from deep within the very camp of the Enemy. Then I was able to proceed as usual, claiming every detail of that life for God, using the power of the blood against the Enemy. This is true warfare in the spiritual realm. Thank God that our spiritual weapons are mighty and that our authority in Christ is far above all the authority of the rulers, powers, and forces of darkness, so that the Enemy must yield. But it takes faith and patience and persistence.

Missionaries on foreign and home fields can resist the Enemy in their districts, communities, and schools by using the power of the blood of Jesus against the powers of darkness, sin, and unbelief with the authority of the name of the Lord Jesus they can demand that the Enemy retreat.

Note that "it is the spirit that quickeneth; the flesh profiteth nothing." (John 6:63) and that "the letter killeth, but the spirit giveth life" (II Corinthians 3:6). Therefore, we must constantly seek the motivation of the Holy Spirit in our hearts, in our faith, in our prayer, and in our testimony. It is most important, also, that we confess our own sins and have them forgiven. The Enemy will use every possible means to silence our intercession and to block our attack against him. We must not only understand our Enemy, our authority in Christ and how to use our spiritual weapons, but also how to wear the armor that God has provided for our protection. Thus equipped and protected, we need not have any fear. But let us always remember that we have no power and no authority other than that of Christ."

Intercession & Going – powerful Bond Established

Intercession, coupled with going, builds a powerful relationship. The two of you will have a special bond, for they will know your heart. And you will have earned a right to speak into their life, and they will know who cared enough to come, in the time when they needed it the most. And, as you intercede, your heart will be knit and bound, and bonded to them.

The Gospel – as Seen in Genesis

The Old Testament predicts the coming of a Rescuer, One who will repair the damage caused by Eden's evil intruder (the Devil - a dark prince who spoiled God's creation). Numerous prophecies, predictions, and allusions point to both the first and second coming of the Messiah, Jesus Christ. These form the trail mapping God's plan to save mankind—a scarlet thread of redemption woven throughout the Scriptures. The first thread was woven after the fall, when Jesus was introduced as the Seed of the woman who will overcome Satan (Genesis 3: 15). We also see a symbol of salvation in Noah's ark (like Jesus, the sole means of salvation), Jacob's ladder (presaging Jesus as the only connection we have to God in heaven), and in the parallels between Joseph and Jesus: both were betrayed by loved ones and sold, and both played mediators between life and death. God's redemptive plan goes back to the beginning of time. And Jesus came as the Great Rescuer, who fought all hell had, to redeem man, and God offers Himself to you today. The thread was a substitute, a trade, as God traded places with you, took your sin, and you (if willing) can be washed clean of your sin, and take a place as a son or daughter.

John 1:29 (NKJV) ²⁹ The next day John saw Jesus coming toward him, and said, "Behold! The Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world!"

Romans 10:9–13 (NKJV) ⁹ that if you confess with your mouth the Lord Jesus and believe in your heart that God has raised Him from the dead, you will be saved. ¹⁰ For with the heart one believes unto righteousness, and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation. ¹¹ For the Scripture says, “Whoever believes on Him will not be put to shame.” ¹² For there is no distinction between Jew and Greek, for the same Lord over all is rich to all who call upon Him. ¹³ For “whoever calls on the name of the LORD shall be saved.”

Conclusion:

After the Death of John the Baptist, his Disciples:

1. They Heard
2. They Came
3. They Took
4. They Told

So who will you write today, call today, go to today? Who will you pray for, intercede for today?

Prayer – Boldly Ask Your God

The Word of God is Living and Powerful, and is ready, and will do a mighty work in our lives.

Hebrews 4:12 (NKJV) ¹² For the word of God is living and powerful, and sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing even to the division of soul and spirit, and of joints and marrow, and is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart.

In Every Study

- Who Is God? (How Great is He?)
- What Does He Think of Me? (How Wonderful Are His Thoughts Towards Me?)
- What Does He Want Me to Do?
- What Can I Boldly Request of Him?
- What Do I Need to Be on Guard of When I Leave Here Today?

Boldly come to the throne of grace, ask God to reveal Himself in a mighty way to you, and to do I might work in you, and through you.

Hebrews 4:16 (NKJV) ¹⁶ Let us therefore come boldly to the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy and find grace to help in time of need.

There is a Prayer Team Available to Pray with and for You

End of Study

Mark 6:30-44

The Feeding of the 5,000 - They All Ate and Were Filled

This Book is amazing:

- The first printed book was.....the Bible
- The Number 1 selling book in the world year in and year out.....the Bible
- The First National Emergency declared in America.....printing of more.....Bibles
- More movies were made based on this book than any other.
- More books were written from this one book.
- In countries like China and India where Bibles are hard to come by, everybody gets one page, and then at the end of the week when they come back together, they trade pages.
- And we get to freely study it today – and let us cherish that opportunity.

Outline Mark 6:

- A Prophet is Not Honored in His Hometown (6:1-6)
- Jesus Sends Out the Twelve (6:7-13)
- John the Baptist is Beheaded (6:14-29)
- Jesus Feeds the Five Thousand (6:30-44)
- Jesus Walks on Water (6:45-52)
- Many Touch Jesus and Are Made Well (6:53-56)

Recap/Intro

We have come as far as verse 30 of chapter 6 in our verse-by-verse study through the Book of Mark. And today we come to one of the most well-known stories, miracles, in the Bible and that is the feeding of the 5,000 (but that is not totally accurate as it says 5,000 men, so add woman and children and we are at the feeding of 15-20 thousand). This story is recorded in all four of the Gospels (Matt. 14:13–21; Luke 9:11–17; John 6:1–14). Jesus performed miracles to prove He was God, but also each miracle has a spiritual application that goes with it. And spiritually, the Lord feeds us His Word.

I have noticed that there is a continual increase of people, churches, bloggers attacking churches and pastors who, still teach the law, the Old Testament. And they say the law only binds, grace is what sets people free, but their statement counters the very word of God which Psalm 19:7-8 says, the law is perfect for converting the soul. This word of God, it is the basic instructions for life and how to live a life that is abundant and a life of godliness and in the same word, Psalm 138 that God magnifies his word above his name and how powerful is the name of Jesus who at the name of Jesus, every knee will bow and every tongue will confess, that Jesus Christ is the Lord.

Psalm 19:7–8 (NKJV) ⁷ The law of the LORD is perfect, converting the soul; The testimony of the LORD is sure, making wise the simple; ⁸ The statutes of the LORD are right, rejoicing the heart; The commandment of the LORD is pure, enlightening the eyes;

Psalm 138:2 (NKJV) ² I will worship toward Your holy temple, And praise Your name For Your lovingkindness and Your truth; For You have magnified Your word above all Your name.

Philippians 2:9–11 (NKJV) ⁹ Therefore God also has highly exalted Him and given Him the name which is above every name, ¹⁰ that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of those in heaven, and of those on earth, and of those under the earth, ¹¹ and that every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father.

Some Books Inform – Bible Transforms / You Hold a Living Book in Your Hand

Some books inform and there's hundreds of millions of books that informed, but there's only one book that transforms and you hold it in your hand today.

In John chapter one we're told that the Word became flesh and that Word was none other than Jesus Christ. Hebrews chapter four tells us that this Word is living and powerful and sharper than a two-edged sword. What you hold in your hand is a book that is alive. It's not dead history, it's his story and it doesn't inform, it transforms. And this comes alive as we enter into it and interact act with it, and I'm reminded the Day of the Resurrection, Jesus on the Road to Emmaus, those two disciples walking and Jesus opens the Word of God to them from Moses all the

way through the prophets and to what those men would say did not our heart burn within us when he opened the scripture to us. And here we have a book that doesn't inform, it transforms. It's a book that comes alive and it's a book that makes us alive and it's a book that shows us how to live and have life and that abundant. What a glorious book, what glorious privilege that we hold in our hands today.

John 1:1-2 (NKJV) ¹ In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. ² He was in the beginning with God.

John 1:14 (NKJV) ¹⁴ And the Word became flesh and dwelt among us, and we beheld His glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth.

Luke 24:32 (NKJV) ³² And they said to one another, "Did not our heart burn within us while He talked with us on the road, and while He opened the Scriptures to us?"

Hebrews 4:12-13 (NKJV) ¹² For the word of God is living and powerful, and sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing even to the division of soul and spirit, and of joints and marrow, and is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart. ¹³ And there is no creature hidden from His sight, but all things are naked and open to the eyes of Him to whom we must give account.

Prayer – Boldly Ask Your God

The Word of God is Living and Powerful, and is ready, and will do a mighty work in our lives.

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Hebrews 4:16 (NKJV) ¹⁶ Let us therefore come boldly to the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy and find grace to help in time of need.

There is a Prayer Team Available to Pray with and for You

Mark 6:30 Then the apostles gathered to Jesus and told Him all things, both what they had done and what they had taught.

Mark 6:31 And He said to them, "Come aside by yourselves to a deserted place and rest a while." For there were many coming and going, and they did not even have time to eat.

Mark 6:32 So they departed to a deserted place in the boat by themselves.

Returning from Being Sent Out

So for context, the 12 had been sent out by Jesus (v.7), and they are now returning.

Mark 6:7 (NKJV) ⁷ And He called the twelve to Himself, and began to send them out two by two, and gave them power over unclean spirits.

Rejoice – Name Written in Lamb's Book (Written in Permanent Blood Ink)

Verse 30. They come back, they're all fired up from a mission trip, but Jesus says, yeah, that's awesome. But you know what's more awesome Jesus will tell them when he sends the 70 out and they return ? Rejoice that your names are written in the Lamb's Book of Life and that's what we need to rejoice always. Ministry can go up and ministry can go down, but our name Lamb's Book of Life that's in permanent ink, blood ink at that. And we can rejoice in that it is done in.

Luke 10:20 (NKJV) ²⁰ Nevertheless do not rejoice in this, that the spirits are subject to you, but rather rejoice because your names are written in heaven."

Revelation 21:27 (NKJV) ²⁷ But there shall by no means enter it anything that defiles, or causes an abomination or a lie, but only those who are written in the Lamb's Book of Life.

John 19:30 (NKJV) ³⁰ So when Jesus had received the sour wine, He said, "It is finished!" And bowing His head, He gave up His spirit.

Come Away – or Come Apart

Jesus says, that's awesome. Now let's go away. Spend some time together. Just a little respite. He doesn't say, let's go away for days, weeks, months. Let's just go away for a period of time here, a night, and spend time together. And this has been said, if you don't come away, you'll come apart. There're times to simply sit with Jesus, hear his heart, and then get up and go. Take the heart that was imparted and give it to those we minister to.

They Told Jesus Everything

Verse 30. It says, they told Jesus everything they did and what they had taught, and that's a good principle for life. It's for good principle for ministry, for your marriage, and as you can talk to Jesus about anything, your school, your work, anything, he loves to hear from you. He loves to hear what's going on in your life because he simply loves you and he loves being with you.

But oh, how he loves to talk to you about what you have been teaching. How did they respond Ray? What passage did you share? What did you glean from it and the key is to talk to Jesus before you teach and then talk to him after you teach because he loves to give you manna from Heaven, for you to partake for yourself personally and then for you to give out to others outwardly. Jesus is the great I am that appeared before Moses and identifies himself continually through the gospels. I am and that means the becoming one. I am the becoming one and I will become to you all that you need and many of the ways that it becomes though us is through this word as if declared to us. And it doesn't inform, but it transforms, and it leads us. He says, I will become to you all that you need, and I'll do that through my word until I speak and guide you.

Exodus 3:14–15 (NKJV) ¹⁴ And God said to Moses, "I AM WHO I AM." And He said, "Thus you shall say to the children of Israel, 'I AM has sent me to you.'" ¹⁵ Moreover God said to Moses, "Thus you shall say to the children of Israel: 'The LORD God of your fathers, the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob, has sent me to you. This is My name forever, and this is My memorial to all generations.'

Mark 6:33 (NKJV) But the multitudes saw them departing, and many knew Him and ran there on foot from all the cities. They arrived before them and came together to Him.

(Mark 6:34) And Jesus, when He came out, saw a great multitude and was moved with compassion for them, because they were like sheep not having a shepherd. So He began to teach them many things.

Compassion Teaches

Notice what Jesus does when He is moved with compassion, He teaches them.

- When God sees sin knocking at your door, He wants to teach you to protect you.
- When He sees the trial in your life He wants to teach you to comfort you.
- When you have doubts, He wants to teach you to assure you.

Read the Passage

Just as bread nourishes our body physically; God's Word nourishes our body spiritually. How God feed these people bread, is also how He wants to feed us His Word. Let's Read for context this miracle, and come back for the spiritual application:

Mark 6:35–44 (NKJV) ³⁵ When the day was now far spent, His disciples came to Him and said, "This is a deserted place, and already the hour is late." ³⁶ Send them away, that they may go into the surrounding country and villages and buy themselves bread; for they have nothing to eat." ³⁷ But He answered and said to them, "You give them something to eat." And they said to Him, "Shall we go and buy two hundred denarii worth of bread and give them something to eat?" ³⁸ But He said to them, "How many loaves do you have? Go and see." And when they found out they said, "Five, and two fish." ³⁹ Then He commanded them to make them all sit down in groups on the green grass. ⁴⁰ So they sat down in ranks, in hundreds and in fifties. ⁴¹ And when He had taken the five loaves and the two fish, He looked up to heaven, blessed and broke the loaves, and gave them to His disciples to set before them; and the two fish He divided among them all. ⁴² So they all ate and were filled. ⁴³ And they took up twelve baskets full of fragments and of the fish. ⁴⁴ Now those who had eaten the loaves were about five thousand men.

The Dream Cruise

Many years ago, there was a man who worked in a Sea Port town. Day in and day out he would watch the Cruise Ships come in and go out. He dreamed of someday being a passenger on one of those ships and going to a faraway land that he never saw before.

Well he was determined to turn his dream into a reality. He started to save his money, almost to the point of being a miser, but every day, a penny here a dollar there, and over the years he saved enough to purchase a ticket on a cruise.

He arrived early, enjoyed all the excitement of being on such a fabulous vessel, was in awe watching all the people board and their excitement. He was overjoyed with the fanfare of throwing confetti and leaving the port.

Unfortunately, this is where his joy ended. After a few hours into the cruise he began to be hungry, he peered into the window of the dining room and he watched the people stuffing themselves with every food imaginable. Shrimp, steak, lobsters, lush fruits and vegetables. The more he watched the more saddened he become. He wished that he money in his pocket to go buy some food, but he had spent every last cent he had on his ticket.

Evening came, the warmth of the sun was replaced by the chill of Atlantic breeze. As he watched everyone retire to their private cabins, the chill grew deeper in his bones. He found a blanket, and wrapped himself tightly in it, and slept on a chair on the deck outside.

For three days this went on. People stuffing themselves in front of him and fighting off the cold sleeping outside on the Atlantic Ocean. What was expected to be his dream experience, turned into joyless days.

One night while security was making their rounds, they stumbled upon him. You man, what are you doing sleeping on the deck. The man replied I have no room. No room they cried, we have a stowaway here. Call the Captain. Put this man in handcuffs, and at the next port we turn you over to the authorities. The man cried I am not a stowaway, I have a ticket, see. I ate no food nor slept in a room, but I have a ticket to be own this ship. The captain came and looked at the ticket, its real all right, he is a paid passenger.

The captain looked at the man sadly, turning the ticket over to the back, sir, if only you would have read the ticket, you would have known that your paid ticket not only included passage on the ship, but everything else.....food, room with a bed and shower, entertainment, and use of all the facilities.....if only you would have read the ticket.

The sad part is that this is a true story. And it is even sadder to say that this is a picture of so many Christians today. They have gained entrance into the Kingdom God but miss out on so many blessings that He has for His children, because they fail to read the TICKET.

Every Spiritual Blessing

The Lord has blessed us with every spiritual blessing in the heavenly places in Christ

[Ephesians 1:3 \(NKJV\)](#) ³ Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who has blessed us with every spiritual blessing in the heavenly places in Christ,

Give a Fish – Teach to Fish

It's been said; Give someone a fish, feed them for a day. Teach them to fish, feed them for a life. The Lord wants to give us a banquet today, and tomorrow, and for life.

5 Keys to Fruitful Bible Study

I see here in our passage today, 5 keys here to a fruitful Bible study, 5 keys to enrich our studies.

- Key 1 Expect God to Give you something every time you study (6:35-38)
- Key 2: Get Comfortable before you study (6:39-40)
- Key 3: Pray Before you read (6:41)
- Key 4: Break the Word Down (6:41)
- Key 5: God wants you to Give it Out what He has given you (6:41-44)

Key 1 To a Fruitful Bible Study; Expect God to Give you something every time you study (6:35-38).

(Mark 6:35 NKJV) When the day was now far spent, His disciples came to Him and said, "This is a deserted place, and already the hour is late.

(Mark 6:36 NKJV) "Send them away, that they may go into the surrounding country and villages and buy themselves bread; for they have nothing to eat."

(Mark 6:37 NKJV) But He answered and said to them, "You give them something to eat." And they said to Him, "Shall we go and buy two hundred denarii worth of bread and give them something to eat?"

(Mark 6:38 NKJV) But He said to them, "How many loaves do you have? Go and see." And when they found out they said, "Five, and two fish."

Key 1 To a Fruitful Bible Study; Expect God to Give you something every time you study (6:35-38).

Notice, here the disciples are saying we have nothing. It's late, were tired, I see nothing. How many times I have said that, I see nothing, yet God says look again.

If you only receive one thing today, let it be this; Every time you read the Bible, expect God to give you something. Brethren, It will revolutionize your Study's. When you're convinced it's true, you'll look forward to your studies, your studies will never be the same.

This is a place where God wants you to be a glutton. Feasting on God's Word is the ultimate High Carb/High Protein Diet. Forget the Atkins Diet, the Phen Phen plan, the Zone – God wants you to eat up, no dieting. This book is powerful, and God wants you to know its power. He wants you to expect something from Him.

Key 2 To a Fruitful Bible Study; Get Comfortable before you study (6:39-40)

(Mark 6:39 NKJV) Then He commanded them to make them all sit down in groups on the green grass.

(Mark 6:40 NKJV) So they sat down in ranks, in hundreds and in fifties.

Key 2 To a Fruitful Bible Study; Get Comfortable before you study (6:39-40)

Before Jesus fed them He had them **sit on the green grass**, not rocks or dirt, or on thorns, but on green grass. Can you picture the green grass all lush and soft. That's what God wants for us. Find a place to study His Word where it is comfortable, where we won't become distracted because our back is sore.

My lush green grass is my chair at my desk in my study with my electric blanket at my feet. Get yourself some coffee, a cozy blanket, or whatever it is that make you comfortable enough to stay awhile. To me, and it is not because I am a pastor (in fact I purposely do not make my teaching preparation part of my personal devotion), but my favorite part of the day is my time in the morning just sitting with open Bible, open notebook and pen, highlighters, and my cup of hot coffee. Notice I said open notebook and pen, highlighters, because I expect God to give me something every time I sit before Him. I know He is going to serve me a banquet, because He has compassion on me, and when He is moved with compassion He teaches. Oh Ray He says, oh how you need this today, I know all that is going on in your life, your marriage, your children, your ministry, your health – sit here awhile and let me serve you.

Notice Jesus doesn't have them stand in line to get plates. He doesn't say everybody whose last name begins with A-M get in line first, then N-Z, or those with the Red Name-tags, then those with the Blue. No He has them sit, He is going to serve them and minister to them.

But do notice, there was order. He sat them in ranks, in hundreds, in fifties, there was order to the whole thing. I won't say it is impossible, but it is more likely to receive the Word from the Lord when there is order to your Bible study, as to randomness. Set your time when you study, as best you can, not when an opening opens and you have a few minutes. And setting an order that reduces distractions. Remember Mark 4, the bird (Satan) tries to pluck the seed before it can reach the heart.

Parents, I know it can be extremely hard for you, but let me encourage you that once your child is of the age to understand, that you establish in your household that when you are having your study time you are not to be

interrupted unless it is extremely important. Yes you may have to be firm, maybe even to the point of disciplining them; but you will not only be strengthening your soul for the day, but you will be planting Godly seeds in them as they see how important God's word is to you.

A Pastor told the story of a young boy in his church bookstore that said he wanted a Bible like his mommy's not his daddy's. They said well their all the same, he said no they're not, mommy's is more interesting than daddy's because he never reads his.

Key 3 To a Fruitful Bible Study; Pray Before you read (6:41).

(Mark 6:41 NKJV) And when He had taken the five loaves and the two fish, He looked up to heaven, blessed and broke the loaves, and gave them to His disciples to set before them; and the two fish He divided among them all.

Key 3 To a Fruitful Bible Study; Pray Before you read (6:41).

Verse 41 He took the bread and fish and **looked up to heaven** and **blessed** it. Jesus knew where to look, so do we. Before we begin any study, it is important that we look to God, the Holy Spirit to be our teacher.

[John 15:26 - 27 \(NKJV\)](#) ²⁶But when the Helper comes, whom I shall send to you from the Father, the Spirit of truth who proceeds from the Father, He will testify of Me. ²⁷And you also will bear witness, because you have been with Me from the beginning.

Pray that the Holy Spirit will speak to us through His Word, that He will reveal the passages to us, to teach us not only what it means, but also how we can apply it to our lives. Lord give me ears to hear and a heart to receive it. Don't let me leave here the same person I sat down as.

It is important that we do not become dull of hearing. It is easy to read something over and over and think that there is nothing new for us to learn, but that is the furthest from the truth. God wants to teach us something new every time we read the Bible.

Key 4 To a Fruitful Bible Study; Break the Word Down (6:41)

(Mark 6:41 NKJV) And when He had taken the five loaves and the two fish, He looked up to heaven, blessed and broke the loaves, and gave them to His disciples to set before them; and the two fish He divided among them all.

Key 4 To a Fruitful Bible Study; Break the Word Down (6:41)

What did He do after He blessed it? **He broke it** before He gave it to them. Notice Jesus didn't shove a whole loaf of bread down their throat. Nor would He try to shove the whole Bible down our throat. As we say, how do you eat an elephant? One bite at a time.

We set our goals for Bible reading: through the Bible in a year, or 3 chapters a day 2 in the OT and 1 in the NT. After a few months it just becomes a routine in our life. We forget what we read as soon as we put it down.

He broke it, and that is what we are to do. Take a little piece of the Bible and break it down. Break God's Word down into bite-size pieces. Chew on a verse or two. Put yourself in the story, get familiar with the history and culture for that time and place.

We must always be asking the question as we read, what does this mean, and what does it mean to me, how do I apply it to my life.

While working at the Space Center many years ago, I was a rocket mechanic working on the Atlas Centaur Rocket carry satellites into space. This rocket was approximately 20 stories tall, had 100,000 pounds of rocket fuel, the engines produced 500,000 pounds of thrust, and would travel at Mach 25 (which is roughly 18,000mph), to get to that speed we would have to fly around the earth and use the earth's rotation to slingshot the rocket into space, 23,000 miles above the earth in what is called geosynchronous orbit. The whole flight time was 23 minutes.

The rocket cost 100 million dollars, and the satellite cost 150 million dollars. So each launch was worth a quarter of a billion dollars. Once that rocket lifted off, there was no getting it back. The mission was either 100 percent success or 100 percent failure, basically it was all or nothing.

To give ourselves every chance for a successful mission, we did extensive testing on the launch pad for 3 months prior to the flight. We had a Test Manual and every test was pass or fail based on the “specifications” – “SPECS” as we called them. If a part was outside the “SPECS” then it was replaced at whatever the cost. If the SPEC said 100 or more, and the test results said 99.9, then it failed. The SPECS were our guidelines for mission success.

In God’s economy, 250 million dollars is chump change compared to one day in the life of one of His children’s, after all it was for us that He endured the Cross. And as I am studying the Word (The Life Manual for mission success), I have a set of SPECS I am constantly looking for as I read. SPECS, S..P...E..C..S;

S – Sins to Forsake -- There is no negotiation, they have to be forsaken:

- **1 Cor 6:9 - 11 (NKJV)** ⁹*Do you not know that the unrighteous will not inherit the kingdom of God? Do not be deceived. Neither fornicators, nor idolaters, nor adulterers, nor homosexuals, nor sodomites, ¹⁰nor thieves, nor covetous, nor drunkards, nor revilers, nor extortioners will inherit the kingdom of God. ¹¹And such were some of you. But you were washed, but you were sanctified, but you were justified in the name of the Lord Jesus and by the Spirit of our God.*
- **Ephesians 5:18 (NKJV)** ¹⁸ And do not be drunk with wine, in which is dissipation; but be filled with the Spirit,

P – Promises to Believe – God’s promises get me through the hard times. God’s promises warm my heart and soul as I read of His great love for me:

- **Jeremiah 29:11 - 13 (NKJV)** ¹¹*For I know the thoughts that I think toward you, says the LORD, thoughts of peace and not of evil, to give you a future and a hope. ¹²Then you will call upon Me and go and pray to Me, and I will listen to you. ¹³And you will seek Me and find Me, when you search for Me with all your heart.*
- Matthew 7:7-8 (NKJV) ⁷ “Ask, and it will be given to you; seek, and you will find; knock, and it will be opened to you. ⁸ For everyone who asks receives, and he who seeks finds, and to him who knocks it will be opened.
- Jeremiah 33:3 (NKJV) ³ ‘Call to Me, and I will answer you, and show you great and mighty things, which you do not know.’
- My God shall supply all my needs (Philp 4:19)
- I will never leave you nor forsake you (Heb 13:5)
- It is Finished (John 19:30)

E – Examples to Follow -- this book is loaded with great examples of great men and woman who followed after God:

- John the Baptist would not waiver or water down the Word. (Matt 14:1-12)
- Moses intercedes on behalf of the people after their great sin (Exodus 32).
- Jesus sees the hungry, so He feeds them (Mark 6)
- Jesus is moved with compassion, so He teaches the people (Mark 6:34)
- Sara called her husband Abraham Lord (haha) (1 Peter 3:6)

C – Commandments to Obey – They are not suggestions, but commands of God. The word command in the OT means “specifically”, and in the NT it means “an authoritative prescription”. I like that, this is the specific prescription from the Great Physician to make us well, and to keep us well:

- Study to show yourself approved unto God (2 Timothy 2:15)
- Go therefore and make disciples (Matt 28:19)
- Husbands love your wives as Christ loves the Church (Eph 5:25)

S – **Stumbling Blocks to Avoid** – Just as there are great examples to follow, there are great examples not to follow but to avoid.

- Peter warmed himself by the enemy's fire (John 18:18)
- Aaron feared man and made the golden calf (Exodus 32)
- And Lot pitched his tent towards Sodom (Genesis 13:12)

Make It Devotional – Fellowship with the Heart of God

And as we always say here, look for Jesus in every study.

- Who is God? You'll see his greatness. His love is compassion.
- What does He think of me? You'll see his great love and compassion for you.
- What does He want me to do? He'll lead and guide our steps because this word is living, but he also guards us as we talk about the specs, sins to forsake, promises to keep, examples to follow, commandments to obey and stumbling blocks to avoid. Boy there's some power in that. Look for Jesus in every study. Look for Jesus in every passage and you will find him there because this is his story, not just history.
- What can you boldly ask of Him, based on the word, we can see, hey, this word is living. It's not just a history book. IF this guy could boldly ask in the Bible (Peter, Jeremiah, Moses, etc) then so can I. It's written for me to be and to have.
- And of course, that evil one, he's always trying to disturb and distract and we'll see what to be on guard on regarding him and his ways and his wows because we live physically in a spiritual realm.

Be careful not to read this Bible for information. Read it for transformation and letting it change you from the inside out.

Turn it Into Worship

Don't just read it for information, or a to-do accomplishment for the day. Turn it into a worship, powerful prayers and the prayers that can be led by the scripture, (scripture fed spirit lead) as we let the scripture feed us on the word, the promises, the heart of God. And then the Holy Spirit moves among this word as he teaches us were told and we pray. We pray with power because we pray the Word of God. Now there's power, and that leads us into worship as we worship all that God is, all that we read of him and the amazement of Him. So don't just read it for information. Read it for transformation. Read it to empower your prayer time. Read it to elevate and lift up in your worship. And read it to meet with the heart of God himself.

Key 5 To a Fruitful Bible Study; God wants you to Give it Out what He has given you (6:41-44)

(Mark 6:41 NKJV) And when He had taken the five loaves and the two fish, He looked up to heaven, blessed and broke the loaves, and gave them to His disciples to set before them; and the two fish He divided among them all.

(Mark 6:42 NKJV) So they all ate and were filled.

(Mark 6:43 NKJV) And they took up twelve baskets full of fragments and of the fish.

(Mark 6:44 NKJV) Now those who had eaten the loaves were about five thousand men

Key 5 To a Fruitful Bible Study; God wants you to Give it Out what He has given you (6:41-44)

Notice the end of Verse 41. **Jesus gave it to His disciples to hand out.** Ever notice how many times your daily reading is the perfect word for someone you meet that day who is struggling. If you study cause you want to feed others, God is going to bless your studies abundantly.

And notice the result when God Feeds You.

Verse 42 What happened when they ate? **They were filled.** Filled means, "to the top, lacking nothing." That is what happens to us when we take in the Word of God, we will be filled lacking in nothing.

When you are filled, you don't want junk food. You won't desire the things of this world, cause you have peace. When we feast on God's Word we will be content, we will have peace, all because we have a deep personal relationship with Him. Our relationship will be deep, because we will know all about Him and be able to put all of our trust in Him.

- Lord I'm Tired; He breaks the bread and hands it to you, here refresh yourself
- Lord I'm not sure I can make it through the day, He breaks the bread and hands it to you, now you can.
- Lord the journey is so long; He breaks the bread and hands it to you, here's strength for the journey.
- Lord do you really love me, He breaks the bread and hands it to you. Read my love letter to you.

And notice, **They took up leftovers**. God always gives in abundance, He is not going to leave us lacking. God wants to teach you so much about Himself that not only will you be filled, you can feed others, and there will still be leftovers.

Conclusion

5 Keys to a Fruitful Bible Study:

- **Key 1 Expect God to Give you something every time you study**
- **Key 2: Get Comfortable before you study**
- **Key 3: Pray Before you read**
- **Key 4: Break the Word Down**
- **Key 5: God wants you to Give it Out what He has given you**

This Spiritual Cruise that we are on comes with all the Spiritual Blessings; Read the Ticket, it will tell you.

Prayer – Boldly Ask Your God

The Word of God is Living and Powerful, and is ready, and will do a mighty work in our lives.

Hebrews 4:12 (NKJV) ¹² For the word of God is living and powerful, and sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing even to the division of soul and spirit, and of joints and marrow, and is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart.

In Every Study

- Who Is God? (How Great is He?)
- What Does He Think of Me? (How Wonderful Are His Thoughts Towards Me?)
- What Does He Want Me to Do?
- What Can I Boldly Request of Him?
- What Do I Need to Be on Guard of When I Leave Here Today?

Boldly come to the throne of grace, ask God to reveal Himself in a mighty way to you, and to do I might work in you, and through you.

Hebrews 4:16 (NKJV) ¹⁶ Let us therefore come boldly to the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy and find grace to help in time of need.

There is a Prayer Team Available to Pray with and for You

End of Study

Mark 6:45-56

Outline Mark 6:

- A Prophet is Not Honored in His Hometown (6:1-6)
- Jesus Sends Out the Twelve (6:7-13)
- John the Baptist is Beheaded (6:14-29)
- Jesus Feeds the Five Thousand (6:30-44)
- Jesus Walks on Water (6:45-52)
- Many Touch Jesus and Are Made Well (6:53-56)

Recap/Intro

We have come as far as verse 45 in chapter 6 of the Book of Mark. Jesus' popularity is at its highest, the religious leaders plotting Jesus' death is in full attack mode (it is one year from the cross based on John's account when the feeding of the 5,000 occurred), but Jesus keeps on with the mission, His calling, to redeem man, rescue man, from their sin that separates them from the Father in heaven. His mission is for any and all men that will willingly come to Him. Last week we studied the miracle of the feeding of the 5,000, and today we will see another great miracle, as Jesus will walk on water. Every miracle had purpose to show that Jesus was God, by doing things that only God could do, and for every physical miracle, there was a spiritual application for to glean. Today Jesus will walk on water, getting to the disciples in the boat, who were in the middle of a long, long trial as the winds and the waves were against them.

John 6:4-5 (NKJV) ⁴ Now the Passover, a feast of the Jews, was near. ⁵ Then Jesus lifted up His eyes, and seeing a great multitude coming toward Him, He said to Philip, "Where shall we buy bread, that these may eat?"

Acts 2:22-23 (NKJV) ²² "Men of Israel, hear these words: Jesus of Nazareth, a Man attested by God to you by miracles, wonders, and signs which God did through Him in your midst, as you yourselves also know—²³ Him, being delivered by the determined purpose and foreknowledge of God, you have taken by lawless hands, have crucified, and put to death;

Anybody in a trial? Has anybody ever been in a trial (haha – what kind of question is that), if you haven't been in a trial, can I give you one of mine, I have plenty at any given time and would gladly love to offload a few (haha).

Trials (or as we like to say, storms), and we have said there are

- storms of corrections as God brings trials and storms into our lives for correction, to bring us back into obedience with him, as nothing else could get our attention.
- And there are storms of perfection, to which we will study today, a storm that molds and shapes our faith, beyond reading a commentary or listening to a sermon, but a real-life event where we get to put, or not put, our faith into action.
- And there are storms of adjustment, that God puts a storm in our life to adjust our course to place us or put us on the path to get us to a place He has chosen. Oh Lord I couldn't understand why I couldn't why I couldn't get that job I wanted, had to go through unemployment for 6 months,, until now I see I had I been where I wanted to be, I would have missed where I am now, and I am in what I can clearly see is the perfect place for me.
- And may we never forget this, storms of the fall, the handful of "D's", that are inescapable in this fallen world we live in, the fallout of the Adam-Bomb, there in the garden, where and when sin entered into perfection, and perfection was lost forever on this earth, and we will not see perfection until we see Him face to face, and take the breath of perfect air there in heaven, and that is: death, disease, decay, division (as sinful man is divided among each other because of greed, selfishness, and all other manner of sin), and of course the Devil (who continually destroys, and desires nothing but destruction).

So there was a brief summary of why there are trials in our lives, but today I want to take a look at for our reminder and understanding, "Where is God in the Trials".

Where Is God in the Trials?

1. He is Praying for You (v.46)
2. His Eyes are Upon You (v.47-48)
3. He is Coming to You (v.48)
4. He is Listening for Your Cry (v.49)

Prayer – Boldly Ask Your God

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In Every Study

- Who Is God? (How Great is He?)
- What Does He Think of Me? (How Wonderful Are His Thoughts Towards Me?)
- What Does He Want Me to Do?
- What Can I Boldly Request of Him?
- What Do I Need to Be on Guard of When I Leave Here Today?

Boldly come to the throne of grace, ask God to reveal Himself in a mighty way to you, and to do I might work in you, and through you.

Hebrews 4:16 (NKJV) ¹⁶ Let us therefore come boldly to the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy and find grace to help in time of need.

There is a Prayer Team Available to Pray with and for You

Jesus Walks on Water (6:45-52)

Mark 6:45 Immediately He made His disciples get into the boat and go before Him to the other side, to Bethsaida, while He sent the multitude away.

Mark 6:46 And when He had sent them away, He departed to the mountain to pray.

Mark 6:47 Now when evening came, the boat was in the middle of the sea; and He was alone on the land.

Mark 6:48 Then He saw them straining at rowing, for the wind was against them. Now about the fourth watch of the night He came to them, walking on the sea, and would have passed them by.

Mark 6:49 And when they saw Him walking on the sea, they supposed it was a ghost, and cried out;

Mark 6:50 for they all saw Him and were troubled. But immediately He talked with them and said to them, "Be of good cheer! It is I; do not be afraid."

Mark 6:51 Then He went up into the boat to them, and the wind ceased. And they were greatly amazed in themselves beyond measure, and marveled.

Mark 6:52 For they had not understood about the loaves, because their heart was hardened.

(Mark 6:45 NKJV) Immediately He made His disciples get into the boat and go before Him to the other side, to Bethsaida, while He sent the multitude away.

Jesus the Servant-Leader

Verse 45, Jesus sends them away. He lets the disciples go before them to get a break from the people and the day. It's been a long day, and Jesus stays. He sends them away. And what a picture we have for us of a servant leader, an equally-said leader servant. That's who Jesus was. And too many people in leadership, they want to be served. Jesus gives us the example, he's the servant. And that's the theme of the Book of Mark, Jesus the servant.

What a Day it has Been

Let's look back at the day. They just came back from the first Missionary journey. Jesus sent them out and gave them the power to cast out demons and heal the sick. Picture the excitement when they came back to tell Jesus the stories. Immediately following this, the crowds came, and they got to experience the feeding of the 5000.

Imagine the joy of that. Can you imagine what it must have been like getting into that boat. They are totally exhausted, yet on a spiritual high, probably the highest ever in their life. And little do they know it, but they are heading right into a trial.

I Admire Disciples – First Time Back in Boat Since the Great Storm

As a reminder, there's storms of correction as God is adjusting our path because of some sin, rebellion, or disobedience. There's a storm of perfection where God is simply perfecting us into his image and this is what the purpose of trials can be. And then there's storms of adjustment that we're not in sin, but God wants to change our course to put us onto the perfect path that he would have us as we see a Jonah. He was in a storm of correction which could very well be said turned into perfection as he would give the message. But there was definitely a storm of adjustment to put him on the path to getting to Nineveh.

This is their first time back in the boat since Mark Chapter 4, at least all alone without Jesus. And this is faith for them to get back in the boat without Jesus. And what we'll learn through our lives is faith grows with experience. And I admire their courage to get back in the boat, and this time make it noted they're getting back in the boat without Jesus. In the first storm, Jesus is in the boat sleeping as he may be, he is in the boat. This one, first time back in the boat, they're going into the waters and Jesus is not with them.

Mark 4:35–41 (NKJV) ³⁵ On the same day, when evening had come, He said to them, "Let us cross over to the other side." ³⁶ Now when they had left the multitude, they took Him along in the boat as He was. And other little boats were also with Him. ³⁷ And a great windstorm arose, and the waves beat into the boat, so that it was already filling. ³⁸ But He was in the stern, asleep on a pillow. And they awoke Him and said to Him, "Teacher, do You not care that we are perishing?" ³⁹ Then He arose and rebuked the wind, and said to the sea, "Peace, be still!" And the wind ceased and there was a great calm. ⁴⁰ But He said to them, "Why are you so fearful? How is it that you have no faith?" ⁴¹ And they feared exceedingly, and said to one another, "Who can this be, that even the wind and the sea obey Him!"

So I admire their courage to get back in the boat. And maybe there's a word for somebody today. We so often talk about getting back up after a fall in the terms of sin. Well, there's an equal call to get back up after a faith fail, a faith fall, where we know God asks us to do something and our faith, the lack thereof, we would not do it. And we recognized that we didn't step out in faith, but God gives us another opportunity to exercise faith, and we can step into that and get back up and walk in. The first time, we refused it. We justified it. We made an excuse, and we recognized that we failed in faith, and we felt like we missed an opportunity. And there's a place that maybe God's speaking to you today is you need to get back up, and you need to step back out in faith of what he'll call you to do by faith as he presents it to you.

I'm reminded of a story when I was leading missions, and I remember this one brother dear to me. He came to me and initially he said he wanted (was called) to go on the mission trip we were doing there in Europe. And then he came back around the next week, and he says, "I'm not going." And not only did he say he was not going, he was in a way coming against the actual mission trip. He challenged the wasted money. He challenged that the churches on site should have been handling the ministry there. He challenged the place to go, and all these kinds of things to which I just let it go. I'll never force somebody against their will. That's not who we want to go into a mission trip.

But a few days later, he came, and he said, "I was so wrong." He goes, "All those things were just excuses. I just made up a bunch of excuses because I didn't want to go, I was afraid to go, I didn't believe God could provide the finances to go, but I know God was calling me to go. I was afraid to go, so I made all these excuses, and they're just lame excuses. And I just opened myself up to Lord I'll go if you prepare and allow the way." Because he literally had no money. And there he was getting back up after a faith fall, after a faith fail, that he was getting back up. "I know what you've called me to do, Lord, and I want to step out in faith and do it. Forget the excuses. I'm getting back up." And that's life-changing when you do such things.

Which by the way, immediately after the service, someone came up to me, and it was a woman said, "It's not possible for me to go in my physical condition as much as my heart wants to go," she said. "But God laid it on my heart that the money for the mission trip to cover me going," as she handed a check to me, "I feel God's calling to give this money to you, that there's somebody who has stepped out in faith to go, and they need the money." What a beautiful story. You know what? When you fail in faith, get back up and be ready to step out in faith.

A faith fail can be as neutralizing as a sin. You will never move forward, go deeper in the things of the Lord when and if you're in sin. God doesn't work and God doesn't wink at sin. People think they can be righteous in all these areas of their life except this one area of sin which they try to justify. But God's not going to wink at that, and God's

not going to be blessing, and God's not going to take people deeper. He'll be patient and kind, but he requires repentance of it. But a faith fail, and I don't want anyone here to feel judged or beat down because I want you to know God's faithful and God's patient. And we'll see that in our passage today. He'll give you opportunities to redeem that fall, that fail, of faith. But steps of faith, they're diagnostic. They reveal to us what do we really believe. What is really in our hearts? Actions will follow beliefs or lack of action will follow lack of faith.

In Verse 51, they marveled because they had not understood, believed the miracle worker that the man that broke the bread was God himself because miracles can only be wrought by God or personal connection to God, the empowerment given by God to perform miracles.

Mark 6:51–52 (NKJV) ⁵¹ Then He went up into the boat to them, and the wind ceased. And they were greatly amazed in themselves beyond measure, and marveled. ⁵² For they had not understood about the loaves, because their heart was hardened.

How long, and how many times until they get it or us. We see God as so patient, and He's so persistent. To grow us in our faith, He never gives up on us. And let these disciples be an example for you. They walked with him. They saw the miracles visibly, and they still took years to grow in their faith.

But I will tell you one of the keys to faith and it's seeing the resurrection. These men will be men of faith unstoppable after the resurrection. And when we put our eyes and keep our eyes on the resurrection and see the same power that rose Jesus from the grave is available to us and lives in us, when we get to the cross and keep our eyes on the cross, you will be amazed at how much more you'll step and walk in faith. When we take our eyes off the cross and the resurrection, and that's the key, the God who rose from the dead, then it's easy for us to fail in our faith.

And so the most valuable passage before us, though not all-inclusive answer, but the question we all ask, why does God allow trials in our lives? And here we see one of the reasons to grow us in our faith for as we see here in verse 51 and 52, they did not understand, they had not grown in the understanding of who Jesus was even after the miracle of the 5,000 and the miracles before then. They get a trial which they are front and center, audience of it, in the midst of it, and here they get to see and have another opportunity to understand who Jesus was, his great might, and his power. And so one of the reasons for trials is for us to grow in our understanding of who Jesus is and his great power.

And that's a good segue into the other question and the main focus that I'll have today is, when we're in a trial, we always say, "God where are you?" The title of today's message is, Where's God in the Trials?

1.) Where Is God in the Trials? - He is Praying for You (v.46)

(Mark 6:46 NKJV) And when He had sent them away, He departed to the mountain to pray.

Jesus Power – Prayer

Jesus departs to pray, and therefore we see the power of Jesus' earthly life was his prayer life connected to the Father, to the Heavenly realm. And everything Jesus did was through his connection to the Father.

Who Was Jesus Praying For?

What was Jesus praying for? I'm sure He was praying for many things, like all the people He had just ministered to, praying for their salvation. But in the context of what is going to happen next in the story, I believe He was praying for the disciples, because He knew the trial they were going to face.

This brings us to the first thing God wants us to know when we are going through a trial. He is praying for you. Notice Jesus was praying for them before the trial began; and notice that He departed to pray - not that He prayed, past tense. Jesus prayed continually. Who sent them into the trial? Jesus sent them yet in His sovereignty He knew what they were going into and knowing what they were to face - immediately our High Priest goes into prayer.

Promise to Believe? / Jesus Lives to Make Intercession

Is there a promise to believe here? You bet, Jesus is praying before and during a storm in our life. Because, Jesus lives to make intercession for you, always.....

(John 17:9-10 NKJV) "I pray for them. I do not pray for the world but for those whom You have given Me, for they are Yours. "And all Mine are Yours, and Yours are Mine, and I am glorified in them.

Hebrews 7:25 (NKJV) ²⁵ Therefore He is also able to save to the uttermost those who come to God through Him, since He always lives to make intercession for them.

Romans 8:26–27 (NKJV) ²⁶ Likewise the Spirit also helps in our weaknesses. For we do not know what we should pray for as we ought, but the Spirit Himself makes intercession for us with groanings which cannot be uttered. ²⁷ Now He who searches the hearts knows what the mind of the Spirit is, because He makes intercession for the saints according to the will of God.

Jesus says I know this will be hard on you, but I am not distant and separate from you, and I am doing a work through this in you. As hard as it is I want you to know I am praying for you. I can't explain the theology of how Jesus is God, yet He prays for us. To be honest I really don't want to know – I'm just going to enjoy the fact that He does. He is our great High Priest and is always interceding for us.

Jesus is Your Number 1 Fan

Can I remind you of this, do you know that Jesus is your Number 1 fan? It is a hard concept to grasp, for we know how sinful for we are, yet the Bible says he can't stop thinking about you. The Bible says His chosen people are the apple of His eye (Psalm 17:8). Let's flash back to the day you first got saved and put in perspective what God thinks of you. Let us take a walk back in time to the day you got saved. Turn to Luke 15:10, and let's read one of the most misquoted scriptures of all time. Who was in the presence of angels when this was written. It was God. It is God who is rejoicing. This isn't some golf clap, ohh isn't that nice. It the fist in the air, that's my boy/girl. This is Jesus' response to what he created you for – fellowship with Him. It was the groom courting you and showering you with love. And then in one moment it was the marriage proposal, acceptance, and wedding all at the moment. He is crazy about you.

Psalm 17:8 (NKJV) ⁸ Keep me as the apple of Your eye; Hide me under the shadow of Your wings,

Luke 15:10 (NKJV) ¹⁰ Likewise, I say to you, there is joy in the presence of the angels of God over one sinner who repents."

He Intercedes for Us

And when the hard times come. He will be there to intercede in our defense, and for our defense when needed. He protects us for what is to come, and what has already passed. In every trial He prays for you continually. We are not alone in our trials.

The disciples are at this point not knowing that Jesus was praying for them. But this story is recorded for us as retold to them where were you in the midst of a storm to which we read the account of the story was Jesus was on the mountain praying. And we know that he prays for his disciples, his sheep. Jesus was on the mountain praying for them, and the story is retold to us so that we know when we're going through a trial, when we're going through toiling and fighting against the wind of whatever it may be in our lives, that God is praying for us. Jesus lives to make intercession for us we are told. And he's not distant. He's not disconnected. He is engaged in the most powerful way, the place of prayer.

2.) Where Is God in the Trials? - His Eyes are Upon You (v.47-48)

(Mark 6:47 NKJV) Now when evening came, the boat was in the middle of the sea; and He was alone on the land.

(Mark 6:48 NKJV) Then He saw them straining at rowing, for the wind was against them. Now about the fourth watch of the night He came to them, walking on the sea, and would have passed them by.

4 Miles to Go

The boat was in the middle of the sea - The boat was not close to either shore, it was the same distance to either side. Notice they were in the sea, the sea is no little stream, it is a large body of water. Large bodies of water can

be a scary thing. “The Lake of Galilee is 13 miles long at its longest, and 8 miles wide at its widest. So if they are in the middle, they are about 4 miles from shore.

Darkness Enveloped Them

Now when evening came - Also note that it was evening. Darkness was all around them, and they were all alone. Sometimes we can feel like this, all alone in the middle of some big mess. We can't see the way out, we can't even see how we got into it. It is so dark we can't see anything around us. We feel totally alone, lost and deserted.

Straining – Physically & Mentally

They were straining - This word used here for straining in the Greek implies more than just muscular activity, but a mental distress and anxiety, and engulfing fear. For those who have been there, you know what this feels like, your mind is racing so hard you can't think straight, and it just compounds the situation.

The disciples are rowing against the wind, which means they could just turn and put their backs to the wind and let the wind take them back to shore, but they would end up, not where Jesus had directed them. They might even end up back where they started. And to these men, they're not going to get out of the boat and approach Jesus defeated, back where they began. They will row and toil, rather than accept defeat and be turned around or simply to let the wind push them to wherever they end up easy. And there's a word for us in that so many times and too many times, we just turn our backs into the wind and let it push us where it so determines, rather than plowing through and pushing through even at the stake of long nights of toiling to get to where the Lord has directed us to go.

Wind Upon – Going No Where

For the wind was upon them - The disciples were having trouble rowing because they were rowing against the wind. The force of the wind and the waves make it extremely difficult to row, almost like you are not even moving. If you are moving it feels like it will take you forever. Remember these are not wimps, we know that at least 5 of them were professional fisherman - experienced seaman, yet they were straining. We face this so often in our lives, it seems like everything and everybody is against us. We get knocked around by the world and all our efforts just seem futile. Any progress we do make is so small it hardly seems worth the effort to gain so little.

This brings us to number two, His eyes are upon us. Jesus is praying for us, and His eyes are upon us.

Jesus Could See them / God Sees – Hasn't Abandoned You / Jude 1 - Preserved

And He saw them straining at rowing - Even from the land, Jesus could see the disciples straining. Jesus sees them if the answer is a natural occurrence, because it was a full moon and Jesus had the height advantage from being up on the mount. Or maybe this was a supernatural revelation imparted to him during prayer. I don't know. But notice that even though the disciples could not see Jesus, Jesus could see them. Even in the middle of a large body of water, in the dark, Jesus still had His eye upon them. When you are in a trial, know that God hasn't abandoned you, He is so interested in you, He hasn't taken His eyes off of you. In the Book of Jude we are told we are preserved" in Jesus Christ. Preserved in Christ - means to guard from loss or injury by keeping the eye upon. Jesus is always keeping an eye upon us we are His responsibility. Just like the disciples, the same holds true for us, even in the middle of a dark crisis, Jesus has His eye upon us.

*Jude 1 (NKJV)*¹ *Jude, a bondservant of Jesus Christ, and brother of James, To those who are called, sanctified by God the Father, and preserved in Jesus Christ:*

Jesus is praying for us, His eyes are upon us, and number 3, He is coming for us.

3.) Where Is God in the Trials? - He is Coming to You (v.48)

(Mark 6:48 NKJV) Then He saw them straining at rowing, for the wind was against them. Now about the fourth watch of the night He came to them, walking on the sea, and would have passed them by.

Jesus Watch – But Had to get Involved

Jesus watched them for a while, He let them struggle on their own, But He came to them. Here we see the nature of Jesus, He couldn't stand to see His loved ones struggling, He came to them. Compassion comes, compassion can't just sit by and idly watch, compassion comes, and our compassionate High Priest comes for us.

Hebrews 4:15–16 (NKJV) ¹⁵ For we do not have a High Priest who cannot sympathize with our weaknesses, but was in all *points* tempted as *we are*, yet without sin. ¹⁶ Let us therefore come boldly to the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy and find grace to help in time of need.

Time Between Coming

Now the 4th watch is between 3-6am. These guys have been rowing for some time now, If they started at dusk, they could well have been 8 hours into this toil. And if Jesus is just walking as a natural man, and this isn't a miracle, and Jesus just steps onto the water and then he's right before the disciples, if it's him in his earthly body doing its limitation in that aspect, and these men are in the middle of the sea, that's four miles. It's taken Jesus an hour to get there, if he's just walking as an average man even more. And so these men are toiling even more so. And there's a place where prayer is being answered. And there's a time from the determination in heaven to the deliverance here on Earth.

Jesus Walks on Water – Deity / And to Show No Storm Can Separate Us

Jesus walked on the water not only to prove His deity, but also to show that there is no storm that can keep Him from coming to us. You see so often we limit God, we think our problem is too big for Him. We think even thou He created the universe, He can't help us with our problem. Jesus says, let me put your trial in perspective, what you have been laboring and toiling over for hours, I will walk over it, the waves will be my footsteps. We see here He is mighty, He can't be stopped. We see by His nature that He will come to us. Next time you are going through a trial know that Jesus is coming to you.

Jim & Derek Redmond

That's what Jim Redmond did. His son Derek a twenty-six-year-old Briton, was favored to win the 400-meter race in the 1992 Barcelona Olympics. Halfway into his semi-final heat, a fiery pain seared through his right leg. He fell to the track with a torn right hamstring.

As the medical attendants were approaching, Redmond fought to his feet. He set out hopping, pushing away the coaches in an attempt to finish the race. When he reached the stretch a big man pushed through the crowd. He was wearing a T-shirt that read "Have you hugged your child today?" and a hat that challenged, "Just Do It." The man was Jim Redmond, Derek's father.

"You don't have to do this", he told his weeping son. "Yes I do", His son declared.

"Well then", said Jim, "we're going to finish this together." And they did. Jim wrapped Derek's arm around his shoulder and helped him hobble to the finish line. Fighting off security men, the son's head sometimes buried in the father's shoulder, they stayed in Derek's lane to the end.

The crowd clapped, then stood, then cheered, and then wept as the father and son finished the race. What made the father do it? What made the father leave the stands to meet his son on the track? Was it the strength of child? No, for if his son had the strength to do it alone - he would have let him. It wasn't his child's strength - it was his child's pain and weakness. His son was hurt and fighting to complete the race. So the father left the stands, ceased being a spectator, and came to help him finish. God does the same for His children.

4.) Where Is God in the Trials? - He is Listening for Your Cry (v.49)

(Mark 6:48 NKJV) Then He saw them straining at rowing, for the wind was against them. Now about the fourth watch of the night He came to them, walking on the sea, and would have passed them by.

(Mark 6:49 NKJV) And when they saw Him walking on the sea, they supposed it was a ghost, and cried out (Mark 6:50 NKJV) for they all saw Him and were troubled. But immediately He talked with them and said to them, "Be of good cheer! It is I; do not be afraid."

Disciples Troubled

They were afraid – the disciples are afraid, they think Jesus is a ghost, for no man walks on water.

Disciples Weak Faith / Jesus still Comes

and would have passed them by - They thought Jesus was a ghost. Why? We don't know for sure. But even after seeing Jesus feed the multitude and perform many miracles, the disciples still were having a hard time believing His power. But in spite of their weak faith, Jesus came to them. And notice Jesus coming is not dependent on their faith (nor our faith), but His faithfulness and compassion.

Would Have Passed By – But they Cry Out / We Need to Acknowledge our Need for Him

and would have passed them by - He would have walked by had they not cried out to him. Jesus knew they were there, but He would have kept walking had they not called out to Him. Jesus is coming to us, but we have to acknowledge our need for help, He will not force Himself upon us. We know that Jesus is praying for us, His eye is upon us, and He is coming to us, but we must call out to Him to help us. As soon as we enter a trial in our life, call out to Jesus. Don't try to handle your problem alone.

That brings us to #4 / Jesus is Listening for our Cries

He is praying for us, He is watching us, He is coming to us, and He listening to our cries.

Immediately

Immediately - Here we see the result of calling on Jesus. Immediately - He talked with them, and peace came. Jesus says, "Be of a good cheer as I. Do not be afraid." And when you read that anywhere through the scripture, it's always used in a situation where there was fear and apprehension. And so we see the connection and we see the middle part of it. "It is I, Jesus." And to the left, we say, "Be of good cheer." To the right, "Do not be afraid." But in the middle it's Jesus. And that's the key of not being afraid and being able to give praise and be of good cheer. It's when you put the Jesus in the middle of everything in our lives. Take Jesus out of the middle, you'll never have "be of good cheer," and you'll never have "do not be afraid."

Do Not Fear / The King is Here / Maybe Trials Doesn't End Immediately – But Peace Comes Immediately

Do not be afraid - the opposite of fear is peace is peace, we are not afraid because we have Peace in knowing that Jesus is with us. Calling on Jesus bring Peace.

Jesus not only says to us "do not be afraid", but He also says, "be of good cheer". Be Happy. The King and the whole army of heaven are around us, the worst that can happen is that we go to heaven.

I am not telling you your trial will end when you cry out to him, but what I can guarantee is that Peace will come. And when you have peace everything else will just seem like minor irritants.

The Time to Praise

Jesus tells them to praise, be of good cheer, while the storm is still going on. We have the tendency to praise Him after the storm not in the storm. Here we see a great spiritual truth and application; praise Him during the storm, and peace will come in the storm, a calm will flood over you even in the midst of the storm, rather than when it is over.

Peter Walks on Water

In Matthew's account he adds the part of Peter getting out of the boat and walking on the water. That is another sermon for another time, and we will be discussing that at a later time.

Matthew 14:27–31 (NKJV) ²⁷ But immediately Jesus spoke to them, saying, "Be of good cheer! It is I; do not be afraid." ²⁸ And Peter answered Him and said, "Lord, if it is You, command me to come to You on the water." ²⁹ So He said, "Come." And when Peter had come down out of the boat, he walked on the water to go to Jesus. ³⁰ But when he saw that the wind was boisterous, he was afraid; and beginning to sink he cried out, saying, "Lord, save me!" ³¹ And immediately Jesus stretched out His hand and caught him, and said to him, "O you of little faith, why did you doubt?"

(Mark 6:51 NKJV) Then He went up into the boat to them, and the wind ceased. And they were greatly amazed in themselves beyond measure, and marveled.

(Mark 6:52 NKJV) For they had not understood about the loaves, because their heart was hardened.

Daniel 3 / Spurgeon Quote

Daniel 3:25. Story of Meschack, Shadrack and Abednigo were thrown into the fire, but while in the fire who was with them.... but Jesus Christ. Charles Spurgeon said, "*As sure as ever God puts His children in the furnace, He will be in the furnace with them.*"

Florence Chadwick

The disciples looked at their problem, instead of looking at Jesus. In the early hours of July 4, 1952, a powerful swimmer named Florence Chadwick attempted to become the first woman to swim from Catalina Island to the coast of California. The 21-mile swim through shark infested waters began on a foggy morning. Less than a half a mile from the finish however, Chadwick had to be pulled from the waters. Later she said, she hadn't been defeated by fatigue, but by the fog. She said, "If I could have seen the land, I might have made it." Two months later, she made it. Again, fog limited Chadwick's vision, but this time she overcame despair by keeping a picture of the coast in her mind.

So Too in Our Trials – We see Fog – Not God

So too it is with us. How often we are defeated by our trials because we don't keep focused on Jesus. How can we overcome our trials when we face them? By remembering the four things we learned.... **Where Is God in the**

Trials?

1. He is Praying for You (v.46)
2. His Eyes are Upon You (v.47-48)
3. He is Coming to You (v.48)
4. He is Listening for Your Cry (v.49)

Jesus Will Be Patient with US as We Grow in Faith

It is reassuring to know Jesus will be patient with us as we mature in our walk with Him. Every day God reveals His miracles to us, yet so often we forget to place our trust in Him. All we need to do is turn over all cares and worries to Him and let Him take care of them.

Notice Maturing Process

Do you notice how God takes us through steps in the maturity process? In Mark 4 we read the story of Jesus calming the storm, and in that story, Jesus was with them. Now, as Jesus takes them to a higher level of faith, He lets them go through the trial at sea without Him there. We see the disciples are learning, because this time they kept rowing against the wind. They could have turned back and let the wind blow them safely back to shore, but they kept rowing because Jesus told them to cross over the other side. For them to turn back, would be for them to go against what Jesus had told them. But in Acts 4 we see their Faith Matured.

Storms of Persecution

Acts 4:1-4, Is the start of the Storm of Persecution of the church. From this point on the Church of God will be persecuted for their faith – and it has yet to cease today

Acts 4:1–4 (NKJV) ¹ Now as they spoke to the people, the priests, the captain of the temple, and the Sadducees came upon them, ² being greatly disturbed that they taught the people and preached in Jesus the resurrection from the dead. ³ And they laid hands on them, and put them in

custody until the next day, for it was already evening. ⁴ However, many of those who heard the word believed; and the number of the men came to be about five thousand.

Peter and John had healed the lame man outside the temple. Silver and Gold have I not, but what I do have I give you, in the name of Jesus Christ, arise and walk. The people were all amazed and said what has happen here. And Peter preached to the multitude and 5000 got saved that day. The priest got upset and threw them in jail. They got to feed the 5000 with bread, and today they feed 5000 with the Bread of Life. When they were in jail, no doubt they remember their storm at sea, and they knew Jesus was coming. And when commanded to cease preaching Jesus – they said “For we can not but speak the things which we have seen and heard.

Many Touch Jesus and Are Made Well (6:53-56)

Mark 6:53 When they had crossed over, they came to the land of Gennesaret and anchored there.

They made It

So here again, they made it, just as Jesus said they would.... I will “meet” you on the other side. John 6 says regarding this miracle that as soon as Jesus got in the boat, they were on shore. So did they keep rowing? Or was there this smooth sea that they were able to quickly complete as in immediately? Or do we have another miracle here where the boat was supernaturally just transported to the seashore? Pretty amazing thought there to which I don't have the answer.

John 6:21 (NKJV) ²¹ Then they willingly received Him into the boat, and immediately the boat was at the land where they were going.

John 6 says immediately once Jesus got in the boat, they're on shore. But I'm just wondering what it was like if they still had to row or when they got to shore, Jesus gets in the boat. Does anyone say something? Do they sit there and just stare in awe? We just watched a man walk on water. Are they staring at him, going, "Is this real? Are you a ghost? What am I seeing here?" I'm thinking it was a very quiet moment as they pondered what they have just witnessed and seen in their lives. They're coming more in the understanding of who Jesus is. And he's ever so patient to walk and work that through with them until they fully come to the realization. But it won't be until the resurrection that they will fully understand.

Mark 6:54 And when they came out of the boat, immediately the people recognized Him,

Mark 6:55 ran through that whole surrounding region, and began to carry about on beds those who were sick to wherever they heard He was.

Mark 6:56 Wherever He entered, into villages, cities, or the country, they laid the sick in the marketplaces, and begged Him that they might just touch the hem of His garment. And as many as touched Him were made well.

Just Think if Turned Around

Now look at all the people being blessed and healed. Just imagine if the disciples had turned around, all that would have been missed. So beloved, keep rowing, Your King is coming, and there will be a great testimony at the end, for there is no testimony with out the “test”.

Conclusion

God has a plan and purpose for each trial in your life, and in each trial he is there. And when the storm is over, you too will be on dry ground, and Anchored even deeper in Christ.

Where Is God in the Trials?

5. He is Praying for You (v.46)
6. His Eyes are Upon You (v.47-48)
7. He is Coming to You (v.48)
8. He is Listening for Your Cry (v.49)

Prayer – Boldly Ask Your God

The Word of God is Living and Powerful, and is ready, and will do a mighty work in our lives.

Hebrews 4:12 (NKJV) ¹² For the word of God is living and powerful, and sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing even to the division of soul and spirit, and of joints and marrow, and is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart.

In Every Study

- Who Is God? (How Great is He?)
- What Does He Think of Me? (How Wonderful Are His Thoughts Towards Me?)
- What Does He Want Me to Do?
- What Can I Boldly Request of Him?
- What Do I Need to Be on Guard of When I Leave Here Today?

Boldly come to the throne of grace, ask God to reveal Himself in a mighty way to you, and to do I might work in you, and through you.

Hebrews 4:16 (NKJV) ¹⁶ Let us therefore come boldly to the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy and find grace to help in time of need.

There is a Prayer Team Available to Pray with and for You

End of Study

Mark 7

Mark 7:1-23

Outline Mark Chapter 7:

- Defilement Comes from Within (7:1-23)
- A Gentile Woman Asks for Bread Crumbs (7:24-30)
- Jesus Heals a Deaf Mute (7:31-37)

Overview/Recap

We are less than one year from the cross. Swelling crowds are following Jesus. Rightly so, the blind are seeing, the lame are walking, leprosy made clean, and the sick are made well. That is where we ended chapter 6. And leading up to that point was one of Jesus greatest miracles, the feeding of the 5000 (plus woman and children – so 15-20 thousand), so that's a lot of witnesses proclaiming and spreading the story. And, I wonder how many might have seen Jesus come down from the mount, and just keep walking..... Right out on to the water (imagine that sight). So Jesus' ministry is full-on, and the religious leaders have more than taken note, they have become combative against Jesus, they are plotting His death, they are looking for reasons, they want to swing the favorable public opinion of Him, away from Him. We will read various places they wanted to kill Him, on the spot (aka stone Him), but did not because they "feared the people" would turn on them and stone them.

Mark 6:54–56 (NKJV) ⁵⁴ And when they came out of the boat, immediately the people recognized Him, ⁵⁵ ran through that whole surrounding region, and began to carry about on beds those who were sick to wherever they heard He was. ⁵⁶ Wherever He entered, into villages, cities, or the country, they laid the sick in the marketplaces, and begged Him that they might just touch the hem of His garment. And as many as touched Him were made well.

Application

In our passage before us today we will read of a confrontation of religious leaders and Jesus. These religious leaders have come up from Jerusalem, Jesus is ministering in the region of the Sea of Galilee; and so that is about 75 miles. Verses 1-3, they challenge Jesus over handwashing, the ceremonial washing of the hands before eating. Now I say, are you serious, you travel 75 miles and the best you can come up with is..... you don't wash your hands before you eat (and even that – the challenge is against His disciples, not Him), but 75 miles and that is the best you got..... you don't wash your hands before you eat!

Mark 7:1–3 (NKJV) ¹ Then the Pharisees and some of the scribes came together to Him, having come from Jerusalem. ² Now when they saw some of His disciples eat bread with defiled, that is, with unwashed hands, they found fault. ³ For the Pharisees and all the Jews do not eat unless they wash *their* hands in a special way, holding the tradition of the elders.

Hear Me and Understand

We could really focus in on the judgmental heart and critical hearts of these men, which there is; but before us today is one of the deepest, heart revealing passages in all the Gospel. The intent is not so-much to see the heart of these religious critics, but to see our hearts. God will use these critics, to speak a deep profound message to those who have an ear to hear (7:14). Hear me, and understand this the Lord is saying, I want to show you your heart, and what I am going to say

Mark 7:14 (NKJV) ¹⁴ When He had called all the multitude to Himself, He said to them, "Hear Me, everyone, and understand:

The heart of the problem, is the problem of the heart.

Here in our passage we will see people doing outward actions, thinking that equates to spiritually, yet God (Jesus) will say but your heart is all wrong, your outward rituals can't change the problem with your heart, for the heart of the problem, is the problem of the heart. The application will apply in the other direction too, and that being that those whose outwards actions are far from spiritual, but sinful and carnal, are not a body thing or even the mind, but simply display that the heart of the problem, is the problem of the heart. Drunkenness, sexual immorality, hatred, theft, and the likes merely reflect that there is a problem with the heart.

This passage will apply two ways today, to some it will be condemning, to others it will be liberating. I pray God's Words today will be like arrows, and they hit the mark that needs to be hit, so no one leaves here the same today, no one including myself. For to fix a problem, the problem needs to be rightly identified.

Psalm 51:10 – Create in Me a New Heart

David would say, "create in me a clean heart, O God, and renew a right spirit within me". The word for create is the Hebrew word "bara", and it means to create something that is not there, something new that has never existed before. We can wrestle the theology of the doctrines of salvation, regeneration, and the likes, but I think we can all agree on this, there are things in our hearts that need changing, so let's come before the Lord and say Lord there are things that I know need changed, I've excused them away, I have reasoned them away, but now Lord I come and I ask that you take them away. Lord create, change my heart, that "ONLY YOU CAN", liberate me, us, today -

Psalm 51:10 (NKJV) ¹⁰ Create in me a clean heart, O God, And renew a steadfast spirit within me.

Prayer – Boldly Ask Your God

The Word of God is Living and Powerful, and is ready, and will do a mighty work in our lives.

Hebrews 4:12 (NKJV) ¹² For the word of God is living and powerful, and sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing even to the division of soul and spirit, and of joints and marrow, and is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart.

In Every Study

- Who Is God? (How Great is He?)
- What Does He Think of Me? (How Wonderful Are His Thoughts Towards Me?)
- What Does He Want Me to Do?
- What Can I Boldly Request of Him?
- What Do I Need to Be on Guard of When I Leave Here Today?

Boldly come to the throne of grace, ask God to reveal Himself in a mighty way to you, and to do I might work in you, and through you.

Hebrews 4:16 (NKJV) ¹⁶ Let us therefore come boldly to the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy and find grace to help in time of need.

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Defilement Comes from Within (7:1-23)

Mark 7:1 Then the Pharisees and some of the scribes came together to Him, having come from Jerusalem.

Mark 7:2 Now when they saw some of His disciples eat bread with defiled, that is, with unwashed hands, they found fault.

The Fault Finder / The Most Carnal

Verse one, the Pharisees come to find fault. What we're going to see before this passage is over these religious leaders who think they're the most spiritual, what we're going to see is they're actually the most carnal. So, what you have here as you look at that in its fullest context, is their actions are not spiritual but carnal. Fleshly, and what's the most amazing part of it is they think they are the most spiritual. That is something that has always been a tell-tale sign to me, those who are fault finders, those who like to point out the faults in other people. Those who like to challenge the faults of other people, or gossip about the faults of other people, they think they're spiritual. They think what they're doing is spiritual, but the reality is it is carnal, it is worldly, it is fleshly.

The heart of the problem, is the problem of the heart.

A Barometer of How Spiritual – How You Handle Others Faults you See

Every Christian needs to do a self-evaluation and really look at themselves, and see and ask how much do I look for, and even worse so discuss the faults of other Christians? That will be a barometer to test the temperature of your spirituality. If you want to test your depths of spirituality, you'll definitely see it in Jesus. If you see a fault in your brother cover it with love, cover it with prayer, not with discussion. Not with judgment, or even condemnation, cover it with love for love covers a multitude of sin. Jesus would say, Father forgive them, they

know not what they do. What a beautiful picture to enter into intercession for them, Lord help them. Lord minister to them. The Lord may speak to you and you'll go with the right attitude to do something about that fault.

1 Peter 4:8 (NKJV): 8 And above all things have fervent love for one another, for "love will cover a multitude of sins."

If you're not going to do something about their fault, then it's really none of your business to be evaluating, and judging it, or discussing it.

All Fault Finders have this In Common – They are Miserable / Bound Up – Not Free to Enjoy Presence of God

Here is something that all fault finders have in common, and that is they are not happy. The majority of them are miserable at that because they don't enjoy the freedom that is in Christ. Here these fault-finding religious leaders come, and Jesus Christ is in their very presence, and they can't enjoy it. They can't enjoy Jesus's work and he just fed 5,000 people. They can't enjoy that Jesus has healed many people, the lame walk, the blind see, the lepers are healed. Mind you at this point, according to Leviticus, when a leper was healed, they would have to go to the temple, that's in Jerusalem, and go through the prescribed method to be declared clean, and that was before the priest. There's a stream of lepers streaming into Jerusalem by the day, and they can't enjoy it, these religious leaders, because their heart's all twisted up and bound with criticality and judgment. Jesus stands before them and they can't enjoy them. Nothing's changed in 2,000 years for the fault finders today. Saved or unsaved, they are bound up and they are in bondage, and they have no joy, and they have no freedom.

The heart of the problem, is the problem of the heart.

We Need Empathy for Them – They are Bound Up

And so, comes a place for us. You may say I'm not a fault finder, but it's not hard to find fault and see it when it's right before you. Now we come to what are we going to do about it. We should be feeling the fault (not uncaring about what we see), ministering, praying, compassion, sorrow, looking at the bondage that they're in. We should have an empathy for them because they are not enjoying the freedom that is in Christ. They're bound, and so they look around and their criticality and judgment, and they never have joy. Oh they can have outward showings, but deep down, as Jesus shows us in this passage, they're miserable, what's going on in their heart, they're not free.

1 Peter 4:8 (NKJV): 8 And above all things have fervent love for one another, for "love will cover a multitude of sins."

They Judge – We Respond – God Reveals

But now here's one for all of us, and not one of us in this room are immune or excluded from this because you may say but their fault finding is directed at me. They come, and they judge me, and they're critical, they look down upon me. Or you don't know how much they gossip about me. You don't know how much they talk about me continually behind my back. It angers me. I'm resentful. You know what you/we are? We're critical, judgmental, and worst of all, we are in bondage, our joy is robbed. Their fault finding towards us does something. It reveals to us, our hearts, that we're not as free as we think we are. We're not in that place that we truly think we are spiritually.

The heart of the problem, is the problem of the heart.

Fault Finding Takes Us Away from Presence of God

When we find ourselves in the place of being the judge, being critical, say the word for what it is, hatred or bitterness, or resentment, it all indicates and declares one thing. We've lost the sight of Jesus Christ. Standing before these Pharisees was God manifest present working miraculous wonders and signs all in great love and yet they can't see him because of their critical hearts, their fault finding. That will all be the result. Fault finding will always take us away from seeing Jesus clearly and presently before us.

Quote from Tozer

In the course of scores of conferences and hundreds of conversations, I have many times heard people say, "I resent that." But I repeat: I have never heard the words used by a victorious man. Resentment simply cannot dwell in a loving heart. Before resentment can enter, love must take its flight and bitterness take over. The bitter soul will

compile a list of slights at which it takes offense and will watch over itself like a mother bear over her cubs. And the figure is apt, for the resentful heart is always surly and suspicious like a she-bear. (A.W. Tozer)

Maybe You Have Some Heart Examination To Do Today / have You Lost sight of Jesus' Presence

Maybe you got some heart examination to do today. Today is the day to do it. Examining your heart, asking yourself have I lost sight of Jesus through all of these things? Whether it's the response to being critiqued or criticized or it's just what you've been doing as you look at other people. God is speaking to us the truth about our hearts today. In every Bible study, we're left with that place. What does he want me to do? It may take you to boldly ask of him to help you do what needs to be done but you can be free today and set free by seeing Jesus clearly before you.

So we get to decide when the fault finding is directed to us specifically if we're going to be "fault fillers" and cover this person in prayer, recognizing their state even if it is directed at us, even if it is hurtful, but we're going to fill in their faults, cover them in prayer, cover them in love. Should the Lord direct, we then speak to them in love about the situation. But it will really show where are we at, how free are we when the fault finding is pin pointedly directed specifically to us.

1 Peter 4:8 (NKJV): 8 And above all things have fervent love for one another, for "love will cover a multitude of sins."

I can't forgive and love, without God doing a supernatural work in my life, without Him working something in my heart, putting something in my heart, changing my heart, and putting something new in my heart..... that just isn't there right now.

How? Simply by sincerely asking God..... Create (out of nothing to put in something that is not there) a new, clean heart.

Psalms 51:10 (NKJV) ¹⁰ Create in me a clean heart, O God, And renew a steadfast spirit within me.

Mark 7:3 For the Pharisees and all the Jews do not eat unless they wash their hands in a special way, holding the tradition of the elders.

Mark 7:4 When they come from the marketplace, they do not eat unless they wash. And there are many other things which they have received and hold, like the washing of cups, pitchers, copper vessels, and couches.

Mark 7:5 Then the Pharisees and scribes asked Him, "Why do Your disciples not walk according to the tradition of the elders, but eat bread with unwashed hands?"

The Mishnah – The Fence

The Mishnah, a compilation of Jewish oral laws made at the end of the second century A.D., says, "Tradition is a fence around the law." Tradition, as the Jews saw it, protected God's Holy Word and assisted his people in keeping it.

This fencing of the Law probably began well enough, but as the years passed it produced some famous absurdities. For example, in an effort to protect the Sabbath from being broken through inadvertent labor, the devout were given an amazing list of prohibitions—fences. For example,

- looking in the mirror was forbidden, because if you looked into the mirror on the Sabbath day and saw a gray hair, you might be tempted to pull it out and thus perform work on the Sabbath.
- You also could not wear your false teeth; if they fell out, you would have to pick them up and you would be working. In regard to carrying a burden,
- you could not carry a handkerchief on the Sabbath, but you could wear a handkerchief. That meant if you were upstairs and wanted to take the handkerchief downstairs, you would have to tie it around your neck, walk downstairs, and untie it. Then you could blow your nose downstairs!
- The rabbis debated about a man with a wooden leg: if his home caught on fire, could he carry his wooden leg out of the house on the Sabbath?
- One could spit on the Sabbath, but you had to be careful where. If it landed on the dirt and you scuffed it with your sandal, you would be cultivating the soil and thus performing work.

The Sabbath, of course, was just one concern of those who would fence the Law.

- The biggest concern of the Mishnah (some 186 pages) was “cleannesses,” and much of the concern here was with ritual washing. This originally rose from the Biblical command that all priests must wash their hands (Exodus 30:19; 40:12). Though this was only a priestly requirement, all pious Jews began to do it about 200 years before Christ. By Jesus’ day, it was firmly entrenched as a requirement for those who wanted to be “clean.”

According to what Mark said in verses 3 and 4: (The Pharisees and all the Jews do not eat unless they give their hands a ceremonial washing, holding to the tradition of the elders. When they come from the marketplace they do not eat unless they wash. And they observe many other traditions, such as the washing of cups, pitchers and kettles.)

They were washing all the time! Before meals they would pour a little water over their hands, elevating them slightly so the water would run down to the wrist, and then would rub their hands together. Next they would lower their hands and rinse them, allowing the water to run off their fingertips. This was just for meals. If they were returning from a place where they could be defiled, such as the marketplace, they went to greater extremes. Some commentators think the language of our text means they took a bath! When it came to washing the dishes, they really got carried away. The later Mishnah indicated something of the extremeness of their bent during Jesus’ time, for it devoted thirty-five pages to washing “vessels” and other daily implements.

We can see that a huge legal complex developed over this matter of ritual purity.

- A rabbi who once omitted washing his hands before eating bread was excommunicated.
- It is also reported that another rabbi who suffered imprisonment under the Romans nearly died because he used his ration of drinking water to ritually wash up!

During Jesus’ day the Scriptural rituals of purity were so fenced and re-fenced that the concept of true inner purity had been trivialized to a system of external washings. Thus, an inevitable earth-shaking collision was set with Jesus, the preacher of true righteousness. In the text considered in this chapter, Jesus set the scribes and Pharisees straight about the nature of real purity and its source. He taught the need for radical purity which could only be supplied by his life.

Hughes, R. K. (1989). Mark: Jesus, servant and savior (Vol. 1, pp. 162–164). Westchester, IL: Crossway Books.

Russian Czar (1776 – 1903 – 127yrs)

William Poteet wrote in *The Pentecostal Minister* how in 1903 the Russian czar noticed a sentry posted for no apparent reason on the Kremlin grounds. Upon inquiry, he discovered that in 1776 Catherine the Great found there the first flower of spring. "Post a sentry here," she commanded, "so that no one tramples that flower under foot!"

Biblical Trace

I had to spend some time tracing and tracking where did they develop this tradition; what scripture is it based on? And I found two places the Jewish religious leaders would reference, even still today, although few are go to the depth we have discussed, but there still is the call for ceremonial/ritual hand washing before meals still today.

- So one thread is back to Exodus 30, and the problem with that passage is that it is directly regarding the priests before they would serve in the Tabernacle/Temple, so it was not a command that was given regarding common people, nor anything to do with eating food.
- The other thread that I traced was to Leviticus 15, and yes it was very specific about washing, and not just hands, but clothing, furniture, and any vessel the person would touch (such as cups, utensils, etc), but that passage is directed at cleansing after a bodily discharge of a man or woman pertaining to reproduction (a woman’s menstrual flow or a man’s semen – apart from sexual intimacy).
- So the Jewish religious leaders built a fence around the Law, to ensure that no one could accidentally break the Law, and as well-meaning as that may have been, it was not God’s intent, and more so, they were adding to the Word of God, rather than just letting the Word of God be the Word of God.

Exodus 30:17–21 (NKJV) ¹⁷ Then the LORD spoke to Moses, saying: ¹⁸ "You shall also make a laver of bronze, with its base also of bronze, for washing. You shall put it between the tabernacle of meeting and the altar. And you shall put water in it, ¹⁹ for Aaron and his sons shall wash their hands and their feet in water from it. ²⁰ When they go into the tabernacle of meeting, or when they come near the altar to minister, to burn

an offering made by fire to the LORD, they shall wash with water, lest they die. ²¹ So they shall wash their hands and their feet, lest they die. And it shall be a statute forever to them—to him and his descendants throughout their generations.”

Leviticus 15:31–33 (NKJV) ³¹ Thus you shall separate the children of Israel from their uncleanness, lest they die in their uncleanness when they defile My tabernacle that is among them. ³² This is the law for one who has a discharge, and for him who emits semen and is unclean thereby, ³³ and for her who is indisposed because of her customary impurity, and for one who has a discharge, either man or woman, and for him who lies with her who is unclean.’ ”

God Knows What He Means – and Says What He Means

God knows what He means, and says what He means, and He needs no help from man to define what He is saying by adding details they think He meant.

Church Today has Traditions / Traditions can Become Laws

Even today the church has many traditions, many well-meaning, but still traditions set by man, not in accordance with God’s word. Dress codes (must wear a suit), frequency of communion, styles of music, infant baptism, even the display of Christian symbols. Some churches require a man takes off his hat before he prays, or even wearing hats in the church (which shouldn’t we just be happy they are in church).

When traditions get entrenched, they can become laws, or even greater than laws. Yet traditions are not in the Word, and many times even become superior to the Word.

Mark 7:6 He answered and said to them, “Well did Isaiah prophesy of you hypocrites, as it is written: ‘This people honors Me with their lips, But their heart is far from Me.

Mark 7:7 And in vain they worship Me, Teaching as doctrines the commandments of men.’

Mark 7:8 For laying aside the commandment of God, you hold the tradition of men—the washing of pitchers and cups, and many other such things you do.”

Mark 7:9 He said to them, “All too well you reject the commandment of God, that you may keep your tradition.

Jesus Confronts the Challenge – Doesn’t remain Silent

By the way, it's interesting as we look here Jesus, he confronts these religious leaders and their hypocrisy, and there is a time to challenge the challenge. These guys come to Jesus, they challenge him and many times we take the approach that Jesus when he was before Pilate, he mentioned not a word. We take that, and there's a good application where there's no wood there's no fire. But sometimes the response is a counter to the challenge, a correcting, a even rebuking to what the challenge is, and how to apply, and it has to be supernatural. Jesus was always in contact with the Father and he always had the right word for the right season. The right action for the right reaction that was put before him. There's an application for us, sometimes it is just be quiet, no wood no fire. Sometimes it's a response, and Jesus truly is not defending himself, what he is doing is he is confronting these men for their own well-being and he will see his liberating the other people.

Isaiah 29

Jesus quotes Isaiah 29:

Isaiah 29:13 (NKJV) ¹³ Therefore the LORD said: “Inasmuch as these people draw near with their mouths And honor Me with their lips, But have removed their hearts far from Me, And their fear toward Me is taught by the commandment of men,

Jesus Definition of Hypocrite

The word there for hypocrite, was a word used for actors on a stage, and they would have these masks that over-emphasized their point, like a huge smile, or a huge frown, so everyone in the audience would know the point. These actors were called hypocrites. Jesus calls them hypocrites. Jesus’ definition of a hypocrite, a person says wonderful words with this their lips, their mouth says praise God, hallelujah (I own all 7 of the WOW Cd’s), but the person’s heart is far from God. They say the right words, but have no regard for God’s Word, they live a life contrary to the words they speak. If that is your life today, Jesus says you are a hypocrite, and if I was you, I would deal with it before the sun goes down.

The ½ Eggshell Cleansing

Therefore, the Rabbis concluded, before eating one needed to wash his hands in the following manner: One was to take one and a half eggshells of water and pour it over his hands as they were pressed together uprightly, letting the water drip only to his wrists and no further. Then, he would flip his hands over, pointing them downward while yet another one-and-a-half eggshells of water was poured over them. Finally, he was to rub his right fist with his left palm, then his left fist with his right palm.

Who Needs Atkins Diet

This procedure was followed not only before every meal, but between each course of every meal. (if I had to do this before each course, I would probably be 20pds lighter, that beats any Atkins Diet, or the Zone).

Defile 6 / Tradition 5 / Commandments 3

We know the context of this whole confrontation and dissertation before us, as we see the word “defile” six times in our passage, the word “tradition” five times, and the word “Commandment” three times. So who determines what constitutes “being defiled”, the tradition of man, or the commandments of God. These religious men thought they were holy clean, but Jesus exposes them, says your righteousness is nothing but a big act. You have no heart for God, nor people..... As we will see here in next verses. Your words and actions are empty, just actors on a stage.

The heart of the problem, is the problem of the heart.

2 Identifiers that Prove Where we are Spiritually

Jesus will give in the remaining verses two true identifiers of where a person is at in their relationship with the Lord, in their spirituality, and that is how they treat people, and what they think.

Mark 7:10 For Moses said, ‘Honor your father and your mother’; and, ‘He who curses father or mother, let him be put to death.’

Mark 7:11 But you say, ‘If a man says to his father or mother, “Whatever profit you might have received from me is Corban”—’ (that is, a gift to God),

Mark 7:12 then you no longer let him do anything for his father or his mother,

Mark 7:13 making the word of God of no effect through your tradition which you have handed down. And many such things you do.”

Jesus exposes Their heart Towards People / Reveals How Much Love of God in Us

Interestingly, Jesus doesn’t start off by addressing the “cleansing/defilement”, but goes right to their heart..... by saying oh you have this great outward show of godliness, spiritually, but you are hypocrites, actors on a stage, for if you had the love of God in your heart, you surely would not be treating your parents the way you do. And so it is true for all of us, how we treat our fellow man, whether parents, spouse, children, sibling, neighbors, and enemies, shows how much of the love of God is in us, or more of just a show,

Corban – Dedicated / Convenient way to Refuse Helping Others/Family / Honor Parents

The tradition of the elders stated specifically that if you had something in your house which was of great value, you could say it was “corban,” or “dedicated,” which then made that object a gift to God. You could still keep it in your house and use it for your purposes, but it was technically dedicated to God. It was a convenient way to refuse help to people in need—even to those in your own family, but still feel spiritual. Jesus indicts the people for this practice, saying, “The Scriptures declare, honor your father and your mother. But you have made the commandment of God of none effect by your vain traditions.”

[Exodus 20:12 \(NKJV\)](#) ¹² “Honor your father and your mother, that your days may be long upon the land which the LORD your God is giving you.

Example - GTO

An example today would be a man with two cars. A minivan to drive the wife and 4 kids around, and then a 69 GTO mint condition muscle car, for his weekend joyrides. Now he loves that car, washes it and waxes it every Saturday, reads hot rod magazine to it before bed every night, and then tucks it in ever so gently with the custom-made car

cover, even though it sits in the garage. Well his mom and dad come over one day and say son our car broke down, can we borrow yours for a few weeks until we can get it fixed. We can't afford to get it fixed right now, our next social security check is still two weeks away, and you know with BGE rate hike, the price of gas, and the cost of dad's heart medicine money is really tight. The man is stunned, oh my, think of an excuse, and think quickly, ah, the car needs windshield washing fluid, ah, I mean the transmission fell out, no, oh it's Corban mom and dad. See I would love to loan it to you, help you out of your tough spot, but this car is dedicated to the Lord, it is a gift to the Lord. You see I only drive it when I pray, yes I put the top down, and I and the Lord go for a ride together. I pray for the people as I pass them, those men in their minivans – losers, I mean I pray blessings on the people. I've dedicated this 400cc of piston-pounding, 0-60 in 3.5 seconds, greased lightning power unto the Lord. Sorry I can't help you, but hey here is 2 dollars for bus tokens, mom take some "Aleve" for your arthritis before you walk the 6 blocks to bus stop through the drug invested neighborhood you live in – God bless you.

Leaders like Tradition – Lined their Pocket

Of course, the religious leaders they like "corban", they no doubt coined the term and promoted it. Why? Because it lined their pockets.

The heart of the problem, is the problem of the heart.

Mark 7:14 When He had called all the multitude to Himself, He said to them, "Hear Me, everyone, and understand:

Jesus Says Listen – I Want to Set You Free

Jesus says to them, "Harken, come, listen, understand this," and that's the heart of Jesus. He teaches, and he would say that to each and every one of us today, if we could just be still and write down, focus on, and listen to what he's trying to speak to our hearts. He'll say, "Harken, listen, I want to share my heart with you, because I want to give you words that can set you free and liberate you." I pray we harken to the voice of God today.

The heart of the problem, is the problem of the heart.

Mark 7:15 There is nothing that enters a man from outside which can defile him; but the things which come out of him, those are the things that defile a man.

Mark 7:16 If anyone has ears to hear, let him hear!"

Digestive System – Not Moral Agent

Jesus is saying that the digestive system is not part of the moral agent. It's not the moral determination of morality. Not what goes in the mouth but comes out from the heart (Jesus will clearly expound on in this dissertation).

Two Things Test Spirituality

So two tests of spirituality, how near to God or how far from God, is how we treat our fellow man, and what comes out of our heart. Traditions and rituals don't, will not, equate to spirituality.

Colossians 2 / Don't Let them Rip You Off / Remember Eggshell? They Are Being Set Free Right Now

Paul under inspiration of the Spirit will say don't let them cheat you! Their traditions and rules will rip you off, rob your life. Remember the eggshells? Do you know who is being set free right now? All the people hearing Jesus crush man's tradition, and the setting free by God's Commandments.

(Colossians 2:8 NKJV) Beware lest anyone cheat you through philosophy and empty deceit, according to the tradition of men, according to the basic principles of the world, and not according to Christ.

All of His commandments are freeing! It is man who makes religion bondage.

Calls Multitude / Takes Daily Event – Teaches / Superstar – Iran – Coke Cola

Jesus calls the multitude over; another great example, principle for life. Jesus takes a daily event and turns it into an opportunity to teach. Parents this is a great example and principle to apply to our families and kids. Don't wait for Sundays to teach our kids, don't be limited to your family devotions, but take life events around you to speak to your kids spiritual things, same for your co-workers or unsaved loved one.

- When they show the superstar checking into the Betty Ford clinic, great time to say to the kids, boy you would think all that money and fame would make them happy, but it doesn't, no Jesus, no peace, true contentment comes through Jesus Christ.
- Watching the news and the ties between Iran and Russia as it is displayed on the news; you know that is interesting you say to that unsaved loved one, that is just what is prophesied in the Book of Ezekiel chapter 38.
- Boy this Coke Cola is good, do you know son that in India more people have heard the name Coke Cola than they have the Name of Jesus Christ, let's pray for them.

Jesus Uses Everyday Life to Teach / May we have Eyes to See the Opportunity

Jesus uses lifts everyday situations and events to teach His disciples and followers some spiritual truths, good example for us, may God give us eyes to see the opportunities when they come.

Mark 7:17 When He had entered a house away from the crowd, His disciples asked Him concerning the parable.

Peter Asks

Peter said, "Lord, please explain this parable," and the fact is this isn't a parable. Jesus never said it was a parable. But what we see with Peter is, if I don't understand it, it must be a parable. Peter puts himself a little higher than he should. This was clean, direct teaching. Jesus is making the point, it's not what goes in a mind that defiles, it's what comes out of the heart. It's a heart condition.

Matthew 15:15 (NKJV) ¹⁵ Then Peter answered and said to Him, "Explain this parable to us."

Mark 7:18 So He said to them, "Are you thus without understanding also? Do you not perceive that whatever enters a man from outside cannot defile him,

Digestive System – Not Moral Agent

Jesus is saying that the digestive system is not part of the moral agent. It's not the moral determination of morality. Not what goes in the mouth but comes out from the heart (Jesus will clearly expound on in this dissertation).

The heart of the problem, is the problem of the heart.

Jesus is talking to His disciples! Are you a disciple, then Jesus is speaking to you.

Mark 7:19 because it does not enter his heart but his stomach, and is eliminated, thus purifying all foods?"

Mark 7:20 And He said, "What comes out of a man, that defiles a man.

Mark 7:21 For from within, out of the heart of men, proceed evil thoughts, adulteries, fornications, murders,

Mark 7:22 thefts, covetousness, wickedness, deceit, lewdness, an evil eye, blasphemy, pride, foolishness.

Mark 7:23 All these evil things come from within and defile a man."

Jesus Definition of Evil

Then Jesus closes with all these evil things. He says, everything that we just listed is ... That's his definition, not mine. Just reading what it says here.

Sermon on Mount

In the Sermon on the Mount, Jesus makes it clear that the law is spiritual, not physical, that God sees and will judge based on what is in the heart. That outward actions only reveal what is already in the heart, who that person is on the inside, regardless what the outside may look like (as with these religious leaders).

Matthew 5:21–22 (NKJV) ²¹ "You have heard that it was said to those of old, 'You shall not murder, and whoever murders will be in danger of the judgment.' ²² But I say to you that whoever is angry with his brother without a cause shall be in danger of the judgment. And whoever says to his brother, 'Raca!' shall be in danger of the council. But whoever says, 'You fool!' shall be in danger of hell fire.

Matthew 5:27–28 (NKJV) ²⁷ "You have heard that it was said to those of old, 'You shall not commit adultery.' ²⁸ But I say to you that whoever looks at a woman to lust for her has already committed adultery with her in his heart.

Jesus has addressed all 10 Commandments

Interestingly, in this dissertation, Jesus has addressed all the Ten Commandments.

10 Commandments

- #1. "You shall have no other gods before Me... (Exodus 20:3). – Traditions became their god.
- #2. "You shall not make for yourself a carved image... (Exodus 20:4-6). – Rituals were their carved images.
- #3. "You shall not take the name of the LORD your God in vain... (Exodus 20:7) – Vain worship with no Heart
- #4. "Remember the Sabbath day, to keep it holy...(Exodus 20:8-11) - Traditions became their god.
- #5. "Honor your father and your mother... (Exodus 20:12) – It is Corban!
- #6. "You shall not murder. (Exodus 20:13) – if you have hatred in your heart you have murdered.
- #7. "You shall not commit adultery. (Exodus 20:14) – if you have lust in your heart you commit adultery
- #8. "You shall not steal. (Exodus 20:15) – Jesus calls out theft
- #9. "You shall not bear false witness against your neighbor. (Exodus 20:16) – Jesus calls out deceit, blasphemy
- #10. "You shall not covet your neighbor's goods; (Exodus 20:17) – Jesus calls out evil eye, lewdness, covetousness

Definitions

It is to be noticed in the list of twelve sins which follows that the first six are plural, referring to acts, and the last six are singular, referring more directly to the sin itself.

- porneiai (only here in Mark) 'sexual vice,' 'unlawful sexual intercourse,' 'immoral sexual acts.'
- klopai (only here in Mark) 'thefts,' 'acts of thievery.'
- phonoi (15:7) 'murders,' 'killings.'
- moicheiai (only here in Mark) 'adulteries' (as distinguished from porneiai above; sometimes the word may be the equivalent of porneiai 'sexual vice').
- pleonexiai (only here in Mark) 'avarice,' 'greed,' 'covetousness,' 'cupidity': the word often has a sexual connotation, and so is translated 'lust' by Moffatt (cf. Taylor).
- ponēriai (only here in Mark) 'acts of wickedness,' 'malicious deeds.'
- dolos (14:1) 'deceit,' 'cunning,' 'treachery.'
- aselgeia (only here in Mark) 'licentiousness,' 'debauchery'; with the connotation of open and flagrant excess, 'wantonness' (Goodspeed 'indecenty').
- ophthalmos ponēros (only here in Mark) 'an evil eye': in Jewish thinking 'envy,' 'malice' (for other possible meanings see Arndt & Gingrich 1). Synodale le regard envieux: Zürich neidischer Blick.
- blasphemia (3:28) 'blasphemy': here directed not to God but to men, 'slander,' 'defamation,' 'abusive speech.'
- hyperēphania (only here in the N.T.) 'haughtiness,' 'pride,' 'insolence.' (Ray) -Pride - This word for pride was common in the day, but it was, this is the first and only use of it in the new testament. It means to look down upon another, to esteem one's self better than others.
- aphrosunē (only here in Mark) literally 'foolishness,' 'stupidity': in the Bible not simply to be equated with intellectual stupidity, but rather with 'moral ... wrongheadedness of unbelief and sin' (Swete; cf. Gould, 'morally foolish'). Lagrange hēbétude morale; Synodale le dérèglement de l'esprit. Some English translations have it 'recklessness' or 'reckless folly'; BFBS has 'godlessness' (in the Glossary this meaning of the word is defended). A translation should convey the moral and spiritual connotation of the word.

Bratcher, R. G., & Nida, E. A. (1993). A handbook on the Gospel of Mark (pp. 233–234). New York: United Bible Societies.

Seriousness of Sin – Defeated by Sincerity of the Heart

The seriousness of the sin is defeated by the simplicity of the asking, when the asking is in sincerity to the Lord. Where we say Lord, I want to draw near to you. I want to enjoy your presence.

Jesus is offering liberation to all who would hear, whether it's to the religious leaders or those that were standing and listening. He calls them all in to hear and say, listen, evaluate your heart and determine is it pure? Is it clean before me and what is not for it surely will never be until we are in his presence? The question of if there will always be something in this sanctifying process of our life that we will say, Lord, what is not? I'm asking you to clean it, to cleanse it, to renew a right spirit in me so that I can enjoy fully your presence. I don't want church. I want God.

Create In Me a Clean Heart

David would say, "create in me a clean heart, O God, and renew a right spirit within me". The word for create is the Hebrew word "bara", and it means to create something that is not there, something new that has never existed before. We can wrestle the theology of the doctrines of salvation, regeneration, and the likes, but I think we can all agree on this, there are things in our hearts that need changing, so let's come before the Lord and say Lord there are things that I know need changed, I've excused them away, I have reasoned them away, but now Lord I come and I ask that you take them away. Lord create, change my heart, that "ONLY YOU CAN", liberate me, us, today -

Psalm 51:10 (NKJV) ¹⁰ Create in me a clean heart, O God, And renew a steadfast spirit within me.

Prayer – Boldly Ask Your God

The Word of God is Living and Powerful, and is ready, and will do a mighty work in our lives.

Hebrews 4:12 (NKJV) ¹² For the word of God is living and powerful, and sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing even to the division of soul and spirit, and of joints and marrow, and is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart.

In Every Study

- Who Is God? (How Great is He?)
- What Does He Think of Me? (How Wonderful Are His Thoughts Towards Me?)
- What Does He Want Me to Do?
- What Can I Boldly Request of Him?
- What Do I Need to Be on Guard of When I Leave Here Today?

Boldly come to the throne of grace, ask God to reveal Himself in a mighty way to you, and to do I might work in you, and through you.

Hebrews 4:16 (NKJV) ¹⁶ Let us therefore come boldly to the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy and find grace to help in time of need.

There is a Prayer Team Available to Pray with and for You

End of Study

Mark 7:24-37

Outline Mark Chapter 7:

- Defilement Comes from Within (7:1-23)
- A Gentile Woman Asks for Bread Crumbs (7:24-30)
- Jesus Heals a Deaf Mute (7:31-37)

Mark 7:24 From there He arose and went to the region of Tyre and Sidon. And He entered a house and wanted no one to know it, but He could not be hidden.

Distances

These Phoenician cities were Gentile territory. As the crow flies, Tyre is about 30-35 miles from where Jesus is ministering there in the region of the Sea of Galilee; the travel route would be more about 50 miles. Tyre to Sidon is another 20-25 miles. Where the deaf mute is healed, down in the area of Decapolis, from Sidon, will be about 90+ miles. The significance in our study today, is that these areas were all predominately Gentile (non-Jewish) areas.

Recap – Defiled / Jesus Making Statement – I’ve Come for All Men

We have to really grasp what's being said here. If you recall in the last study, that these religious leaders, they would take baths when they came back from the marketplace if they thought they touched someone that was a Gentile, unclean. Even if it was just, I was at the marketplace, it wouldn't matter. They would take a bath just so there was no chance that had they inadvertently and unknowingly rubbed up against a Gentile and had become unclean and then be defiled; so they would come home, bathe, and change just so they could be sure that they were not defiled and then they could eat. Here, Jesus says he is full on going into Gentile territory. You know this is stirring greatly the religious leaders because if they challenge him on hand washing you can imagine what this stirred now because he's in Gentile territory, touching Gentiles. He's not just rubbing up against them when his robe touched them, he's touching them purposely with his hand, he's interacting with them. This would cause great anger of the religious leaders towards Jesus but he's making a statement here. "I've come for greater than just Israel. I've come for every man who will willingly receive my offer." Every man who will willingly give themselves, say, "Here I am Lord, take me." The Lord saying, "I will."

Mark 7:1–4 (NKJV) ¹ Then the Pharisees and some of the scribes came together to Him, having come from Jerusalem. ² Now when they saw some of His disciples eat bread with defiled, that is, with unwashed hands, they found fault. ³ For the Pharisees and all the Jews do not eat unless they wash their hands in a special way, holding the tradition of the elders. ⁴ When they come from the marketplace, they do not eat unless they wash. And there are many other things which they have received and hold, like the washing of cups, pitchers, copper vessels, and couches.

The Gospel (A-B-C) & a D:

Admit

Romans 3:23 (NKJV) ²³ for all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God,

Romans 6:23 (NKJV) ²³ For the wages of sin is death, but the gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord.

Believe

John 3:16–17 (NKJV) ¹⁶ For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have everlasting life. ¹⁷ For God did not send His Son into the world to condemn the world, but that the world through Him might be saved.

Confess

Romans 10:9–10 (NKJV) ⁹ that if you confess with your mouth the Lord Jesus and believe in your heart that God has raised Him from the dead, you will be saved. ¹⁰ For with the heart one believes unto righteousness, and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation.

Disciple

Matthew 16:24–26 (NKJV) ²⁴ Then Jesus said to His disciples, "If anyone desires to come after Me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross, and follow Me. ²⁵ For whoever desires to save his life will lose it, but whoever loses his life for My sake will find it. ²⁶ For what profit is it to a man if he gains the whole world, and loses his own soul? Or what will a man give in exchange for his soul?"

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Hebrews 4:16 (NKJV) ¹⁶ Let us therefore come boldly to the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy and find grace to help in time of need.

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A Gentile Woman Asks for Bread Crumbs (7:24-30)

Mark 7:24 From there He arose and went to the region of Tyre and Sidon. And He entered a house and wanted no one to know it, but He could not be hidden.

Mark 7:25 For a woman whose young daughter had an unclean spirit heard about Him, and she came and fell at His feet.

Mark 7:26 The woman was a Greek, a Syro-Phoenician by birth, and she kept asking Him to cast the demon out of her daughter.

Shut the Blinds

Again, these Phoenician cities were Gentile territory. He was seeking a break from the action - a respite from the crowds that thronged Him. "And He entered a house and wanted no one to know it..." The Bible doesn't tell us this, but I'm sure Jesus shut the blinds. And how do I know this house had blinds? Haven't you heard of Phoenician blinds?

Light of the World – Can't be Hid

Of course, even with the blinds shut, verse 24 tells us, "He could not be hidden." I love that thought. Jesus is the light that cannot be covered. He always shines.

John 8:12 (NKJV) ¹² Then Jesus spoke to them again, saying, "I am the light of the world. He who follows Me shall not walk in darkness, but have the light of life."

5 Second Read – Life of Pain

For a woman whose young daughter had an unclean spirit heard about Him, and she came and fell at His feet. -

Verse 25, we just read that in about five seconds. We could also just read it as a precursor to the rest of the passage, a passage of wow Jesus heals, His power is great and mighty; or we could stop and consider, what's it like for this mother, her daughter the love of her life is demon possessed. You think those demons treat her kindly? Those demons, they would be abusing her, mistreating her, causing her to enter into all kinds of evil and darkness.

Opened the Portal / Where is a Mother to Go?

Somewhere in this daughter's life she would have opened herself up to these demonic influences to invite them in, who knows maybe the mother or father were into the occult and brought that influence into the home. There had to be a portal, an invitation. Demons can't just take somebody because they choose to, and here this mother is watching her baby being brutalized by these demons. Where's the mother to go? Is she going to go to the religious leaders down in Israel? Is she going to go to the Scribes and Pharisees? They're going to quote a bunch of scriptures and they're going to challenge the situation theologically. Put a blame on, the reason you're in this state is because your fault?

No compassion, no sympathy, no empathy. We just read that last week. Jesus says, "Oh, you hypocrites. You worship me with your lips, but your heart is far from me." He goes on and shows them the first indicator of their heart was there a lack of love for the person in need. That passage last week started specifically with the caring for the mother and father. But here, this mother comes. Who's she going to go to? No doubt she's been to the world and the world can't solve it either, the secular counselors and methodologies.

Where is a Mother to Go? / She Goes to Jesus

Here this girl is still in the same state of her life. Where's the mother to go? She goes to Jesus when she hears that Jesus is in town. She doesn't ask if He's available, she just comes expecting, pleading.

Where Can We Go for Our Children Under Stronghold / Do You Believe His Power to Deliver?

Who are we to go to if our children are taken into some stronghold in bondage, whether it be the flesh or the world or the influence of the evil one? We take them to Jesus and you can do that today. Do you believe that Jesus has the power? I'm not promising a rapid delivery or a set free, but I know one place I can go above all places that I have this opportunity because I can go before Jesus and say, "Lord, my child is not in the right place and I'm begging you, I'm beseeching you to touch, to intervene on behalf of my child." You could do that today.

She Followed – Would not Quit

Verse 26, The woman was a Greek, a Syro-Phoenician by birth, and she kept asking Him to cast the demon out of her daughter. - She is saying, she keeps asking, the passage says she just keeps asking over and over. She's not taking no for an answer. In the Matthew's gospel account were told that the disciples were like, "Lord, do something with her," in the sense of, "She's driving us crazy." That account tells us that Jesus and the disciples are leaving Tyre and Sidon and heading back to the Galilee area, and this woman is following them, and crying out continually along the way. Remind you, Sidon to Tyre is 25 miles, that is a lot of crying out, that is at least 8 hours, or more. But she keeps asking because she's desperate.

Matthew 15:21–23 (NKJV) ²¹ Then Jesus went out from there and departed to the region of Tyre and Sidon. ²² And behold, a woman of Canaan came from that region and cried out to Him, saying, "Have mercy on me, O Lord, Son of David! My daughter is severely demon-possessed." ²³ But He answered her not a word. And His disciples came and urged Him, saying, "Send her away, for she cries out after us."

Breaking Through Iron Dome – Desperate Prayer / Sovereignty God & Freewill of Man /

And I say to you, I say to me, those are the prayers that I know break through the iron dome. Those are the prayers when my heart's broken and I'm pleading in desperation, whatever that may be, especially intercession for another person who's in bondage. You know, when I pray in desperation, I am not getting wrapped up in theology as I made reference to last week. The sovereignty of God and the freewill of man, and therefore this is how it shall be based on my theological mind and understanding. I come to the heart and I just simply come pouring myself out before the Lord and I pray as if my prayers matter. I pray believing like this woman has gone asking as I'm seeking, as I'm knocking. And I ain't knocking politely with a tap-tap. I am knocking with a fist than a pound and a pound.

Matthew 7:7–11 (NKJV) ⁷ "Ask, and it will be given to you; seek, and you will find; knock, and it will be opened to you. ⁸ For everyone who asks receives, and he who seeks finds, and to him who knocks it will be opened. ⁹ Or what man is there among you who, if his son asks for bread, will give him a stone? ¹⁰ Or if he asks for a fish, will he give him a serpent? ¹¹ If you then, being evil, know how to give good gifts to your children, how much more will your Father who is in heaven give good things to those who ask Him!

Pray as if Prayer Matters!

I don't understand how all this works. All I know is the call to ask, the call that we wrestle not against flesh and blood, but against principalities and powers. I ask in the example of a story like this. I ask in that example of the man who comes and knocks and says, "I got friends in town. Can you loan me some bread?" He says, "Hey, we're in bed, we're sleeping. Come back tomorrow, but the neighbor keeps pounding say hey I need it now." Please note Luke 11 is in the context of the Lord's prayer, and the disciples saying Lord teach us to pray:

Luke 11:1–4 (NKJV) ¹ Now it came to pass, as He was praying in a certain place, when He ceased, that one of His disciples said to Him, "Lord, teach us to pray, as John also taught his disciples." ² So He said to them, "When you pray, say: Our Father in heaven, Hallowed be Your name. Your kingdom come. Your will be done On earth as it is in heaven. ³ Give us day by day our daily bread. ⁴ And forgive us our sins, For we also forgive everyone who is indebted to us. And do not lead us into temptation, But deliver us from the evil one."

Luke 11:5–10 (NKJV) ⁵ And He said to them, "Which of you shall have a friend, and go to him at midnight and say to him, 'Friend, lend me three loaves; ⁶ for a friend of mine has come to me on his journey, and I have nothing to set before him'; ⁷ and he will answer from within and say, 'Do not trouble me; the door is now shut, and my children are with me in bed; I cannot rise and give to you'? ⁸ I say to you, though he will not rise and give to him because he is his friend, yet because of his persistence he will rise and give him as many as he needs. ⁹ "So I say to you, ask, and it will be given to you; seek, and you will find; knock, and it will be opened to you. ¹⁰ For everyone who asks receives, and he who seeks finds, and to him who knocks it will be opened.

These passages on prayer, give me three powerful three to remember in prayer, and how to pray in my desperation:

Persistent – Pounding - Prayer

Prayer is the Spiritual Realm

There's something that's spoken of here of the continual asking, seeking and knocking to which I see there's a spiritual realm to this prayer life. I'm engaged in a spiritual battle. I don't understand it all, but I understand enough to know. I see these examples and I see that is how the battle of prayer is waged, so I enter it accordingly. To fight victoriously, you have to know where the battlefield is.

Ephesians 6:12 (NKJV) ¹² For we do not wrestle against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this age, against spiritual hosts of wickedness in the heavenly places.

2 Corinthians 10:3–6 (NKJV) ³ For though we walk in the flesh, we do not war according to the flesh. ⁴ For the weapons of our warfare are not carnal but mighty in God for pulling down strongholds, ⁵ casting down arguments and every high thing that exalts itself against the knowledge of God, bringing every thought into captivity to the obedience of Christ, ⁶ and being ready to punish all disobedience when your obedience is fulfilled.

The Screeching Birds

Hey, I'm not making a spiritual proof text, but it was quite interesting to me as I was thinking that verse through. It stirred me to prayer for something that seems so bound up and unbreakable. I just started calling upon the name of the Lord, believing saying, "Lord, I'm not going to try to reason this out in my mind. I'm just opening and breaking my heart before you. This person needs set free and I'm asking you to set them free. I'm asking you to come and bind the evil one. Let them see your great love and compassion and the freedom that you offer them. I got nowhere else to go because nothing else will work." At that moment, I was outside and I heard this stirring and squawking. I look up and I was surrounded by black ravens squawking and squealing and screaming at me all the way as I walked by them. I don't know what that was, but I did say, "This is truly a picture. When I am banging on the door in prayer broken and desperate, I definitely think that dirty bird, that devil and his henchmen, they are nervous and they are squealing in pain because they know what God does when we come with a broken and desperate prayer before Him.

Persistent Prayer – Do We Care Enough to Persistent / How Important is it?

Matthew tells us when she first approached Jesus, "He answered her not a word." Apparently, Jesus wanted to see the persistence of her faith. His silence was a test of the woman's faith. Often we misinterpret Jesus' silence in our lives. It doesn't mean He's not home, or He's busy. It could be He's testing the persistence of our faith. Notice again verse 26, "she kept asking Him to cast the demon out." Maybe, Jesus is waiting to see if we'll keep asking! **A continual persistence will truly draw out what is important, what really matters. Things we can drop after few prayers' requests, usually aren't that important, and would not be beneficial to us should God grant them. But things we won't let go of, continually knock on the door for, those are usually the things that matter, and the continual prayer request, help us prioritize life into what really matters most.**

Don't Rest – Else the Can Rest / God Stir us / Peace in the Midst of the Storm

How have you been praying? I just ask because I have to ask myself continually. Are my prayers matter of fact, lukewarm, Oh well, it is what it is. God will do what He will do. Or, do I pray for my children, my loved ones, those who are taken captive. If I can do something, then I'm asking and I'm pounding however long it takes. Let me say this, I don't want to have a peace about their state if they're in a bad state. I want God to stir me so that I can pray and intercede. And then, I know that that's not ended in delivered at that very moment, but I know who's set free

at that moment, that can face the day, it's me. I have a peace, I know I've handed this to the Lord one more day and we're going to pick it up again later in the day and early in the morning again.

Mark 7:27 But Jesus said to her, “Let the children be filled first, for it is not good to take the children’s bread and throw it to the little dogs.”

Mark 7:28 And she answered and said to Him, “Yes, Lord, yet even the little dogs under the table eat from the children’s crumbs.”

Prophetic Passage – Power Passage / The Lamb for the World / Invite Any and All to Wedding Feast

So, the passage is very prophetic at that this is recorded for us the first time that Jesus has left the area that was predominantly Jewish and He's up here now and a Greek non-Jewish region. See, Israel at this time had come to the place, but the Messiah would come for the nation of Israel. They never recognized that He would also come for the gentiles also. Jesus is laying before them in this passage and hence the significance of it, this Lamb of God who comes, He comes for both Jew and Greek.

John 1:29 (NKJV) ²⁹ The next day John saw Jesus coming toward him, and said, “Behold! The Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world!

John 3:16 (NKJV) ¹⁶ For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have everlasting life.

He comes for all man, all women, and He'll give that clear correlation so there will be no confusion after His ascension that the Gospel is for both Jew and Greek. He'll give the parable of the marriage feast where He invites first the family who refused to come and then through the string at the end He says, "Just go out to the highway and byway. Invite anyone and everyone who's willing to come." He's making a reference there that the majority of the Jewish nation is going to reject Him, but let's not miss many multitudes received Him as the Messiah. Many of the religious leaders were told in Acts they recognize, and they follow but unfortunately, many who were first called refuse. The significance Jesus is clearly showing is that the gospel is open to all. That's what the highway and byway is. It doesn't matter where you lived, go to the outer parts of the world.

Matthew 22:1–10 (NKJV) ¹ And Jesus answered and spoke to them again by parables and said: ² “The kingdom of heaven is like a certain king who arranged a marriage for his son, ³ and sent out his servants to call those who were invited to the wedding; and they were not willing to come. ⁴ Again, he sent out other servants, saying, “Tell those who are invited, “See, I have prepared my dinner; my oxen and fatted cattle are killed, and all things are ready. Come to the wedding.” ⁵ But they made light of it and went their ways, one to his own farm, another to his business. ⁶ And the rest seized his servants, treated them spitefully, and killed them. ⁷ But when the king heard about it, he was furious. And he sent out his armies, destroyed those murderers, and burned up their city. ⁸ Then he said to his servants, “The wedding is ready, but those who were invited were not worthy. ⁹ Therefore go into the highways, and as many as you find, invite to the wedding.” ¹⁰ So those servants went out into the highways and gathered together all whom they found, both bad and good. And the wedding hall was filled with guests.

Jewish People Called Gentiles – Dogs / Words for Dogs / Jesus Uses Word Play

Now the Jewish people, they called the gentiles dogs. Jesus is using this very cultural application to speak and breakthrough to this woman, and to all listeners who would hear this story that He is calling and will receive the gentiles. There's two words used here in the culture and there were dogs, as in scavenger dogs, that ran in packs, did not live in homes among families; that is what the Jews would consider the Gentiles, that they were, scavenger dogs. They would use that derogatory word, calling them dogs. Well, the other word is, for the family pet such as the puppy that lived in the house, and that's the word that Jesus uses for her, so drawing on a parallel of the Jews looking down on the Gentiles, calling them dogs. Jesus, not going in that derogatory manner, uses an endearing term but still there is a connection, and a tie, and a word play here, so very interesting.

Clean Hands with Bread – Feed their Dogs

What they would say is for those who had the house pet, they didn't have Purina Dog Chow, they would eat their meal and whatever bread would be left over that would have been stale or moldy by the next day, this is what they would feed the dog with. Some say that they would even soap up their hands with the bread that would remove any residual dipping which they were dipping in, then they would ball it up and throw it to the dog under the table. Interestingly, this woman we're going to see through great faith, she'll take what Jesus says and say, "Yeah, but even the dogs get a crumb from the table." This woman, she's simply asking for a crumb.

Religious Vain Worship / Israel is Rejecting Feast - This Woman – Just give Me a Crumb

Isn't this quite interesting, that this woman, "Just throw me a crumb, I don't care." It hits the floor, "I don't care is it's from unclean hands, just throw me a crumb." In our passage last week Jesus said to these religious leaders that the banquet feast was set for, "What did Isaiah say you hypocrites?" Yeah, that's what He called them. "You worship me with your lips, but your heart is far from me." "I just want to crumb." Jesus had said a feast in this picture for the nation of Israel. He said, a feast in the picture of that story of the parable of the wedding feast. But here, He's going to throw this woman more than a scrap and the crumb. He's going to prepare her a feast and a banquet. He's going to call her a woman of faith and He's going to answer her request. Here we see for the first picture, Jesus outside the land of Israel ministering to the gentiles. He's saying the gate is open to all who would come by faith.

Mark 7:6-7 (NKJV) ⁶ He answered and said to them, "Well did Isaiah prophesy of you hypocrites, as it is written: 'This people honors Me with their lips, But their heart is far from Me. ⁷ And in vain they worship Me, Teaching as doctrines the commandments of men.'

Mark 7:28 (NKJV) ²⁸ And she answered and said to Him, "Yes, Lord, yet even the little dogs under the table eat from the children's crumbs."

Notice – Her Persistence is Worship

Do you see what this woman's doing? She's worshiping Jesus with our lips and our heart is right there for Him. She is worshiping Jesus by believing and declaring through her prayer requests that you are a God of love, a God of compassion, a God who has empathy for the hurting. She is declaring through this continual insistent praises for the king. You know, when your prayer life comes to this place of insistent, insistence, not letting Him go, believing that He has the power and that He has the heart and care to do it, these broken, desperate prayers become forms of worship because we're declaring His nature, "You'll do, it's who you are. It's come to you." What a beautiful picture that is.

Mark 7:29 Then He said to her, "For this saying go your way; the demon has gone out of your daughter."

Mark 7:30 And when she had come to her house, she found the demon gone out, and her daughter lying on the bed.

God Stores Tears in Bottle

As we say some of the greatest prayers, the prayers of tears, they say nothing, just brokenness tears before the Lord are saying it all. The Bible says He captures our tears in a bottle and stores them. How precious are our tears. He says that He stores our prayer in vials in heaven. What does that mean, that He thinks of our prayer life, that He stores them in bowls in heaven? That in itself should make us break through and just plead desperation before the Lord, desperate prayers.

Psalms 56:8 (NKJV) ⁸ You number my wanderings; Put my tears into Your bottle; Are they not in Your book?

Revelation 5:8 (NKJV) ⁸ Now when He had taken the scroll, the four living creatures and the twenty-four elders fell down before the Lamb, each having a harp, and golden bowls full of incense, which are the prayers of the saints.

Parents don't Stop Praying / Jesus Went Out of the Way – to Catch These Tears and Prayers

So this woman goes home and finds her daughter made well, resting and recovering in the bed. If you're here tonight and that's your child or that's your spouse or if that is your parents, siblings, in this whole world, I ask you if you don't pray and plead for them, who will? Who will intercede for them? Because what we see here is God does move, and he moves in power and you can come up and we'll pray for whatever that situation is with you. Of course you can pray right here and now in your very seat. But take this moment and the stirring from the Lord as he worships in our midst and he walks in our midst through this word today, that this is divine moment that he's speaking to us saying, "This is what I want of you, cause I wanna do something. I came all the way to Tyre knowing that this woman would be here." Rest? There is no rest. Until heaven, there will be no rest. He knew this moment would come, and he stirred her to respond, continue and respond. I believe he divinely designed that today, right here, right now, for each and every one of us. I came all the way this way to meet with you, to stir you to call upon me.

Jesus Heals a Deaf Mute (7:31-37)

Mark 7:31 Again, departing from the region of Tyre and Sidon, He came through the midst of the region of Decapolis to the Sea of Galilee.

Decapolis – 10 Cities

Decapolis, was named for ten (deca) Hellenistic (Greek, non-Jewish) cities on the East side of the Sea of Galilee

Remember Decapolis

Remember Decapolis? It was where the man who had been demon possessed went (Mark 5:1-20). He wanted to be with Jesus, but Jesus said go tell your friends what great things God has done for you. The man went to proclaim it in Decapolis - which means 10 cities. Jesus will send us into an area to proclaim the "Good News" and then He will come to reap the harvest. Isn't it wonderful to co-labor and be used by God? What could be more meaningful for us to do in this earthly existence. Our personal witness, is the simplicity of the Gospel, as we simply tell people what Christ has done for us.

Mark 5:18–20 (NKJV) ¹⁸ And when He got into the boat, he who had been demon-possessed begged Him that he might be with Him. ¹⁹ However, Jesus did not permit him, but said to him, "Go home to your friends, and tell them what great things the Lord has done for you, and how He has had compassion on you." ²⁰ And he departed and began to proclaim in Decapolis all that Jesus had done for him; and all marveled.

Mark 7:32 Then they brought to Him one who was deaf and had an impediment in his speech, and they begged Him to put His hand on him.

Impediment – Hard to Articulate What Can't Hear

His speech impediment was the result of his hearing deficiency. It's hard to articulate what you don't hear.

Mark 7:33 And He took him aside from the multitude, and put His fingers in his ears, and He spat and touched his tongue.

Mark 7:34 Then, looking up to heaven, He sighed, and said to him, "Ephphatha," that is, "Be opened."

Takes Man Aside – No Show / Life of Mocking / Disabled – Often the Overlooked / A Nobody

Jesus takes this man. He takes him aside. He takes him out of the crowd. He's not making a show out of him. He knows what this man needs. I think this man, I want to be healed. I don't want to be made a show of. Maybe his whole life was a mocking and a ridicule. And many times the disabled are just the people that are overlooked and walked by. But I love the heart of these people we read of today, they get this man to Jesus. Some will say they just wanted to see a show, and I don't think so, because verse 32 says they begged Jesus to lay His hands upon this man. There appears to be to me, a real desire to see this man touched by Jesus; may we be a people who see the disabled, and minister to them, and give them the love of Christ. And, blessings to so many of you, as I see that amazing heart of love you have for the disabled, especially in our children's church.

Sign Language

I believe what we are seeing here is Jesus talking to this man in sign language. The man can't hear, but Jesus touches his ears, as to say, I am going to open your ears so you can hear. The spitting is a loud sign language, that which is binding your tongue will be released from your mouth, and bind you no more; Jesus touches his tongue, as to say I am going to loose your tongue so you can speak.

Jesus relates to us. He speaks to us on our level. We don't have to reach some spiritual level to hear and understand Him. Jesus will meet us on our level.

Speaking of Sign Language, the greatest sign language of Love is the Cross

He Sighs at the Pain of the Fallen World

This man was a nobody in the sight of an anybody, but not Jesus. Jesus will stop. This is his heart. This is his heart for you today. He stops and it says that he sighs. He makes sure that that's recorded for us, that he sighed. There's a brokenness on his behalf. We saw the brokenness of the woman; now we see the brokenness of God's heart as

he grieves him in this fallen world of the pains that come with this fallen world. You can bring your fall. What's fallen. What's broken.

I pray that you truly will see this and believe it. He sighs. Oh, it hurts to see this pain. I can do something about it. I have the ultimate healing in heaven. Simply he wants to touch us personally and intimately. I believe in the miracles of God, that he can heal physical illness and does so when he chooses. I believe without a doubt in every coming that we come with the fall, he sighs. Oh, this fallen world and the pain of it. I'll touch you. I'm not afraid to touch you. I love to touch you.

If you are hurting, facing and enduring, an illness, a disease, that comes from this fallen God sighs (groans) at the ills of this fallen world. And there are no guarantees that we are immune or excluded from them in this world. But God shows us His heart regarding the matter, when we face the matter.

Just this week two great woman of the Lord tells their stories of breast cancer and the pain and heartbreak that comes with it, but their faith still holds in the anchor of God's love.

Joni Eareckson Tada

Joni Eareckson Tada, a popular evangelical speaker and advocate for people with disabilities, revealed a new cancer diagnosis three years after being declared cancer-free following a battle with stage 3 breast cancer.

The author and founder of Joni and Friends, a Christian ministry focused on helping the disability community, announced the development on Sunday.

Tada, a quadriplegic, recently underwent tests on a small nodule which had developed over the site of her mastectomy, which she underwent along with chemotherapy treatment in 2010.

Doctors found a small cancerous tumor within the nodule after the latest biopsies.

"When I received the unexpected news of cancer from my oncological surgeon, I relaxed and smiled, knowing that my sovereign God loves me dearly and holds me tightly in His hands. What good is it if we only trust the Lord when we understand His ways? That only guarantees a life filled with doubts," she said. (20Nov18)

Anne Graham Lotz

Evangelist Anne Lotz Graham (daughter of Billy Graham) has shared images of her shaved head after losing her hair due to chemotherapy treatments, and expressed her thankfulness that God values other things above outward appearance.

On Monday, Lotz posted an update on her battle against breast cancer, revealing that she has drawn inspiration from 1 Samuel 16:7 in the Bible, which reads: "Man looks on the outward appearance, but the Lord looks at the heart." (20Nov18)

Mark 7:35 Immediately his ears were opened, and the impediment of his tongue was loosed, and he spoke plainly.

Imagine Years – Not Hearing “I Love You”

Be opened - imagine years of not hearing someone say “I love you” or years of not being able to say “I love you”. Be thankful for sight, hearing, touch, smell, and taste. What precious gifts from God. Let us use these gifts to there fullest.

Hearing is a Gift – Yet Often we Listen without Hearing

So often we listen without hearing. So often the best ministering we can do is just to listen to someone and let them know that we care enough to listen. The problem occurs when we get so busy we don't take the time to

stop and talk with somebody, or when we are talking with someone our mind is racing with 10 other things that we are thinking about.

President Franklin D. Roosevelt (32nd President of the USA) got tired of smiling that big smile and saying the usual things at all those White House receptions. So, one evening he decided to find out whether anybody was paying attention to what he was saying. As each person came up to him with extended hand, he flashed that big smile and said, "I murdered my grandmother this morning." People would automatically respond with comments such as "How lovely!" or "Just continue with your great work!" Nobody listened to what he was saying, except one foreign diplomat. When the president said, "I murdered my grandmother this morning," the diplomat responded softly, "I'm sure she had it coming to her."

I highly doubt that this deaf mute ever took a conversation for granted, maybe he became a counselor or Pastor - all ministries demanding ears that hear.

I heard a story of a man who started a phone service. His advertisement said, "I will listen to you talk without saying a word for 5 dollars per half hour." The man was receiving 20-25 calls a day. People want to be heard, let us listen to them.

Can't Put God in a Box

And of course, why did Jesus heal this way? And it's simply a demonstration that you can't put God in a box. Some people, they wanna put God in a box, that he only works this way. He'll only go to these people and these places and as we talked last week about traditions and rituals, here Jesus, he's blowing up traditions and rituals because no one would pick this as a way of healing, putting fingers in ears and spitting on tongues or however that played out. He blows them up. You can't put me in a box. There's not a formula that I work to. And a lot of people struggle entering into the freedom that Christ has for them because they believe he only does it this way, or he does something that way and they miss the freedom of Christ that he's moving. He's always on the move. And he's not in a box. He's out about the world ready to touch and heal and minister and talk and draw.

Many Churches are Anemic

Many churches are anemic today, because they want to put god in a box, reduce him to a formula (that they have formulated), and they miss, or better said, they put a lid on, God moving in fresh, new, powerful ways.

Mark 7:36 Then He commanded them that they should tell no one; but the more He commanded them, the more widely they proclaimed it.

Not Our Timing – But His

Verse 36, Jesus commands them not to tell anyone and we can ask. The reason why and what I believe is that Jesus is not asking for the silence of the mighty work of God. That's why he came. That's why he continually does these miracles to prove and show that he does what only someone who is either God or has the direct connection to the miracle working God. I believe what Jesus is saying here is that the people think that the Kingdom of God has come and that it will be taken by force, that God has come to overthrow, to overthrow the yoke of Rome and to set the people free and to establish the nation of Israel as its own sovereign nation and onto the greatness that it was in the time of King David..

Jesus is knowing that's what their hearts are. Even the apostles would say, Lord, will you restore the kingdom at this time? To which he will say, no one knows the time, but this is the thinking and mentality of the people, that it was the kingdom. Now and the action was now because the time seemed to be right, the harvest seemed to be right, but the timing isn't right. We're still one year out from the crucifixion and the crucifixion must be on the exact day as prophesied in the book of Daniel Chapter Nine, and we've discussed this before and we will discuss it in depth when we get closer to the triumphal entry, but let it be said, there was a specific day down to the day (173,880 days from the command to rebuild the walls of Jerusalem) and the crucifixion was down to the hour of when the Lamb of God would be the Passover sacrifice.

Oh, it all looked like perfect timing, but it wasn't, as well meaning as it was, it still was not to be, and there's times where I'll say to the Lord and I know you have too, Lord this all lines up so perfectly. This looks like the right thing to do. It's the right time, and if we don't do it right now, we're going to miss the opportunity to do it right now, and yet the Lord would be saying to us, no, it's not. There're just things you don't know and there's things you just need to hold for. Now there's things you need wait on right now because I'm working something far greater, then this thing that you think is so great.

There are times I just need to accept, that the time is not now. And here is the great take-away, I say..... Ok. Yes, it is hard to stand down, but its ok to stand down. But here is equal importance for your remembrance and understanding, and that is, nor is it failure. We can walk away and with the help of the flesh, the world, or the Devil, feel like we have missed the great opportunity, that we should just quit trying, God is not in it (at least with us), and we are failures. And that can be the farthest from the truth, God is moved and blessed with us, that we want to see His Kingdom come, we want to see this "thing" blessed, and He is not upset but blessed, oh He says of us, your heart is so awesome how you care about the things of the Lord. It will come, just not right now. And so we go, and wait for that thing, but continue on in what he puts before "now".

Mark 7:37 And they were astonished beyond measure, saying, "He has done all things well. He makes both the deaf to hear and the mute to speak."

He Does All Things Well – God Does things to Excellence

And even when you say, "I don't get it, fingers and spitting," there's power in his ways. Whatever his ways are. And we're told here he does all things well.

Jesus was never sloppy. Whatever He did, He did it with excellence. If it was worth doing, it was worth doing well. And this should be true of His followers. Whether it's making a living - or playing on the worship team - or teaching Sunday School. If you want to be like Jesus, strive for excellence in all you do.

I wanna be like Jesus. I do. I don't take on that I am, but I want to be. So I look at my life and I would like my life to end. He's done all things well in my life, and I would like the next line to read that I've done all things well. I've done what he's called me to do. I've been faithful. I've done it according to his word. Not just according to his word, but according to his ways, and that way was in accordance with his heart. May I do all things well. May we do all things well. I wanna do that by drawing near by faith.

He Does All Things Well – That Includes You

And I think that can go over every person who receives Christ, and he's walked into our lives and showed himself. We can all say he's done all things well in our lives. He's been so good to me. Too often we forget, we are included in that statement (He does all things well); but we are, each and every one of you. He created us in our mother's womb, He breathed His life into us, and we are His workmanship (poemia is the Greek Word), we are His poem, a love poem at that. And He does all things well, every detail of you, He is in love with you.

Genesis 2:7 (NKJV) ⁷ And the LORD God formed man of the dust of the ground, and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life; and man became a living being.

Psalms 139:14 (NKJV) ¹⁴ I will praise You, for I am fearfully and wonderfully made; Marvelous are Your works, And that my soul knows very well.

Ephesians 2:10 (NKJV) ¹⁰ For we are His workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand that we should walk in them.

Prayer – Boldly Ask Your God

The Word of God is Living and Powerful, and is ready, and will do a mighty work in our lives.

Hebrews 4:12 (NKJV) ¹² For the word of God is living and powerful, and sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing even to the division of soul and spirit, and of joints and marrow, and is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart.

In Every Study

- Who Is God? (How Great is He?)
- What Does He Think of Me? (How Wonderful Are His Thoughts Towards Me?)
- What Does He Want Me to Do?
- What Can I Boldly Request of Him?
- What Do I Need to Be on Guard of When I Leave Here Today?

Boldly come to the throne of grace, ask God to reveal Himself in a mighty way to you, and to do I might work in you, and through you.

Hebrews 4:16 (NKJV) ¹⁶ Let us therefore come boldly to the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy and find grace to help in time of need.

There is a Prayer Team Available to Pray with and for You

End of Study

Mark 8
8:1-9

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Outline Mark Chapter 7:

- Defilement Comes from Within (7:1-23)
- A Gentile Woman Asks for Bread Crumbs (7:24-30)
- Jesus Heals a Deaf Mute (7:31-37)

Outline Mark 8:

- The Feeding of the Four Thousand (8:1-19)
- The Pharisees Seek a Sign (8:10-12)
- Beware of the Leaven of the Pharisees and Herod (8:13-21)
- A Blind Man Healed at Bethsaida (8:22-26)
- Peter Confesses Jesus as the Christ (8:27-30)
- Jesus Predicts His Death and Resurrection (8:31-33)
- Take Up the Cross and Follow Me (8:34-38)

Recap/Intro

So we in chapter 8; we are less than a year away from the cross. The religious leaders are plotting the death of Jesus, and we will see another confrontation in this chapter. Back in chapter 7 we saw the challenge and confrontation of man's religious traditions being greater than the commandments of God, specifically they challenge Jesus on the tradition of washing hands before a meal or taking a bath after returning from the marketplace because they may have accidentally rubbed up against a Gentile. Jesus makes it clear, that God looks at the heart, and it is what is in the heart that determines if a man is clean or unclean spiritually speaking. And then in chapter 7 Jesus goes all the way up to the Gentile (non-Jewish) area, some 75 miles from the Sea of Galilee, and ministers to a Gentile woman and her daughter who was demon possessed. Then He hikes it some 90 miles down to the area of Decapolis (another predominately Gentile area) and heals many who are sick and diseased, and He even specifically a Gentile man who is deaf and mute. Jesus doesn't just speak a healing, He touches this Gentile (remember the marketplace reasoning of the Jews), and He doesn't just touch the man on the shoulder but touches his tongue. Now the significance of that is that the Jews believe that if you shared a meal with someone, and the bread they dipped into the bowl of (vinegar or special mixture) left behind a part of the person (because of saliva on the bread), that you were actually becoming one with that person. So Jesus putting His hand on this man's tongue, touching saliva, oh boy, wait the religious leaders hear about that.

Mark 7:14-16 (NKJV) ¹⁴ When He had called all the multitude to Himself, He said to them, "Hear Me, everyone, and understand: ¹⁵ There is nothing that enters a man from outside which can defile him; but the things which come out of him, those are the things that defile a man. ¹⁶ If anyone has ears to hear, let him hear!"

Mark 7:33–34 (NKJV) ³³ And He took him aside from the multitude, and put His fingers in his ears, and He spat and touched his tongue. ³⁴ Then, looking up to heaven, He sighed, and said to him, “Ephphatha,” that is, “Be opened.”

Today – Feeding of the 4,000

So today we come to the feeding of the 4,000. We are still in Decapolis, the Gentile region; and let me emphasize how huge the story of the Syro-Phoenician woman, the deaf mute, and the feeding of the 4,000 mostly Gentile people is. Jesus is very specifically, very clearly, letting it be known to all people, that His Gospel is open to all people. The Jewish people, and not just the religious leaders, but most all the Jewish people at that time believed they were the chosen people of God, and everyone else was damned to hell. They said God created Gentiles for the purpose of fueling the fires of hell. And you could say we know that, why are you harping on something that we all know. The reason is..... the very disciples of Jesus, the early church, truly did not understand the Gospel was for the whole world, not Jew only. They really didn't understand that when Jesus said the world (John 3:16), He literally meant the whole world. My case in point I make is that all the way in Acts chapter 10, this is years after the resurrection, we are talking probably around 7-10 years after the resurrection, and God gives Peter a vision that leads to him proclaiming the Gospel to the Gentiles, and the recording of the first Gentiles to be converted, and when the other church leaders hear about Peter eating and sharing the Gospel with the Gentiles, they call him on the carpet to give an account for his actions. And then at the end of the dissertation, they say wow (Acts 11:18) God has granted to the Gentiles repentance to life (meaning eternal life with God).

Mark 7:27 (NKJV) ²⁷ But Jesus said to her, “Let the children be filled first, for it is not good to take the children’s bread and throw it to the little dogs.”

John 3:16 (NKJV) ¹⁶ For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have everlasting life.

Acts 10:12–16 (NKJV) ¹² In it were all kinds of four-footed animals of the earth, wild beasts, creeping things, and birds of the air. ¹³ And a voice came to him, “Rise, Peter; kill and eat.” ¹⁴ But Peter said, “Not so, Lord! For I have never eaten anything common or unclean.” ¹⁵ And a voice spoke to him again the second time, “What God has cleansed you must not call common.” ¹⁶ This was done three times. And the object was taken up into heaven again.

Acts 10:28–29 (NKJV) ²⁸ Then he said to them, “You know how unlawful it is for a Jewish man to keep company with or go to one of another nation. But God has shown me that I should not call any man common or unclean. ²⁹ Therefore I came without objection as soon as I was sent for. I ask, then, for what reason have you sent for me?”

Acts 10:34–35 (NKJV) ³⁴ Then Peter opened his mouth and said: “In truth I perceive that God shows no partiality. ³⁵ But in every nation whoever fears Him and works righteousness is accepted by Him.

Acts 11:18 (NKJV) ¹⁸ When they heard these things they became silent; and they glorified God, saying, “Then God has also granted to the Gentiles repentance to life.”

The significance of these events we currently are studying here in chapters 7 and 8, and vital to the confirmation of a doctrinal and theological truth. As we say, for a doctrine to be firmly established, we should see a word regarding it in the Old Testament, and it taught or demonstrated by Jesus, and we should find it in the Book of Acts or the epistles. So we do, this doctrine of salvation is open for the Gentiles.

Isaiah 42:6 (NKJV) ⁶ “I, the LORD, have called You in righteousness, And will hold Your hand; I will keep You and give You as a covenant to the people, As a light to the Gentiles,

Isaiah 11:10 (NKJV) ¹⁰ “And in that day there shall be a Root of Jesse, Who shall stand as a banner to the people; For the Gentiles shall seek Him, And His resting place shall be glorious.”

Isaiah 49:6 (NKJV) ⁶ Indeed He says, ‘It is too small a thing that You should be My Servant To raise up the tribes of Jacob, And to restore the preserved ones of Israel; I will also give You as a light to the Gentiles, That You should be My salvation to the ends of the earth.’ ”

BUT Know This

And please know and understand this as we read this passage and reflect on last weeks; Jesus will be put to death because the religious leaders condemn Him for saying He is God, for saying He is the Son of God, for breaking their religious traditions, and..... Jesus will be condemned by them, because He touches, and rubs against, the Gentiles. Jesus would be put to death because of you, and because of me. That is amazing grace! How much does God treasure you! What is your worth to Him! To give His only Son for you, for me!

In heaven, Jesus died for the sin of man, put to death by the Father so judgement of sin could be dealt with; on earth, Jesus died, put to death by the religious leaders, the religious fathers, for claiming He was God, for violating their religious traditions, and..... For touching Gentiles (an extreme violation of their religious traditions). On earth Jesus was put to death for touching Gentiles. Any Gentiles in this room? Yet when He stood before His accusers, when He was beaten with the 40 lashes of the whip, when He was put upon the tree..... Never once did He say, they're not mine, their not mine.

So in our passage before us, Jesus is on His way to the Gentiles, that is you and me, let's hear what the Lord would say to us today. The fact that He is in Decapolis, should scream "love beyond measure, whatever the cost, I want you!" Says the Lord.

The Feeding of the Four Thousand (8:1-9)

Mark 8:1 In those days, the multitude being very great and having nothing to eat, Jesus called His disciples to Him and said to them,

Mark 8:2 "I have compassion on the multitude, because they have now continued with Me three days and have nothing to eat.

Mark 8:3 And if I send them away hungry to their own houses, they will faint on the way; for some of them have come from afar."

Jesus Always Sensitive to Our Needs / Never Used His Powers for Self

Sometimes we become very insensitive to the needs of others, but never Jesus. He was always sensitive to the needs of the people. It is interesting at the beginning of Christ's ministry, when Satan was tempting Him, he said to Him because He was hungry after the forty day fast, "Why don't You take these stones and make them into bread?" But Jesus would not use His miraculous power in order to take care of His own physical need. But when it came to the physical needs of others, He was then willing to use that miraculous power; never to satisfy His own flesh or His own need but was willing to use it in order to satisfy the needs of others. Jesus was always ready to meet the needs of others. Jesus was ready to use His power because of His compassion for people.

Matthew 4:1-4 (NKJV) ¹ Then Jesus was led up by the Spirit into the wilderness to be tempted by the devil. ² And when He had fasted forty days and forty nights, afterward He was hungry. ³ Now when the tempter came to Him, he said, "If You are the Son of God, command that these stones become bread." ⁴ But He answered and said, "It is written, 'Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceeds from the mouth of God.'"

Take Away - Jesus will use His powers for you, because of His compassion for you. Today you can boldly ask of Him, to use His powers for your needs, because he cares for you, and because His compassion for you, He so desires to touch you and your need today.

Fears they May Faint / 3 days & Long Way Home Maybe

Jesus fears they may faint along the way if they leave now, for it appears they have not eaten for 3 days, or have run out of any food they did bring, and have not eaten at least long enough to be weak enough that when they leave, they might faint or stumble. Who knows how far they have come and may not have enough money to buy food for their travels home.

They Came for the Word – not the Show / Russia IBS

These people came for three days of nothing but Jesus teaching the word. No miracles are recorded here, no plays and skits, this is Sermon on the Mount stuff, just pure word for three days. That amazes me, especially as we see today so much of church is about entertainment and keep it short because I got things to do. I am reminded when I did missions in Russia and the Ukraine (and let's not forget to pray for them as war could break out between them before we leave this room today), and we were teaching the Inductive Bible Study method, to groups anywhere from 30 to 300. The walls of communism had just fallen, and we were one of the first missionaries into the country. The country was hungry for the Word of God. Now some of the people attending would come from "days away" to get there. For all the attendees we covered the cost of the 4-day seminar, and the lunch and dinner. Mind you the average Russian salary at that time was 30/month (that's right you heard me right). Well for those traveling, we also covered their travel expenses (trains and buses), and their hotel lodging. But even at that,

what we could cover due to our financial limitations, were the people's lost wages (there were no paid time off, if you missed work you didn't get paid). And I would be amazed that people would come, that it was so important to hear the word of God, that they would be willing to miss a week of pay, and for some it was even more as some would travel upwards of 3 days to get to our seminars, to get to feast on the Word of God.

Don't Make Word Common / Meditate Day & Night / Hershey's Chocolate – Because of the Milk

You know what church, don't make this Word common, don't make it a to-do, and when you do take it in, don't let it just pass through you. Meditate on it. One of my favorite passages in the Scriptures is Psalm 1, and clearly this psalm holds an important key for our lives as believers to be fruitful and prosperous. That key is meditation. The psalmist describes the one who prospers as one who meditates "day and night"; a continual meditation developing the Godly habit of disciplining one's mind in divine truth. The word meditate is the word used for cows, as they chew their food, then swallow it (they have 4 stomachs – in a sense the first two are really just extensions of their throat), and then they bring it back up (regurgitate) and chew it some more, and so on and so on. Their process of chewing and eating, maximizes the amount of nutrients they get out of the food they eat. The chocolate as far as I am concerned is Hershey's, right here in good ole Hershey Pennsylvania, and the reason the chocolate is so good is because of the milk. All the chocolate makers start with the same cocoa bean as the other guy. But Hershey chocolate is great because of the milk, because they get their milk from cows in PA, who are eating the rich lush grass of PA that is nutrient rich because of the rich grass that comes from the snow which is loaded with nutrients, and the cow eats that grass, meditates, chews on it, draws out nutrients, then chews it some more, and drawing more nutrients, and then milk time..... that is rich milk, and then on to rich chocolate. That is the thought here in Psalm 1, to chew the word, take it in, then bring it back to our minds again, chew on it some more, take it in, and get the most nutrients out of it we can because we are mediating on it.

Psalm 1:1–6 (NKJV) ¹ Blessed is the man Who walks not in the counsel of the ungodly, Nor stands in the path of sinners, Nor sits in the seat of the scornful; ² But his delight is in the law of the LORD, And in His law he meditates day and night. ³ He shall be like a tree Planted by the rivers of water, That brings forth its fruit in its season, Whose leaf also shall not wither; And whatever he does shall prosper. ⁴ The ungodly are not so, But are like the chaff which the wind drives away. ⁵ Therefore the ungodly shall not stand in the judgment, Nor sinners in the congregation of the righteous. ⁶ For the LORD knows the way of the righteous, But the way of the ungodly shall perish.

I love what Charles Spurgeon said about meditation,

"He is not the best student who reads the most books, but he who meditates the most upon them; he shall not learn most of divinity who hears the greatest number of sermons, but he who meditates the most devoutly upon what he does hear; nor shall he be so profound a scholar who takes down ponderous volumes one after the other, as he who, reading little by little, precept upon precept, and line upon line, digests what he learns, and assimilates each sentiment to his heart by meditation."

Meditation on the word of God brings its truth and light to bear powerfully upon your mind and soul. Since you are made in the image of God you are not a shallow creature, but a very profound one. Beloved, you have the opportunity to be deeply affected and beautifully transformed by the living words of God. Don't miss out on it. As you contemplate and reflect on His Word, allowing it to expose, redefine, and transform every area of your life, you will flourish like a tree planted by a river, and whatever you do will prosper! Only remember, it begins with meditation.

None of These Things Move Me

I will be honest with you, and you may be shocked by this, but I recognize (afterwards) how I can make the Word of God a routine, something I have to do because I have to teach a Bible Study, or should do because I am a Christian. When I do, and as I say I don't realize it until after the fact, maybe a few days have gone by, or a Bible study I felt somewhat disconnected from, because yes life happens around us, and sometimes we meditate more on life, than the word; but oh, when I get back to, and simply meditate on the word, and I will say nothing can move me,

- the cares of the world cannot move,
- the lust of the flesh cannot move,
- the attacks of the devil cannot move, the criticism and hurtful words of man and man's actions cannot move,

nothing can move me because I am simply basking in the glory of God Himself when I sit and meditate in His Word. We could say I wish I got to sit 3 days on a hill and listen to Jesus teach; well you can, three days and more so, as much as you desire. *Nothing can move you when you do, and you will find yourself in a place, oh Lord I don't want to move, I love just sitting here with You. To which He would smile and say, I have loved every minute of it too; I love being with you.*

Jesus Worries About Them Fainting / God Cares About Our Bodies

So Jesus worries about them fainting along the way, because they haven't eaten. God cares about the body. Our body, He has compassion on it. I think sometimes, and so often we forget to see that as we look here, we see his miracles and we think his miracles are all to prove that he's God and we miss His compassion that he has for our bodies, He cares about our bodies. He cares when you're sick. He cares when you're weak. He cares when you're faint. So you can take your faint body to Him, and say Lord I know You care, and I need You to comfort me on this condition I am in.

Mark 8:4 Then His disciples answered Him, "How can one satisfy these people with bread here in the wilderness?"

Mark 8:5 He asked them, "How many loaves do you have?" And they said, "Seven."

Be of Good Cheer – God is Patient with Us / From Babes to Leaders

They still don't get it; but they are learning, this time they were ready with an answer on the spot. When Jesus feed the 5000, they had to go and find out how much they had. Jesus is taking them from babes, to leaders. Be of good cheer Christian if you think you have failed God, He is patient, and He too will develop you from a babe into a leader.

Philippians 1:6 (NKJV) ⁶ being confident of this very thing, that He who has begun a good work in you will complete it until the day of Jesus Christ;

Mark 8:6 So He commanded the multitude to sit down on the ground. And He took the seven loaves and gave thanks, broke them and gave them to His disciples to set before them; and they set them before the multitude.

Mark 8:7 They also had a few small fish; and having blessed them, He said to set them also before them.

Mark 8:8 So they ate and were filled, and they took up seven large baskets of leftover fragments.

Disciples Distribute / But Not Before Jesus Breaks

Note, Jesus didn't distribute the bread Himself. He gave it to the disciples for them to pass it out. This is how Jesus works today. We're His hands. It's our job to take the Bread of Life and distribute it to those who are hungry and needy. As we noted with the feeding of the 5000, Jesus blesses the bread, and distributes it, but before He gives it, He first breaks it. This is what He does with us. Before we can be used He breaks us of our pride and self-sufficiency. He first makes us digestible. It's amazing how throughout the Bible, God uses broken things.

- Gideon's broken jars...
- Mary's broken flask...
- Even our salvation has come through Jesus' broken body. Brokenness is a tool in God's tool chest.

Nobody goes far with God who resists brokenness.

Key: Jesus Gives Thanks

Jesus gives us a life example here of giving thanks for the little that we do have, and so often we give no thanks for what we have, and he shows us to give thanks for what little we have, not to mention what abundance we have.

Key: Give Out

Notice that Jesus gave to the disciples and the disciples handed out. There's a key ministry principle of life and see, you'll never go wrong giving yourself away in service of the Lord and giving yourself away to someone else because you received first from God. Whatever you give out, he's given it to you first and you'll never go wrong and you'll never lack when you're one who God gives to because you're a giver out. God has to flow through you first to get to them. God has to give to you first to give to them.

Here the word translated “baskets” is “spuris” which means “hamper.” This is the word used in Acts 9:25. Paul was lowered over the city wall in a “spuris.” Apparently, a “spuris” was a basket large enough to hold a grown man. When Jesus finished feeding the 4000 there were enough leftovers to fill seven of these hampers. They’d given Jesus seven loaves - now they get back seven hampers-full. Jesus is saying you can’t out-give Him. It reminds me of Proverbs 11:24, “There is one who scatters, yet increases more; and there is one who withholds more than is right, but it leads to poverty.” In essence, hoard it and you lose it, but give it and watch it grow! Jesus can turn our loaves into hampers-full.

Proverbs 11:24 (NKJV) ²⁴ There is one who scatters, yet increases more; And there is one who withholds more than is right, But it leads to poverty.

Key: Give Glory

So miracle was performed, but it was performed by God. Even though the disciples passed the bread out and so we see all miracles come from God and there is no boasting by any man for any miracle that occurred through their ministry, through being vessels of God, just simple servants. All Ministry, true ministry is simply receiving from Jesus and handing off to someone else. Whatever that's gifting is it was gifted by Jesus, to handout to someone else. It does keep ministry simple because then it keeps us also of the miracles and the mighty works, they're not up to us. We simply come to Jesus, say, here's what we got. He supplies and then we go and give out. People are blessed and God gets the glory.

Ministry: Go to Jesus – Hand Out – Give Thanks & Glory

So true. Ministry, simple ministry. We go to Jesus. Jesus gives, we handed out and Jesus multiplies, and our role is to be thankful along the way.

Mark 8:9 Now those who had eaten were about four thousand. And He sent them away,

Prophecy Regarding Messiah

Prophecy fulfilled here and in Mark chapter 6 when Jesus fed the 5,000.

(Psalm 132:15 NKJV) I will abundantly bless her provision; I will satisfy her poor with bread.

(Isaiah 40:11 NKJV) He will feed His flock like a shepherd; He will gather the lambs with His arm, And carry them in His bosom, And gently lead those who are with young.

My Favorite Fulfillment

Luke 4:17–19 (NKJV) ¹⁷ And He was handed the book of the prophet Isaiah. And when He had opened the book, He found the place where it was written: ¹⁸ “The Spirit of the LORD is upon Me, Because He has anointed Me To preach the gospel to the poor; He has sent Me to heal the brokenhearted, To proclaim liberty to the captives And recovery of sight to the blind, To set at liberty those who are oppressed; ¹⁹ To proclaim the acceptable year of the LORD.”

Isaiah 61:1–3 (NKJV) ¹ “The Spirit of the Lord GOD is upon Me, Because the LORD has anointed Me To preach good tidings to the poor; He has sent Me to heal the brokenhearted, To proclaim liberty to the captives, And the opening of the prison to those who are bound; ² To proclaim the acceptable year of the LORD, And the day of vengeance of our God; To comfort all who mourn, ³ To console those who mourn in Zion, To give them beauty for ashes, The oil of joy for mourning, The garment of praise for the spirit of heaviness; That they may be called trees of righteousness, The planting of the LORD, that He may be glorified.”

A God of Compassion / Definition of Compassion

A fulfillment of the Messiah, is a God of compassion, a God who has compassion for people. Compassion is one of the characteristics of God. Here again we read of Jesus having compassion on the people.

19 times in the Old Testament, and 12 in the New Testament it speaks of God having compassion on people.

(Psalm 86:15 NKJV) But You, O Lord, are a God full of compassion, and gracious, Longsuffering and abundant in mercy and truth.

Compassion means, “being moved with tenderness, combined with pity.”

Compassion leads to kindness, understanding, forgiveness, and mercy and grace.

Nicaragua Missions

I have shared this story before, but it worth sharing again as we talk about compassion. I was doing missions in Nicaragua and we were building an orphanage several miles outside the city in a somewhat remote area. So remote we had to lay our own telephone poles to run power to the orphanage. So that was a miracle in itself (like feeding of 4,000) as we had to manually erect 30-foot-long telephone poles into ten-foot holes we would hand dig. It was awesome, I love mission work, I love being placed into the impossible situations where if God doesn't show up, it I not going to happen. But God did show up, and it was awesome. So we lodged in the city, and each day we would pile into the back of a pickup truck bed, and when I say pile in we piled in, like a dozen of us in the bed of the pickup, and another eight in the cab. The joke in Nicaragua was how many people can you fit in the back of a pickup truck, and the answer is always, "at least one more". So each day we drove the 20-30 miles from the city to the orphanage site. And the first day we are all laughing, having a good time in the back of the truck, and then we come around the bend out in the middle of nowhere really, and there was a small garbage dump. And there in the dump were mostly children, picking through trash to find bits of metal and glass to take to the recycle center to make a buck or two, and they were picking through the trash to find food scraps. It was at least 100 degrees, they had no fresh water, the sun beating down, the smell not so pleasant, and when we saw that sight, being well-off Americans, our laughter went to silence, as we just stared as we drove by. I don't think we spoke again until we got out of the truck and discussed the orphanage project. But when I saw that sight of those kids at the dump, my heart was moved, and I said to myself there is no way I am just going to drive by them tomorrow, I must do something. And gave laid it on my heart, and I told everyone else, ok save all your water bottles, and trust getting water in bottles where we were was not like we had the ability to go buy 20 cases of water we were lucky to find a case, so I said don't throw any of them away. And so we would save them, wash them out every night, and then in the morning we would fill them with fresh cool water, and stop at the dump on the way and give them to the people at the dump. And if you have ever been thirsty in the midst of extreme heat, you know how refreshing a cup of cold water is.

Compassion sees something, sees a need, and can't just walk by, compassion has to stop and get involved.

The heart of God is compassion. He cannot see a need and just walk by, He has to stop and get involved. His heart is a heart of compassion, and He so much wants to infuse that heart of compassion into us as He desires to conform us into His image.

We have read in Mark so far the times Jesus has had compassion on people:

1. The Leper:

(Mark 1:40-42 NKJV) *Now a leper came to Him, imploring Him, kneeling down to Him and saying to Him, "If You are willing, You can make me clean." Then Jesus, moved with compassion, stretched out His hand and touched him, and said to him, "I am willing; be cleansed." As soon as He had spoken, immediately the leprosy left him, and he was cleansed.*

Jesus had compassion and pity on this leper. You recall from our previous study just how pitiful leprosy is. The person is disfigured, an outcast from society and his own family - they are all alone.

Maybe some of you understand just what that is about, you feel isolated or have been separated from a meaningful relationship, or you don't fit the young and beautiful crowd. Your heart is broken and you feel so very alone. Your condition is the very thing that moves Jesus with compassion.

2. How about the man in Gadarenes we read about in chapter 5.

(Mark 5:1-6 NKJV) *Then they came to the other side of the sea, to the country of the Gadarenes. And when He had come out of the boat, immediately there met Him out of the tombs a man with an unclean spirit, who had his dwelling among the tombs; and no one could bind him, not even with chains, because he had often been bound with shackles and chains. And the chains had been pulled apart by him, and the shackles broken in pieces; neither could anyone tame him. And always, night and day, he was in the mountains and in the tombs, crying out and cutting himself with stones. When he saw Jesus from afar, he ran and worshiped Him.*

Mark 5:19–21 (NKJV) ¹⁹ However, Jesus did not permit him, but said to him, “Go home to your friends, and tell them what great things the Lord has done for you, and how He has had compassion on you.” ²⁰ And he departed and began to proclaim in Decapolis all that Jesus had done for him; and all marveled. ²¹ Now when Jesus had crossed over again by boat to the other side, a great multitude gathered to Him; and He was by the sea.

You can hardly picture a more pitiful state. A man who is being tormented by an unclean spirit. Wild, untamed. Living in the tombs, crying and cutting himself with rocks. As the leper driven and isolated from his friends, but for a far different reason.

As the leper, he was probably very unsightly. You can picture his wild shaggy long matted hair. His bushy beard. the wild look in his eyes, and the scars and the fresh marks of bleeding on his naked body. You have seen the people on the streets who are obviously mentally incompetent, sometimes pushing shopping carts with all of their possessions, yelling at the air. Your heart goes out for their plight.

This kind of person moved Jesus with compassion. When this man begged to go with Jesus, Jesus told him to go home and tell his friends what great things the Lord had done for him and had compassion on him. The person separated from home and friends as the result of his condition. This is what moved our Lord with compassion. Maybe that is you today, know that the Lord has compassion on you.

3. The disciples had just returned from their missionary journeys and were weary and tired because of the great crowds who were thronging them.

(Mark 6:33-34 NKJV) *But the multitudes saw them departing, and many knew Him and ran there on foot from all the cities. They arrived before them and came together to Him. And Jesus, when He came out, saw a great multitude and was moved with compassion for them, because they were like sheep not having a shepherd. So He began to teach them many things.*

The multitudes of people whose lives were without meaning or purpose. Blindly looking for anything that seemed to be attractive or novel. Following every new trend, or fad. Going from one experience to another looking for someone who really cared. Sheep without the guidance and supervision of a loving, caring shepherd.

We so often look upon them as unstable, flighty, shallow, but Jesus looked upon them with compassion. Does your life seem to be without purpose, unmeaningful, have you been searching for something, or someone who really cares? Your plight is something that moves our Lord with compassion.

4. He had compassion on those who were so hungry to hear His word that they did not even eat for three days.

Mark 8:1–3 (NKJV) ¹ In those days, the multitude being very great and having nothing to eat, Jesus called His disciples to Him and said to them, ² “I have compassion on the multitude, because they have now continued with Me three days and have nothing to eat. ³ And if I send them away hungry to their own houses, they will faint on the way; for some of them have come from afar.”

His compassion was because of their physical weakness and fainting.

(Psalm 103:13-14 NKJV) *As a father pities his children, So the LORD pities those who fear Him. For He knows our frame; He remembers that we are dust.*

The compassion is prompted from understanding us. He knows our frame, He knows we are made of dust, not steel.

Maybe you are suffering from an illness like cancer, arthritis, or a disability, or maybe your just tired. God knows your suffering from living in an earthly body and know that He has compassion on you.

Some of you because of your weakness have fainted along the way. Maybe you have given into temptation and sinned. Maybe you have even walked away from the Lord. You are discouraged, and wondering if the Lord could

ever forgive you or trust you again. If you are His child, His feeling toward you is not one of condemnation, but of pity and compassion.

It is the person who is needy, and aware of their need that our Lord will have compassion upon and heal. That very infirmity in our life that we have been ruing is the very thing that will prompt the work of God in our life.

His compassion always led to acts of mercy and grace.

1. He healed the leper.
2. He delivered the man from the evil spirit.
3. He became the shepherd and led the people into truth. He gave direction and meaning to their lives.
4. He fed the multitude.

God has compassion on us, He pity's us for our helplessness. When we reflect on our helplessness and God's great compassion, we can't fall help but fall deeper in love with Him. It is interesting that in every case where Jesus was moved with compassion, the people were drawn to Jesus.

1. In the case of the leper, He came and knelt before Jesus begging for help
2. In the case of the man with the unclean spirit, He came running to Jesus and worshipped Him.
3. In the case of the multitude who were like sheep without a shepherd, they had run around the lake to meet Him when His ship made it to shore.
4. In the case before us, they had been with Jesus for three days, so intent on hearing His word, that they even neglected eating.

Take Away - Jesus will use His powers for you, because of His compassion for you. Today you can boldly ask of Him, to use His powers for your needs, because he cares for you, and because His compassion for you, He so desires to touch you and your need today.

He Has Been So Compassionate to Us

The Lord has been so compassionate to us, just consider our lives without His compassion. Compassionate enough to do something about our sin.

John 1:29 (NKJV) ²⁹ The next day John saw Jesus coming toward him, and said, "Behold! The Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world!

John 3:16 (NKJV) ¹⁶ For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have everlasting life.

2 Corinthians 5:21 (NKJV) ²¹ For He made Him who knew no sin to be sin for us, that we might become the righteousness of God in Him.

Snow Man

Harry and his childhood sweetheart crossed the Atlantic Ocean together from the Netherlands to America in the 1950's. Harry landed a job as horse riding master at the Knox School for Girls on Long Island.

It was a wintry day in February when Harry returned from the horse auction. The entire family came out to greet him and see what he had chosen for the riding stables. When the trailer doors opened out came a mammoth gray-white horse with bony ribs, matted mane, and scarred legs. As he stood in the fresh ankle-deep snow one of the children said, "he looks just like a snow man", thus he was named Snow Man.

Snow Man was trained well that season, and he was a good riding horse. But when the school closed for the summer, a neighbor offered to buy him...he offered to pay twice what Harry had paid. Reluctantly Harry sold, after all he was in the horse business, he couldn't let personal sentiments enter in.

As the days passed Harry began to regret his sale, and apparently so did Snow Man. That's when the hidden talents of Snow Man came out. The neighbor's fences were high, very high; but somehow Snow Man escaped. Again and again he would jump the fence to be reunited with his master.

One day the reunion became permanent. Harry bought back Snow Man and the rest is in the record books. Winner at horse show after horse show until the ultimate dream....the National at Madison Square Garden. Snow Man would be "Horse of the Year" two years running, but not for running or beauty, but for jumping. Snow Man was jumper, and no one would have known were it not for the neighbor's fence that separated a grateful animal from the master who missed him.

Snow Man had reason to be grateful. You see Harry arrived late at the auction that first day they met. The best horses had long since been sold. The "jumping great" was one of the last to be auctioned, and he had been saved that day from the only other bidder that bid for him, the glue factory.

(Lam 3:22-23 NKJV) Through the Lord's mercies we are not consumed, Because His compassions fail not. They are new every morning; Great is Your faithfulness.

Oh when we realize and see, the God of compassion, His love and compassion, His tender mercies for us, when we "simply meditate on Him and these words", what fences could keep us from running and if need be jumping to get to Him.

Take Away - Jesus will use His powers for you, because of His compassion for you. Today you can boldly ask of Him, to use His powers for your needs, because he cares for you, and because His compassion for you, He so desires to touch you and your need today.

Prayer – Boldly Ask Your God

The Word of God is Living and Powerful, and is ready, and will do a mighty work in our lives.

Hebrews 4:12 (NKJV) ¹² For the word of God is living and powerful, and sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing even to the division of soul and spirit, and of joints and marrow, and is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart.

In Every Study

- Who Is God? (How Great is He?)
- What Does He Think of Me? (How Wonderful Are His Thoughts Towards Me?)
- What Does He Want Me to Do?
- What Can I Boldly Request of Him?
- What Do I Need to Be on Guard of When I Leave Here Today?

Boldly come to the throne of grace, ask God to reveal Himself in a mighty way to you, and to do I might work in you, and through you.

Hebrews 4:16 (NKJV) ¹⁶ Let us therefore come boldly to the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy and find grace to help in time of need.

There is a Prayer Team Available to Pray with and for You

End of Study

Mark 8:10-21

Outline Mark Chapter 7:

- Defilement Comes from Within (7:1-23)
- A Gentile Woman Asks for Bread Crumbs (7:24-30)
- Jesus Heals a Deaf Mute (7:31-37)

Outline Mark 8:

- The Feeding of the Four Thousand (8:1-19)
- The Pharisees Seek a Sign (8:10-12)
- Beware of the Leaven of the Pharisees and Herod (8:13-21)
- A Blind Man Healed at Bethsaida (8:22-26)
- Peter Confesses Jesus as the Christ (8:27-30)
- Jesus Predicts His Death and Resurrection (8:31-33)
- Take Up the Cross and Follow Me (8:34-38)

Intro/Recap / The Bread of Life – For Everyone and All

Last week we studied the feeding of the 4,000, which happened there in the area of Decapolis, a predominately Gentile area on the East side of the Sea of Galilee; now the feeding of the 5,000 was a Jewish area on the west side of the Se of Galilee. Jesus is letting it be known He is the bread of life to every man, all who will come and partake. And when Jesus breaks the bread, there's even a spiritual significance of his body being broken. But as his body is broken, it's given out to any who will partake and eat of it and they will be filled, and they will be nourished. And as we have said before, eating in that time together was a sign of oneness. Jesus is sending a message to Jew and Gentile alike that he wants to be one and have oneness, communion and fellowship with man.

John 6:22–23 (NKJV) ²² On the following day, when the people who were standing on the other side of the sea saw that there was no other boat there, except that one which His disciples had entered, and that Jesus had not entered the boat with His disciples, but His disciples had gone away alone—²³ however, other boats came from Tiberias, near the place where they ate bread after the Lord had given thanks—

John 6:35 (NKJV) ³⁵ And Jesus said to them, “I am the bread of life. He who comes to Me shall never hunger, and he who believes in Me shall never thirst.

Jesus is So Compassionate – Are You Not Glad

Jesus had compassion on the multitude, and aren't you glad that he does? Such a world today, mankind in general, there is no compassion. There is no oneness. But Jesus, he has compassion on man. He has compassion on you today. Compassion is seeing a need, and not being able to simply walk by it, but has to get involved to help meet the need. He is such a compassionate God, loving and sensitive God, and he wants to meet your need today, He won't, for He can't, simply walk by, he must stop and get involved. You can speak to Him right now, say to Him Lord you know my need, you know where my heart is at, you know what aches, you know what breaks, and I am handing my heart to You to minister to it. And He will. He loves you.

Mark 6:34 (NKJV) ³⁴ And Jesus, when He came out, saw a great multitude and was moved with compassion for them, because they were like sheep not having a shepherd. So He began to teach them many things.

Mark 8:1–3 (NKJV) ¹ In those days, the multitude being very great and having nothing to eat, Jesus called His disciples to Him and said to them, ² “I have compassion on the multitude, because they have now continued with Me three days and have nothing to eat. ³ And if I send them away hungry to their own houses, they will faint on the way; for some of them have come from afar.”

Today's Study

In our study today, the religious leaders come for another confrontation with Jesus, the challenge Jesus to put on a show for them, to perform some spectacular miracle, not these small-time things like feeding 5,000 and 4,000 from just a few loaves of bread. After the confrontation, Jesus is going to get alone with His disciples for some quality one-on-one time and He is going to tell them, beware of the “leaven of the Pharisees and Herodians”. He is going to tie the feeding of the 5,000 and 4,000, and this confrontation, to teach them something very rich, and something very essential, for their walk of faith. And so, this preserved word for us, to apply the same, something rich and something essential – for our walk of faith.

2 Corinthians 5:7 (NKJV) ⁷ For we walk by faith, not by sight.

Romans 10:17 (NKJV) ¹⁷ So then faith comes by hearing, and hearing by the word of God.

Prayer – Boldly Ask Your God

The Word of God is Living and Powerful, and is ready, and will do a mighty work in our lives.

Hebrews 4:12 (NKJV) ¹² For the word of God is living and powerful, and sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing even to the division of soul and spirit, and of joints and marrow, and is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart.

In Every Study

- Who Is God? (How Great is He?)
- What Does He Think of Me? (How Wonderful Are His Thoughts Towards Me?)
- What Does He Want Me to Do?
- What Can I Boldly Request of Him?
- What Do I Need to Be on Guard of When I Leave Here Today?

Boldly come to the throne of grace, ask God to reveal Himself in a mighty way to you, and to do I might work in you, and through you.

Hebrews 4:16 (NKJV) ¹⁶ Let us therefore come boldly to the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy and find grace to help in time of need.

There is a Prayer Team Available to Pray with and for You

Recap Feeding 4K

Let's read through the feeding of the 4,000 to set our context for today's study.

Mark 8:1 In those days, the multitude being very great and having nothing to eat, Jesus called His disciples to Him and said to them,

Mark 8:2 "I have compassion on the multitude, because they have now continued with Me three days and have nothing to eat.

Oh The Compassion

Oh the great compassion of our Lord.

Lamentations 3:21–24 (NKJV) ²¹ This I recall to my mind, Therefore I have hope. ²² Through the LORD's mercies we are not consumed, Because His compassions fail not. ²³ They are new every morning; Great is Your faithfulness. ²⁴ "The LORD is my portion," says my soul, "Therefore I hope in Him!"

Mark 8:3 And if I send them away hungry to their own houses, they will faint on the way; for some of them have come from afar."

Mark 8:4 Then His disciples answered Him, "How can one satisfy these people with bread here in the wilderness?"

Mark 8:5 He asked them, "How many loaves do you have?" And they said, "Seven."

Mark 8:6 So He commanded the multitude to sit down on the ground. And He took the seven loaves and gave thanks, broke them and gave them to His disciples to set before them; and they set them before the multitude.

Amazing What God Does When Put in His Hand / But they Have to Be Broken First

Isn't it amazing what God does with the things that are in his hands? He can create a world by speaking it, forms man with his hand. And here he takes a few loaves and turns it into a banquet for 4,000. Which begs the question, why do we keep anything that we have in our hands and not put them into the hands of Jesus and let him multiply it? Oh, he may have to break it first, and maybe that's what we're afraid of, that he breaks before he multiplies. But the pain of the temporal breaking is nothing compared to the bountiful multiplying that comes when we do. And yet we hold on to things and we won't put them in his hands. We won't put a suffering marriage into his hands. We won't put a grieving or sorrowful or depressed heart into his hands. We won't put our livelihood and our wealth and our abundance into his hands because we're afraid that we'd lose control. And we miss, we've lost control when we try to control. Because we have no control. But give it to him and his power and his ability and now we can rest in his control of the compassion in God.

Mark 8:7 They also had a few small fish; and having blessed them, He said to set them also before them.

Mark 8:8 So they ate and were filled, and they took up seven large baskets of leftover fragments.

Leftovers Meant to Be Used Up

So here's seven baskets. As we said last week, the word there for basket is a hamper. It's the same word that we use to lower Paul from the roof. That's how much leftovers there were of bread that started with probably enough to fit into a breadbox. Now there's seven hampers leftover. But here's the key, as it sets into our study today, don't waste the leftovers. What God's done, presently and immediately, it's meant to carry over. It's meant to be remembered. It's meant to be re-partaken in again. There is no easy come, easy go. But what God gives in an abundance and overflowing leftover, it's meant to be used again. And we'll see how that applies in our story today.

[The Pharisees Seek a Sign \(8:10-12\)](#)

Mark 8:9 Now those who had eaten were about four thousand. And He sent them away,

Mark 8:10 immediately got into the boat with His disciples, and came to the region of Dalmanutha.

Mark 8:11 Then the Pharisees came out and began to dispute with Him, seeking from Him a sign from heaven, testing Him.

Mark 8:12 But He sighed deeply in His spirit, and said, "Why does this generation seek a sign? Assuredly, I say to you, no sign shall be given to this generation."

Dalmanutha

Verse 10 - DALMANUTHA—a place on the west of the Sea of Galilee, mentioned only in Mark 8:10. In the parallel passage it is said that Christ came "into the borders of Magdala" (Matt. 15:39). It is plain, then, that Dalmanutha was near Magdala, which was probably the Greek name of one of the many Migdols (i.e., watch-towers) on the western side of the lake of Gennesaret.

*Easton, M. G. (1893). In *Easton's Bible dictionary*. New York: Harper & Brothers.

Dispute / Test or Debate

Verse 11, notice the word "dispute" (means to test or debate), and thus we quickly come to know what the environment of this meeting is, and it is a challenge, and as we have seen in the big picture of these religious leaders, it is hostility towards Jesus. There is not a sincere seeking of Jesus, there is not a place of them coming to Jesus in hopes that He is the promised Messiah, but it is a coming to Jesus to discredit and destroy.

A Sign

So they want a sign, and it is obvious that feeding of 5,000 and 4,000 was proof enough. They want something more.

Jesus Sighs / Not Asking from Pure Heart / A Pass-Fail Test

Jesus sighs because they asked for a sign. We know not the emotion of this, whether it's heated or broken. But we know there's a deep stir of an emotion in Jesus. And what we know is they're not asking out of a pure heart. It says they're testing him, they're trying to trip him up. A test is pass or fail. They've already determined the grade long ago as we read. They're looking to fail him in some way. They ask for a sign, which is laughable considering all the people that are being healed, feeding of 5,000, feeding of 4,000. One of my favorites of course though is the stream of lepers streaming into Jerusalem for the review of the priest before they can be pronounced clean, because leprosy was considered unclean. And here we are in a context, they challenge Jesus on his being unclean and defiled with the washing of the hands back in chapter seven. But Jesus is continually sending them cleaned Jews. And Leviticus chapter 14 was the manner that a leper would have to go through to be reinstated into society as clean. No one had ever come, as recorded in the scriptures, for cleansing from leprosy. The only mention in the scriptures up to this point of someone being cleansed of leprosy was a Gentile named Naaman, so he wouldn't have gone to the temple. But now Jesus comes on the scene, he starts healing, he starts touching, he starts proclaiming. And every day, or close to, a stream of lepers would be flowing into Jerusalem before the priest. It'd be undeniable. Yet here they are, here they are, still asking for a sign.

[Leviticus 14:1-2 \(NKJV\)](#) ¹ Then the LORD spoke to Moses, saying, ² "This shall be the law of the leper for the day of his cleansing: He shall be brought to the priest.

Maybe You Demand a Sign – It won't Matter

Maybe you're here today and you say, if I can see it, I'll believe it. To which I say, no, you won't because these religious people have seen it. They don't believe it. The disciples walked with him, see it, and they still struggle to believe it as we'll read here today

- Signs and wonders didn't convince Pharaoh, it didn't change Pharaoh and make him humble and repent;
- and signs and wonders all through the wilderness for the Nation of Israel, parting of the Red Sea, Manna from heaven, and water from a rock, the sun stood still, and yet those things still didn't make them people of faith. They wouldn't go into the Promise Land and fight and defeat the giants because they were afraid, even though they saw all the signs and wonders

So signs and wonders are not going to give us faith.

God Still Does Miracles

God still does miracles. Absolutely. But if you want to find the people who are walking in strength, walking in security, it's those who are walking in faith. When the walk in faith is according to the word of God, that is their foundation and that is what equips them because when you have this word of God sewn in your heart, the bedrock of your life, nothing will move you. Nothing will move you. You won't need signs and wonders to step out in faith, and you won't need signs and wonders to secure your faith. You'll see signs and wonders and you'll examine them with the word of God, and you'll say, "That's awesome." But signs and wonders will just be an addition to your faith that has been sewn and secured by the word of God. It won't be the substance of your faith.

2 Corinthians 5:7 (NKJV) ⁷ For we walk by faith, not by sight.

Romans 10:17 (NKJV) ¹⁷ So then faith comes by hearing, and hearing by the word of God.

Hudson Taylor

James Taylor, eighteenth-century English villager, hated Wesley's circuit riders, viewing them as nothing but targets for his rotten eggs. But one day as he readied his missiles one of the preachers quoted Joshua 24:15: "As for me and my house, we will serve the Lord!" (KJV). James, about to be married, was smitten. On his wedding day he prayed so long that he arrived late at his wedding. He announced he had become a Christian. Burdened for his new wife, he picked her up, carried her to the bedroom, and forced her to her knees where she, too, became a Christian.

Their faith passed from generation to generation until it reached their great-grandson, James Hudson Taylor, who founded the China Inland Mission and opened the interior of China to the gospel.

His grandson, James Hudson Taylor II, continued the legacy by taking his family to China as missionaries during the days before World War II. The children's boarding school was located in a Chinese city 1,000 miles from their parents, and they were there on December 7, 1941 when Japanese planes attacked Pearl Harbor. When news reached Mrs. Taylor, she writhed in fear and fell on her knees, unable to pray. Worried, a paraphrase of Matthew 6:33 came to mind: "If you will take care of the things that are dear to God, God will take care of the things that are dear to you."

Meanwhile, far away, the four Taylor children were herded into a concentration camp in Japanese-occupied territory while singing, "God is our refuge and our strength, a very present help in trouble." The children were detained for five years, until liberated by the Americans and allowed to rejoin their parents.

One of the boys, James Hudson Taylor III, grew up to become the general director of China Inland Mission (now Overseas Missionary Fellowship)—the great-grandson of the great-grandson of the man who resolved on his wedding day: "As for me and my house, we will serve the Lord!"

Morgan, R. J. (1997). On this day: 365 amazing and inspiring stories about saints, martyrs & heroes (electronic ed.). Nashville: Thomas Nelson Publishers.

Jesus Miracles Ministered to Hurting – Not to Put on Show

The purpose of His miracles was always the helping of the helpless. He always used His power to minister to the needs of people. He did not use them to minister to His own needs. He did not use them just to make some spectacular display to draw attention, or the attention of people to Himself. Herod had heard of Jesus and the miracles that He did and Herod wanted Jesus to perform a miracle for Him, like having some magician show you some fancy trick. But Jesus would not perform any miracles for Herod. He refused to perform miracles just to satisfy people's curiosity for supernatural phenomena. And so here, as they were seeking a sign, He just said, "No sign is going to be given to this generation."

Anti-Christ will Put on Show

Because when the anti-Christ comes, he's going to come with all types of signs and wonders and lying miracles. And deceiving the people by the signs that he is able to perform.

(Rev 13:13-14 NKJV) He performs great signs, so that he even makes fire come down from heaven on the earth in the sight of men. And he deceives those who dwell on the earth by those signs which he was granted to do in the sight of the beast, telling those who dwell on the earth to make an image to the beast who was wounded by the sword and lived.

Not Healthy to Put Faith in Sight

So, it is not a healthy thing to put your faith or trust in the signs that a person might be able to produce. It is important that you put your faith and your trust in the Word of God, what God has said. And to believe God's Word, not requiring some supernatural sign before you believe.

But Also – Don't be Afraid of Miracles / Know Word – Won't Be Deceived

Many people are afraid of miracles. There's nothing to be afraid of. Read this book (the Bible) and you won't be deceived by a miracle worker. Miracle worker will do everything in accordance to this book.

Now, no man knows his soon return, His Second Coming, but there are clear signs that it is soon and very soon. I encourage you, you don't want to miss this our yearly prophecy update. You need to understand the signs. We need to be a people who can read the signs as we read the newspaper and watch the world around us. Now there are some people (Christians and churches at that) who are going to say, that's crazy, talking about prophecy, and the coming of Jesus. Well that's one of the signs of the last days, and that is people mocked prophecy in the last days.

2 Peter 3:3-4 (NKJV) ³ knowing this first: that scoffers will come in the last days, walking according to their own lusts, ⁴ and saying, "Where is the promise of His coming? For since the fathers fell asleep, all things continue as they were from the beginning of creation."

Mark 8:12 But He sighed deeply in His spirit, and said, "Why does this generation seek a sign? Assuredly, I say to you, no sign shall be given to this generation."

Matthews Account

Matthew 16:1-4 (NKJV) ¹ Then the Pharisees and Sadducees came, and testing Him asked that He would show them a sign from heaven. ² He answered and said to them, "When it is evening you say, 'It will be fair weather, for the sky is red'; ³ and in the morning, 'It will be foul weather today, for the sky is red and threatening.' Hypocrites! You know how to discern the face of the sky, but you cannot *discern* the signs of the times. ⁴ A wicked and adulterous generation seeks after a sign, and no sign shall be given to it except the sign of the prophet Jonah." And He left them and departed.

The only sign given, was Jonah.

Can Reason Jesus Away – waiting Conclusive Evidence / Jesus says 1 Event – Jonah / LOOK

People can reason Jesus away all they want, excuse Him away, and say they are waiting for conclusive evidence before they believe. Jesus says it all comes down to one event, the cross and the resurrection, what will you do with the cross and the resurrection. Jesus had already said this before back in Mathew 12, just as Jonah spent 3 days and 3 nights in the belly of the great fish, so will the Son of Man spend in the heart of the earth. From Adam to the cross, all man looked forward to the cross (Genesis 3:15); and from today all men look back to the cross. Jesus doesn't say look at my miracles, my teachings, my lineage, but look at the cross and the resurrection, for it is what divides Me from all who came before Me, and all who will come after Me.

Matt 12:38 - 40 (NKJV) ³⁸Then some of the scribes and Pharisees answered, saying, "Teacher, we want to see a sign from You." ³⁹But He answered and said to them, "An evil and adulterous generation seeks after a sign, and no sign will be given to it except the sign of the prophet Jonah. ⁴⁰For as Jonah was three days and three nights in the belly of the great fish, so will the Son of Man be three days and three nights in the heart of the earth.

Good Example – back to the Cross and Resurrection / Jesus died, Why? – Jesus rose – Why?

By the way, the Lord gives us another great life example for witnessing. Jesus just sticks to the main point, the cross and the resurrection. He didn't say ok now, I had already told them this before and it didn't convince them, let me try something else, maybe that will convince them. Jesus brings them back to the main point, the cross and the resurrection. When we witness, yea it is ok to talk about creation, prophecy, the uniqueness of the Bible, but we must always bring it back to this one place, the cross and the resurrection, for creation, prophecy, the uniqueness of the Bible, they all point to one thing, the cross and the resurrection, for that is the heart of the gospel, Jesus died, why? For your sin. Jesus rose from the dead on the 3rd day, why? Because God accepted the substitution, God accepted Jesus taking your sin upon Himself, trading places with you, taking your punishment, so that you wouldn't have to face death, for He already has taken the punishment for sin (sin) for you.

Gayle Erwin / LOOK – Resurrection divides Him from all Other

A man came up to Pastor Gayle Erwin and said he was going to start a new religion, and what did Gayle think of that. Gayle said I tell you what, if you die, and can resurrect from the dead, I'll follow you. Jesus doesn't say look at my miracles, my teachings, my lineage, but look at the cross and the resurrection, for it is what divides Me from all who came before Me, and all who will come after Me.

Saying True / Imagine the Sky that Morning / Storm Coming / Storm so Violent the Earth Shook

The saying is still true and used by seaman today. Red sky at night, sailors delight. Red sky in morning, Sailor takes warning. I can only imagine the sky that morning, that Friday some 2000 years ago. Red, blood Red, and they would say, there is a storm coming, a big storm for I've never seen the sky that color of Red before in all my life, it is like a blood red. And what a storm it was, as the wrath of God stormed down upon Jesus as He took on the sins of man, your sin, and my sin. A storm so violent that there was darkness over all the land. A storm so violent earth quaked, and rocks were split open. A storm so violent that the veil in the temple was torn from top to bottom.

Matt 27:51 - 53 (NKJV) ⁵¹Then, behold, the veil of the temple was torn in two from top to bottom; and the earth quaked, and the rocks were split, ⁵²and the graves were opened; and many bodies of the saints who had fallen asleep were raised; ⁵³and coming out of the graves after His resurrection, they went into the holy city and appeared to many.

What a Morning it must have Been / What done with Sign – Have you Read the Sky

What that morning sky must have looked like that Friday morning; and I bet the evening sky the night before the resurrection was a beautiful calm red, what a sunset it must have been, red sky at night, what a delight. For every man, woman, and child, God gives one sign, 3 days and 3 nights, the cross and the resurrection. What have you done with that sign? Have you read the skies?

Beware of the Leaven of the Pharisees and Herod (8:13-21)

Mark 8:13 And He left them, and getting into the boat again, departed to the other side.

Mark 8:14 Now the disciples had forgotten to take bread, and they did not have more than one loaf with them in the boat.

Mark 8:15 Then He charged them, saying, "Take heed, beware of the leaven of the Pharisees and the leaven of Herod."

Mark 8:16 And they reasoned among themselves, saying, "It is because we have no bread."

Leaven – Picture of Sin / Leaven – Starter Dough

Leaven was always a symbol of evil. It was the starter that they would always save from the previous batch of dough that they had made. And it was like the sourdough that the old Forty-niners used to use. They always had their starter. They always keep a part of the dough from the previous batch that had already been leavened. And when they would make a new batch of dough, they would stick in this little part from the old batch, their starter that would start their fermenting process in the new batch of dough. And it would permeate the whole batch of dough by this process of fermentation, or actually it's a method of petrification, or fermentation by which it

permeates the whole loaf. And because just a little bit could permeate the whole loaf by this process of fermentation, it was to the Jews a very good symbol of evil, how just a little bit of evil tolerated can permeate throughout a whole system. And when Jesus said, "Beware of the leaven of the Pharisees, or the leaven of Herod," He was talking about that evil of the Pharisees. That type of spirit that is able to permeate and infect others. Not talking about the fact that they had forgotten to take bread.

Mark 8:17 But Jesus, being aware of it, said to them, "Why do you reason because you have no bread? Do you not yet perceive nor understand? Is your heart still hardened?"

Mark 8:18 Having eyes, do you not see? And having ears, do you not hear? And do you not remember?

Mark 8:19 When I broke the five loaves for the five thousand, how many baskets full of fragments did you take up?" They said to Him, "Twelve."

Mark 8:20 "Also, when I broke the seven for the four thousand, how many large baskets full of fragments did you take up?" And they said, "Seven."

Some Think 5K and 4K Same Event

Some people, many actually think that the feeding of the 5,000 and the 4,000 are the same event, just retold. I have 10 reasons why they are different, Above all, however, the reason I know these two events are separate is because Jesus Himself referred to them as such here in mark and in Matthew 16:9, 10. If the "scholars" are right in suggesting there was only one feeding with two accounts, then Matthew wasn't listening to the Spirit as he wrote his Gospel, and Jesus was mistaken and confused about His own miracles, to which I say that in sarcasm:

- There were five thousand men in chapter 6
- There were four thousand men in chapter 8
- There were five loaves and two fish in chapter 6
- There were seven loaves and a few fish in chapter 8
- The multitude sat on the grass in chapter 6—the implication being it was springtime.
- The multitude sat on the bare ground in chapter 8—the implication being it was summertime.
- Jesus was in Bethsaida, the northern side of the Sea of Galilee, in chapter 6
- Jesus was in Decapolis (Mark 8), on the eastern side of Galilee in chapter 8

Mark 8:21 So He said to them, "How is it you do not understand?"

Why Don't Understand – About the Leaven (not Miracles)

Jesus asks, how is that you don't understand what I am saying (not about the feeding of the 5&4 Thousand), but about the leaven of the Pharisees?

Mark 8:18 Having eyes, do you not see? And having ears, do you not hear? *And do you not remember?*

Jesus Ties Leaven & Miracles Together

Again now, Jesus is tying the feeding of the 5/4 thousand to the leaven of the Pharisees that He says to beware of. See they came and basically said those are hardly miracles, show us something big, do an Elijah and call fire down from heaven, do a Moses and part the sea, in fact here is the Sea of Galilee right before us, part that. Don't do this old slight-of-hand stuff, or mind control stuff (making someone believe they had leprosy when all they really had was poison ivy. So convincing were they (these Pharisees) that they were able to cause doubt, whether a shadow of a doubt, or full-blown doubt, that it was enough to make the eye-witness disciples of back-to-back miracles question what they saw. So again, the dangers of walking by sight, wanting to see before we believe, because we can even doubt what we see.

Main Point - Doubt

But here is the main point that Jesus is specifically warning these disciples of, the specific leaven the Pharisees are spreading right now, and it is rising through the whole loaf (all 12 of them), is "doubt". The challenge by these religious leaders, to perform a "real miracle", was enough to make the disciples "doubt" that Jesus was who He says He was, and His powers were not of this earth, but in direct contact with heaven.

Now I could give warning about allowing the “doubters, the scoffers” into your sphere of influence. Oh how many youth, and adults, who had great faith, Jesus is real, He is alive, and they walked with Him, but then someone planted a seed of doubt, and said you don’t believe that stuff do you. Or they say, that is so outdated. Or, that book, its just a fairytale, and what was once sure and true comes into question, sometimes to the point of not believing anymore, what you once experienced and knew to be true and sure.

But I want to speak to you very directly about yourself personally, for quite possibly the greatest enemy of our souls..... is doubt. Doubt is surely one of Satan’s greatest weapon he uses against the believer. Where we begin to question is God really (and you fill in the blank); is God really compassionate, is He really loving, does He really forgive, maybe He is judgmental and angry. And we begin to doubt.

My Personal Struggle

I’ve shared this before, but it is worth sharing again. I was raised in a religious system. God always existed, from as early as I can remember, I always believed God existed. The thought that we evolved was never even considered. I always believed in creation over evolution, a world that was created by God (of the Bible), and held in existence by Him, and that there was a heaven, and that is where He dwelt. I believed in creation, and totally rejected evolution. And get this, I wasn’t even saved. I didn’t get saved until I was 27. Around the age of 21 I started to feel an emptiness, that there was something missing, but I did not know what it was. But outwardly I looked like I had it all together, the life of the party, but for years go home after the party and look into the mirror, and it was as if I could look right into the depth of my soul, and all I saw was darkness. Started to read the Bible, just supernaturally stirred by God I can look back on and see. I said if I was created by Him I should read this book (Bible) that tells all about Him, and has all the answers for life I am told. And I started to read the Bible, starting in Genesis, going chapter by chapter verse by verse, and I was consumed with reading it. I like read the Bible 3 hours a day, I read the whole Old Testament in like 30 days, and although I didn’t understand much, I understood this..... Holy God, sinful man (me). I understood my sin separated me from Him. I read the God who wiped out the Egyptians, the Philistines, and the Amalekites because of their sin and rebellion against Him, for He is a Holy God..... and my sin separated me from this Holy God, yet somehow, as I read, I somehow knew it was going to work out well for me. And then there I am in the Gospels, and I see it as clear as can be, I didn’t read that God so loved the world, but that God so loved Ray Bolla specifically, and gave His only Son Jesus for Ray. And I was saved there in my bedroom at 325 South Banana Beach Blvd in Cocoa Beach Florida, at the age of 27.

[John 3:16 \(NKJV\)](#) ¹⁶ For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have everlasting life.

I walked on a cloud for 6 months to a year or so. Oh I am His and He is mine. Then of all things, could you believe it, I started to struggle with creation versus evolution. I actually started to doubt that God existed. I threw myself into the study of creation versus evolution. I would read not just Christian books, but atheist books, after all what if all that I am reading started with the bias that God existed. That probably went on for close to a year. All the while I am still reading my Bible, going to church, and not telling anyone of my struggles inside my heart, the flood of doubts I was dealing with..... is God real, does He really exist, or did man evolve.

I read books that stacked on top of each other would reach the ceiling. But then one day, after a year of this, it all became clear to me what my struggle really was..... it wasn’t creation versus evolution, my struggle was this..... I struggled to believe, my doubts were, that there was such a being, who could love (especially me) as He said He does. That there could be a God, who could and would forgive me, all of me, all of my past and present sins, as He said He does and did. That was my struggle, that God could love like He says He loves, that there could be such a being in this universe.

And there was a defining, definite moment, where I simply said, I believe it. I believe You love as You say You do, and You forgive the way You say You do, and that You love me, just as You say You do in this Word of God.

[2 Corinthians 5:7 \(NKJV\)](#) ⁷ For we walk by faith, not by sight.

[Romans 10:17 \(NKJV\)](#) ¹⁷ So then faith comes by hearing, and hearing by the word of God.

Every Person

Every person has to take their own spiritual trek, to come to what they can own that no one can take away. And if you are on that trek today, I encourage you to not deviate from the left or the right, to not let the leaven of the Pharisees (doubt) shipwreck you, but you continue to search the Scriptures out until you come to a place that you are sure you have left nothing undone in your search..... for eternity is online.

And to those that have come to that place, have settled that issue. Doubt is still an enemy of our souls. And when Satan says..... has God really said.....as he twists the scripture.... To which you say..... Yes God has really said that....in fact this is exactly what He said!

Genesis 3:1 (NKJV) ¹ Now the serpent was more cunning than any beast of the field which the LORD God had made. And he said to the woman, "Has God indeed said, 'You shall not eat of every tree of the garden'?"

When you say

- I doubt God is pleased with me because _____, flip it and say God is pleased with me even in spite of my failings, because His mercies are new every morning.
- I doubt God will ever use me because _____, flip it and say, God will use me because He loves to use the weak and foolish things of the world.
- I doubt God loves me because _____, flip it and say, God loves me, because He bought me with a great price, His only begotten Son.

Lamentations 3:21–24 (NKJV) ²¹ This I recall to my mind, Therefore I have hope. ²² Through the LORD's mercies we are not consumed, Because His compassions fail not. ²³ They are new every morning; Great is Your faithfulness. ²⁴ "The LORD is my portion," says my soul, "Therefore I hope in Him!"

Did God really say..... Yes He did!

Romans 10:17 (NKJV) ¹⁷ So then faith comes by hearing, and hearing by the word of God.

Prayer – Boldly Ask Your God

The Word of God is Living and Powerful, and is ready, and will do a mighty work in our lives.

Hebrews 4:12 (NKJV) ¹² For the word of God is living and powerful, and sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing even to the division of soul and spirit, and of joints and marrow, and is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart.

In Every Study

- Who Is God? (How Great is He?)
- What Does He Think of Me? (How Wonderful Are His Thoughts Towards Me?)
- What Does He Want Me to Do?
- What Can I Boldly Request of Him?
- What Do I Need to Be on Guard of When I Leave Here Today?

Boldly come to the throne of grace, ask God to reveal Himself in a mighty way to you, and to do I might work in you, and through you.

Hebrews 4:16 (NKJV) ¹⁶ Let us therefore come boldly to the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy and find grace to help in time of need.

There is a Prayer Team Available to Pray with and for You

End of Study

Mark 8:22-30

Mark 8:22–30 (NKJV) ²² Then He came to Bethsaida; and they brought a blind man to Him, and begged Him to touch him. ²³ So He took the blind man by the hand and led him out of the town. And when He had spit on his eyes and put His hands on him, He asked him if he saw anything. ²⁴ And he looked up and said, “I see men like trees, walking.” ²⁵ Then He put *His* hands on his eyes again and made him look up. And he was restored and saw everyone clearly. ²⁶ Then He sent him away to his house, saying, “Neither go into the town, nor tell anyone in the town.” ²⁷ Now Jesus and His disciples went out to the towns of Caesarea Philippi; and on the road He asked His disciples, saying to them, “Who do men say that I am?” ²⁸ So they answered, “John the Baptist; but some *say*, Elijah; and others, one of the prophets.” ²⁹ He said to them, “But who do you say that I am?” Peter answered and said to Him, “You are the Christ.” ³⁰ Then He strictly warned them that they should tell no one about Him.

Written with Divine Design

The Gospel of Mark is written with purpose; it is more than just the history of Jesus. Mark is written by design, to weave these historical events into a spiritual revelation. Recorded before us is the only miracle that Jesus performed that did not happen instantaneously. Now some will say that because some miracles Jesus couldn't perform instantaneously because of some limitation physically or spiritually; to which we have studied enough of Jesus that we say that is an absurd statement, that Jesus who speaks a universe into existence has no problem speaking any miracle into instant existence.

What we have is a continual spiritual design, woven together for a deep spiritual revelation and application for us personally. In our last study Jesus had said to the disciples, (v.18) having eyes, do you not see, having ears do you not hear, and do you not remember? And so, talking about eyes and ears takes us back to chapter 7 where He heals a man who couldn't hear. And now today He heals a man who can't see and tucked in the middle of these two physical limitations, slash miracles, is a spiritual limitation of these disciples (who you can put us in the boat as well) who need a miraculous touch just as much, so they can see, so they can hear, so they can understand.

Mark 8:18 (NKJV) ¹⁸ *Having eyes, do you not see? And having ears, do you not hear? And do you not remember?*

Mark 7:32–34 (NKJV) ³² Then they brought to Him one who was deaf and had an impediment in his speech, and they begged Him to put His hand on him. ³³ And He took him aside from the multitude, and put His fingers in his ears, and He spat and touched his tongue. ³⁴ Then, looking up to heaven, He sighed, and said to him, “Ephphatha,” that is, “Be opened.”

What we have is a continual spiritual design, woven together for a deep spiritual revelation and application for us personally. What we are going to see is a man's physical vision go from cloudy to clear, and we are going to start to see the disciples spiritual vision start going from cloudy to clear, but they won't by all means go to perfectly clear, for they have a way to go on that, it is not an instant process, and so the heart of the message that the Lord speaks and sends to us today.....

2 Corinthians 3:18 (NKJV) ¹⁸ *But we all, with unveiled face, beholding as in a mirror the glory of the Lord, are being transformed into the same image from glory to glory, just as by the Spirit of the Lord.*

What's in it for you to study this passage today is that you will get to know more about the heart of your God, and His heart for you. You will also get the relief, and release, that He is patient with you, He is not expecting nor requiring instant perfection of you, in fact He will confirm that He is the potter and we are the clay, and He is in work creating His beautiful vessels (that's me and you). But there is a calling on our side, the backend of one of the most quoted and claimed promises of God in all the Scriptures (Jeremiah 29:11-13), where yes God has a great plan for our lives, but there is the calling to seek Him, to search out His marvelous ways and truths, with all our hearts. The New Testament version of that calling is James 4,

Isaiah 64:8 (NKJV) ⁸ But now, O LORD, You *are* our Father; We *are* the clay, and You our potter; And all we *are* the work of Your hand.

Jeremiah 29:11–13 (NKJV)

¹¹ *For I know the thoughts that I think toward you, says the LORD, thoughts of peace and not of evil, to give you a future and a hope.* ¹² *Then you will call upon Me and go and pray to Me, and I will listen to you.* ¹³ *And you will seek Me and find Me, when you search for Me with all your heart.*

James 4:8 (NKJV) ⁸ *Draw near to God and He will draw near to you. Cleanse your hands, you sinners; and purify your hearts, you double-minded.*

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Hebrews 4:16 (NKJV) ¹⁶ *Let us therefore come boldly to the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy and find grace to help in time of need.*

A Blind Man Healed at Bethsaida (8:22-26)

Mark 8:22 Then He came to Bethsaida; and they brought a blind man to Him, and begged Him to touch him.

Bethsaida - Location

Bethsaida was a fishing village located on the northern shore of the Sea of Galilee. The Gospels mention the town of Bethsaida by name seven times (Matt 11:21; Mark 6:45; 8:22; Luke 9:10; 10:13; John 1:44; 12:21). Three of Jesus' disciples, fishermen by trade, were from Bethsaida. For example: "Philip was from Bethsaida, the hometown of Andrew and Peter" (John 1:44 HCSB; see also John 12:21). However, Matthew 8:5, 14 suggest that Peter (and possibly Andrew, as well) had moved to Capernaum at some point.

Jesus performed several miracles in Bethsaida, including:

- Feeding the 5,000 (Luke 9:10–17);
- Healing a blind man (Mark 8:22–26);
- Walking on water (Mark 6:45–51).

Bethsaida Condemned by Jesus

Jesus also condemned the town of Bethsaida (Matt 11:21; Luke 10:13). The Gospels portray the townspeople as fickle and narcissistic; although they saw Jesus' miracles and received His blessings, most people did not believe in Him (Matt 11:14–24).

Matthew 11:21–22 (NKJV) ²¹ *“Woe to you, Chorazin! Woe to you, Bethsaida! For if the mighty works which were done in you had been done in Tyre and Sidon, they would have repented long ago in sackcloth and ashes. ²² But I say to you, it will be more tolerable for Tyre and Sidon in the day of judgment than for you.*

Sadly Left Dalmanutha / But Never Stopped being the Light of the World

We finished last week with the disciples being in the boat with Jesus, where he told them to beware of the leaven of the Pharisees, and they had just left a town called Dalmanutha (where the Pharisees had confronted Jesus and demanded a sign from Him, challenging Him to prove Himself to them, for the feeding of the 5,000, the feeding of the 4,000, the countless people being healed, still were not enough for them, they wanted more, to which Jesus said only one sign you will get and that is the sign of Jonah). So they have left Dalmanutha where Jesus was not received, are in the boat heading to Bethsaida, where they have pretty much rejected the mighty works of Jesus there too. When Jesus departs, the presence of God departs, Jesus is God. Only darkness can follow, where "Light" has been driven out. Christian enough with this political correctness stuff. Listen, it is impossible to be politically correct, and the light of the world. The light you shine glorifies your Father in heaven. We have to decide, are we going to put the light under the bushel, so not to offend someone, or are we going to let our light shine, even if it means offending someone. I like the example of Jesus; He leaves, but when He came He was the Light of the World, while He was there He was the Light of the World, and when He left them, He left them as the Light of the World. He never stopped being the Light of the World, and nor should we, ever, not when we show up, not when we are there, and not when we are leaving. Every person gets to choose between darkness and light, including us, and may we always choose "light".

Matthew 5:14–16 (NKJV) ¹⁴ “You are the light of the world. A city that is set on a hill cannot be hidden. ¹⁵ Nor do they light a lamp and put it under a basket, but on a lampstand, and it gives light to all who are in the house. ¹⁶ Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works and glorify your Father in heaven.

Mark 8:23 So He took the blind man by the hand and led him out of the town. And when He had spit on his eyes and put His hands on him, He asked him if he saw anything.

Jesus Takes Man Out of Town – Because Town is Judged / But Still will Touch the Individual

One of the reasons Jesus takes the man out of the town of blessing is because he's already pronounced a curse upon the town. So there's a general judgment against Bethsaida, as Jesus had previously said, because of their rejection of what they did see and what was given to them. But it won't stop him from ministering to individuals. And that's true in every nation, in every group. There might be a group that God has turned his back on because of their disobedience and they're telling him to get out of town and refusal to receive him, but he'll still reach in to individuals who have a tender heart who are open to him, and he will touch them with his tremendous touch.

Can't & Don't Put God in a Box / Denominations Rally Around Experiences – Rather than let God be God

Again, Jesus heals through some bizarre behavior. In the Gospels, Jesus opened the blind eyes of at least seven different people... In John 9 He healed a man by putting mud on his eyes... Here he spits in this man's eyes... In Mark 10 He heals blind Bartimaeus by just speaking a word... You can't put Jesus in a box. He works in different ways with different people. Our problem is we expect Jesus to work in everyone the way He worked in us. This is how denominations start. Rather than let God be God, we rally around like experiences... There's the Church of the Muddists, Assembly of the Spitdist, and the First Speakists. Actually, it's the same Savior using different methods.

Mark 8:24 And he looked up and said, “I see men like trees, walking.”

Mark 8:25 Then He put His hands on his eyes again and made him look up. And he was restored and saw everyone clearly.

Clearly

The word here for “clearly” is a compound word in the original Greek, and its two words are “far off” and “radiance”. This man goes from being blind to seeing radiance and beauty, near vision and far away vision. Simply put, he can see crystal clear as we like to say.

Recap

So Jesus touches this blind man, and says what do you see, and he responds by saying things are a little fuzzy. Then Jesus touches him again, a second time, and now the man sees perfectly. Did Jesus not have enough miracle power in Him the first time that He had to do it a second? I think not, not the God who speaks worlds into existence, He has the power of the universe surging through His veins, for He is the God-Man, and he lacked nothing to perform miracles.

Significance

The great significance of this miracle, the only miracle that Jesus performed in stages, is that there can be and often times are, stages in God's miracles that He performs.

4 Spiritual Truths

We see (pardon the pun) four significant spiritual truths to deepen our spiritual understanding:

1. Slow Maturing is still Maturing.
2. Slow Miracles are still Miracles.
3. Humbled Healings, are better than no Healing
4. Out of the Body, doesn't necessarily mean Out of the Mind.

1 - Slow Maturing is still Maturing.

Picture of Salvation

This man begins with no sight at all - then he receives partial sight - and then finally, he receives perfect sight. This blind man goes from no sight - to partial sight - to even perfect sight... and that's out-of-sight!

- And this is a picture of our salvation, the stages if you will... Before I knew Jesus my spiritual eyes were blind to the things of God. Yet when I repented of my sin and trusted Jesus – He opened my eyes to His light. I could see... not with the sharpest, clearest definition... but at least I could see...
- Since then, I've grown in my discernment. My sight continues to improve. In fact, the day is coming when I'll have perfect sight. 1 Corinthians 13:12, "For now we see in a mirror, dimly, but then face to face. Now I know in part, but then I shall know just as I also am known." The Christian life is a sight-giving process.

1 Corinthians 13:12 (NKJV) ¹² For now we see in a mirror, dimly, but then face to face. Now I know in part, but then I shall know just as I also am known.

We Need to Keep Coming Back to Jesus

This is why it's important we keep coming back to Jesus when we're seeking Him to heal us.

There's a place for us as we read the word of God. Again, I can't emphasize and stress enough to you to continue reading the word of God, chew on it over and over, even the things you don't understand. Read through it again and again. It's amazing to me, things that made no sense to me 10 years ago, 20 years ago, 25 years ago, that I can come back around another loop and laugh through the systematic reading through the Bible each year, and I go, "Oh, now I get it," because so often it's tying a piece later here or a piece that I had missed previously. And it starts weaving together or just something supernatural that God reveals to me for the faithfulness to study to show myself a proved workman, for me not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the Word of God. And things become clearer and clearer, so please, just continue on. There's a place where you go, "I don't understand this. I'm gonna put this in the file cabinet called Hold Until Further Information," but eventually you'll see it's gonna be something. You're gonna go open that file cabinet and go, "I got it now. I know what that means." You'll take it and put it into Clear as Radiant Light.

Psalm 1:1-3 (NKJV) ¹ Blessed is the man Who walks not in the counsel of the ungodly, Nor stands in the path of sinners, Nor sits in the seat of the scornful; ² But his delight is in the law of the LORD, And in His law he meditates day and night. ³ He shall be like a tree Planted by the rivers of water, That brings forth its fruit in its season, Whose leaf also shall not wither; And whatever he does shall prosper.

Faith Gets Tested – When Can't See all the Details

And this is where our faith gets tested. It's not faith if you can see all the details. Today, I know God. I'm no longer blind. But I still don't see everything clearly. Thus, I need to trust Him even when I can't see Him.

2 - Slow Miracles are still Miracles.

A Healing in Stages

I think this particular healing is very significant. So often we do not consider it a miracle unless there is an immediate healing.

Healing still Unexplainable

This an interesting miracle, inasmuch as it is the only miracle recorded where there was a gradual healing. Sometimes God heals immediately, and then sometimes gradually. If I was to go get an operation, the surgeon may remove or repair damage, but it is still a miracle when the wound heals. Even with all the technological advances we have made in medicine over the years, healing is still unexplainable - doctors have to accept by faith that the body will heal. So it is after surgery there is a time of gradual healing until the body is 100% again.

If I was to fall and cut myself, it is really a miracle that the wound heals, and I don't bleed to death. But somehow the cells and tissues come back together and closes the wound to cut off the bleeding. Removing a cancerous growth from the body and the body heals: too many people give the credit to the doctor and modern science, but in reality, they were just instruments used by God. And how about the miracle of birth? Over a period of 9

months a baby is gradually formed in the mother wombs. The odds of the first cell coming together are in the impossible range, and yet for a whole child to be formed - truly a miracle, a gradual miracle.

Louis Evans told of watching a medical missionary perform a seven-hour operation in a tent. Afterward, Evans asked the surgeon what he got for an operation like that. The doctor showed a small bent copper coin the patient had offered. The doctor had assured the patient the coin would be enough. "But, what I really got from that operation was the joy of knowing that for the last seven hours, my 10 fingers have been Jesus Christ performing his healing ministry."

3 - Humbled Healings, are better than no Healing

Was Man Upset Jesus Spit in His Eye?

So you think this man was upset that Jesus spit in his eye? That's literally what it says. That's literally what it means. When Jesus would heal this blind man, it says that he spit in his eye. And what we read is a man who makes no gripe about it, no complaint about it, and we would say, "Of course not. The man was blind; now he sees. He wouldn't care how he was healed." But you know, there's an application there for so many of us, probably all of us. Cause there's a place where we go, "Lord, heal me. Lord, fix this problem with me." And I'm talking about a personal problem, a personal shortcoming, thin, lack of faith, something that we personally. And we cry out to the Lord, "Lord, change me. Heal me. Fix me. This has got to go." And God shows up and says, "I will." And then he starts to do what's necessary to change us, to fix us, to heal us, and we can go, "No, no, no, stop. This is so humiliating, what you're ... I didn't mean it like that. I want you just to do something quickly, say it and have it over with."

But when God says, "This is how I have to do it. This is the manner I have to do it," maybe he's gonna do something that is humiliating to us. Maybe there is a place of confession. Maybe it's a place of the breaking as we've talked about last week. I have to break you before I can make you whole. To which we go, "I'm already broken," and God says, "I have to break that part that's broken too before I can make you whole." And we can find ourselves crying out to God to fix us, to heal us, to make us whole, but then the means that he does it, we can say, "No, not like this. Do it more like this so I can feel more comfortable about it." That's not how it's gonna be. There's a place sometimes that God will do a healing, and the only way he's gonna do the healing is to do it his way, and it might be humbling. And there's a time. He may have to expose your sin before he can heal you of it. And we wanna hide it. We don't want it revealed. There's a time that God says, "I have to do something that is humbling, and it could be quite humiliating. But if you trust me, what you see will be beyond anything that can compare to the humbling and the humiliating circumstances that got you there."

Why would we ever argue with the way God wants to heal us and fix us, change us and make us whole? Especially when we're so sick and tired of being sick and tired. We know this gotta go. We know it's displeasing. We know it's robbing us. We know it's blinding us. We know it leaves us short of entering into the abundant life that he promises us. We just know that it's wrong, and yet we'll still argue about how. When he does do it the hard way for us. Is life so good that thing that continually robs you and blinds you, that it's worth arguing with the Lord over how he's gonna heal you rather than just releasing it to him and saying, "Lord, however you choose, whatever you choose, I am fully on board with, because I want to be made whole. I want to see clearly. You and the path and the promises and the plans that you have for my life."

4 - Out of the Body, doesn't necessarily mean Out of the Mind.

The Body & the Mind

And the final, one that it is vital to understand, for any and all who have some type of physical vice, addiction, bondage, or habit. For as a man thinks, therefore he is says the scriptures (Proverbs 23:7). It is what is in our minds that make us do what we do. Back in chapters 7 as we studied, Jesus had said as we summarized, **The heart of the problem, is the problem of the heart.**

Proverbs 23:7 (NKJV) ? For as he thinks in his heart, so is he. "Eat and drink!" he says to you, But his heart is not with you.

Mark 7:20–23 (NKJV) ²⁰ And He said, “What comes out of a man, that defiles a man. ²¹ For from within, out of the heart of men, proceed evil thoughts, adulteries, fornications, murders, ²² thefts, covetousness, wickedness, deceit, lewdness, an evil eye, blasphemy, pride, foolishness. ²³ All these evil things come from within and defile a man.”

And I want you to see, the physical aspect going on in this healing. We actually don't see with our eyes, but with our mind. The eyes take the picture, but it is the mind (brain) that develops the picture. The eye receives the image, the transforms the image into an electrical impulse that are carried by the optic nerve to the brain and processed into the images we see. And we can see in our story, the eyes saw, but the images were not being clearly processed in the brain.

And what I liken this to regarding any and all who have some type of physical vice, addiction, bondage, or habit..... is that a person can go to detox, abstain, get a coin/chip, unplug the wire, (and all that is great), but the problem is that it may be out of your body..... but it isn't out of you mind. And the mind is still incorrectly processing it. The mind keeps remembering what it was like, the mind keeps calling back out to you, come back, remember how great it was, how good it felt, and it keeps calling and calling. Oh you may have gone 30 days without..... the chemical may be out of your body, but it is still in your mind. And we can be shocked, at someone or ourselves, and go how did I make 90 days, 2 years, and then wham in a moment I yielded to it and succumbed to it, and here I am back where I started at. The reason, because it may be out of your body, but it is not out of your mind, it is still not processing correctly in your mind, you still don't see the threat “crystal clear”.

Beloved, you must recognize this, you can't rest in your “days since”, you must see the need to continually come back to Jesus to be touched, again and again. It is the “transforming by the renewing of your mind”.

Romans 12:1–2 (NKJV) ¹ I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that you present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable to God, which is your reasonable service. ² And do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind, that you may prove what is that good and acceptable and perfect will of God.

Mark 8:26 Then He sent him away to his house, saying, “Neither go into the town, nor tell anyone in the town.”

Jesus says Same to Disciples

Jesus will say this again to the disciples in a few verses, so the application will be the same and we will cover it there.

Peter Confesses Jesus as the Christ (8:27-30)

Mark 8:27 Now Jesus and His disciples went out to the towns of Caesarea Philippi; and on the road He asked His disciples, saying to them, “Who do men say that I am?”

No Boat – On Foot

Jesus now travels north from the Galilee to the mountains of southern Lebanon. They are on foot, out of the boat for the first time in a long time. No rowing, no navigating, they are walking.

Jesus Spending Time with Disciples

Jesus is spending time with His disciples, as we are probably less than 6 months from the cross.

Now the tie back to the blind man, who saw fuzzy at first, then crystal clear at the end. Jesus is sharpening the spiritual eyesight of these disciples who He will send out with the message of the Gospel. Peter, and the rest of you, you have been seeing somewhat fuzzy up to this point, but I am going to sharpen your vision, until you see “crystal clear”.

Mark 8:28 So they answered, “John the Baptist; but some say, Elijah; and others, one of the prophets.”

Mark 8:29 He said to them, “But who do you say that I am?” Peter answered and said to Him, “You are the Christ.”

We Know what Others Say

We may all be familiar with what other people, or books say about Jesus, but what do you say? Is it hear-say, or personal knowledge? It is not enough to be familiar with what other people say. It is a personal responsibility - Jesus wants to know who you say He is.

Good Witnessing Tool (What Some Say – But What You Say?)

Who do you say that I am? This is a conversation piece when sharing with someone. We can tell them what Peter said the other people said. Then we ask them, “When Jesus asked Peter, Who do you say that I am?” - Do you know what Peter said? Most people will want to know if they already don’t. After telling them what Peter said, we can then ask them, “Who do you say that Jesus is?”

A Fisherman Nails It

Peter nails it on the head. He saw that Jesus was the Messiah, the one promised. Kings and prominent religious leaders failed to see that Jesus was the Messiah, yet a fisherman saw clearly that He was. The same is still true today. Many of the leaders today are blinded by themselves to see Jesus is Lord, but then a multitude of everyday common people are being saved daily.

First mention of Christ

This is the first time “Christ” is mentioned in the Book of Mark, other than the introduction of the Book. Christ (Christos in the Greek) and it means “anointed”. That one word, is a mountainous volume, of who Jesus is, and His purpose for coming. The Greek translation of the Hebrew word rendered “Messiah” (q.v.), the official title of our Lord, occurring five hundred and fourteen times in the New Testament. It denotes that he was anointed or consecrated to his great redemptive work as Prophet, Priest, and King of his people. He is Jesus the Christ (Acts 17:3; 18:5; Matt. 22:42), the Anointed One. He is thus spoken of by Isaiah (61:1), and by Daniel (9:24–26), who styles him “Messiah the Prince.”

The Messiah is the same person as

- “the seed of the woman” (Gen. 3:15),
- “the seed of Abraham” (Gen. 22:18),
- the “Prophet like unto Moses” (Deut. 18:15),
- “the priest after the order of Melchizedek” (Ps. 110:4),
- “the rod out of the stem of Jesse” (Isa. 11:1, 10),
- the “Immanuel,” the virgin’s son (Isa. 7:14),
- “the branch of Jehovah” (Isa. 4:2),
- and “the messenger of the covenant” (Mal. 3:1).

This is he “of whom Moses in the law and the prophets did write.” The Old Testament Scripture is full of prophetic declarations regarding the Great Deliverer and the work he was to accomplish. Jesus the Christ is Jesus the Great Deliverer, the Anointed One, the Saviour of men

Mark 1:1–2 (NKJV) ¹ The beginning of the gospel of Jesus Christ, the Son of God. ² As it is written in the Prophets: “Behold, I send My messenger before Your face, Who will prepare Your way before You.”

Isaiah 61:1–3 (NKJV) ¹ “The Spirit of the Lord GOD is upon Me, Because the LORD has anointed Me To preach good tidings to the poor; He has sent Me to heal the brokenhearted, To proclaim liberty to the captives, And the opening of the prison to those who are bound; ² To proclaim the acceptable year of the LORD, And the day of vengeance of our God; To comfort all who mourn, ³ To console those who mourn in Zion, To give them beauty for ashes, The oil of joy for mourning, The garment of praise for the spirit of heaviness; That they may be called trees of righteousness, The planting of the LORD, that He may be glorified.”

Luke 4:18–19 (NKJV) ¹⁸ “The Spirit of the LORD is upon Me, Because He has anointed Me To preach the gospel to the poor; He has sent Me to heal the brokenhearted, To proclaim liberty to the captives And recovery of sight to the blind, To set at liberty those who are oppressed; ¹⁹ To proclaim the acceptable year of the LORD.”

Mark 8:30 Then He strictly warned them that they should tell no one about Him.

Savior – Before the King

Not time to be king yet, but to be Savior first.

Don't Declare – Without All Details

Now, in chapters eight, nine, and 10, Jesus is going to make a very clear declaration of his death and resurrection. He has told the religious leaders the sign of Jonah which would be a sign for them afterwards, but here he is being very clear of how he will die. He is giving them more details, but he's not letting them go out and declare without the full details. So hence, he tells them why to be quiet.

Strictly Charged

The word there for strictly charged is a very direct word. It's actually almost along the lines of a rebuke that he is being very clear to them with strong tone, "Don't be going out and talking about these things to which we know because you fully don't understand these things. You're just going to make a mess of these things." Hence, he's very stern in his warning to them.

Imagine what their gospel would mostly be..... come to Jesus and He will heal you and feed you, life will be great. That is not the gospel!

Even after the mount of transfiguration, Jesus will still tell them not to say anything, and he'll give them clear direction that you're not to say anything until I arise from the dead because you're not going to believe in the resurrection until you see it as clearly as what Jesus knows is in man's heart. And of course, we can understand that. I fault not the disciples in that manner. They knew of a general resurrection from the dead. After you died, there was heaven. They believed that. They believed that a man was going to arise from the grave and walk the earth again. It's a whole new thing to them.

Matthew 17:9 (NKJV) ⁹ Now as they came down from the mountain, Jesus commanded them, saying, "Tell the vision to no one until the Son of Man is risen from the dead."

Conclusion

Flesh and Blood Can't Persuade

Back in verse 29 in Matthew's gospel, it also says and adds that Jesus says, "Flesh and blood did not reveal this to you, but the Spirit of God." And there's the fact and a truth. We have to remember that. We'll never convince somebody, even as persuasive as we feel our delivery may be, our flesh can never convince someone a need for a Savior. It has to be Jesus, supernatural. He's a supernatural God and does supernatural works. And therefore, what we are living in is a spiritual realm of the supernatural, even though we continue on in this natural realm. We as Christians are living outside of this world in the sense that we're looking for something supernatural for God to do in the lives of people who do not know him and did not come to the understanding to receive him as Lord and Savior.

Matthew 16:13–17 (NKJV) ¹³ When Jesus came into the region of Caesarea Philippi, He asked His disciples, saying, "Who do men say that I, the Son of Man, am?" ¹⁴ So they said, "Some say John the Baptist, some Elijah, and others Jeremiah or one of the prophets." ¹⁵ He said to them, "But who do you say that I am?" ¹⁶ Simon Peter answered and said, "You are the Christ, the Son of the living God." ¹⁷ Jesus answered and said to him, "Blessed are you, Simon Bar-Jonah, for flesh and blood has not revealed this to you, but My Father who is in heaven."

But it is a Great Question this Christmas

But it's a great question. Lots of people talk about Jesus and it's a time of Christmas and there's all kinds of times where people are talking about Jesus, and most of it is confusion and wrong reasoning of who he is and why he came. There's lots of talk about Jesus, but it comes down to every person individually. But who do you say that Jesus is? And every man makes that decision for himself. Who is Jesus? Who is he to you personally?

Prayer – Boldly Ask Your God

The Word of God is Living and Powerful, and is ready, and will do a mighty work in our lives.

Hebrews 4:12 (NKJV) ¹² For the word of God is living and powerful, and sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing even to the division of soul and spirit, and of joints and marrow, and is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart.

In Every Study

- Who Is God? (How Great is He?)
- What Does He Think of Me? (How Wonderful Are His Thoughts Towards Me?)
- What Does He Want Me to Do?
- What Can I Boldly Request of Him?
- What Do I Need to Be on Guard of When I Leave Here Today?

Boldly come to the throne of grace, ask God to reveal Himself in a mighty way to you, and to do I might work in you, and through you.

Hebrews 4:16 (NKJV) ¹⁶ Let us therefore come boldly to the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy and find grace to help in time of need.

There is a Prayer Team Available to Pray with and for You

End of Study

Mark 8:27-29 (Christmas 2018)

Introduction

Christmas, a most wonderful time of the year. Decorations and celebrations. I knew Christmas was near back on October 30th, when I was at Walmart and the Christmas displays were up. I love the Christmas decorations. We haven't been fairing so well on our Christmas lights this year, as we are running at a 75% failure rate. I have reached a point where I am going to just let them burnout, and hope that I have at least one string twinkling by Christmas Day. That will make post holiday cleanup much easier as I store them in the garbage can rather than the attic.

- Did you hear about the place up in Pennsylvania, a family who has been decorating their property since 1948, now boasts 1 million lights. So popular has it become that they are open to the public to come and walk the grounds. It has turned into a Christmas village. They are open from Thanksgiving to New Years Day. And then they spend the rest of the year setting up for next year. It has been voted the greatest lights decoration in the world. It did look amazing, it is about 2.5 hours from here to see this amazing Christmas Village, but it will cost you 12 dollars a person.
- We have the Lights on the Bay down there at Sandy Point Park, that is one of the biggest light decorations in the area. But that will cost you 15 dollars a car, or 30 if you have a van.
- You can go see the National Christmas Tree down at the Capitol, it is free to see. But forget finding a parking space, so take the Metro, and that will cost about 8 dollars a person.
- If you want some Christmas music, there is the Baltimore Symphony Orchestra's, "Holiday Pops", up there at the "Joseph Meyerhoff Symphony Hall", tickets will run you from 12.50 a person upwards to 80 dollars a person if you want to sit in the Grand Tier Box.
- Or maybe you want to watch those calories, and want to run rather than watch, then there is the Santa Run up in Baltimore, which will "run ya" 25 dollars, T-shirt not included.

Now before you think oh here we go the good ole Christmas has become too commercialized Christmas sermon. Next weeks sermon will be the ole "Jesus wasn't born on December 25" sermon. Christmas is a pagan holiday. Rearrange the letters in Santa and it spells Satan. No not at all. I love Christmas, I love the lights and decorations, I love the gift giving as people "give" unto others. People are thinking of others. I love families getting together, I love taking a break from the everyday, to have a special season of "not every day". I love Christmas!

What I would like to do today, is draw some interesting parallels, of our passage of text before us, an event close to 2,000 years ago, and our Christmas today.

Peter Confesses Jesus as the Christ (8:27-29)

Mark 8:27–29 (NKJV) ²⁷ Now Jesus and His disciples went out to the towns of Caesarea Philippi; and on the road He asked His disciples, saying to them, "Who do men say that I am?" ²⁸ So they answered, "John the Baptist; but some say, Elijah; and others, one of the prophets." ²⁹ He said to them, "But who do you say that I am?" Peter answered and said to Him, "You are the Christ."

Caesarea Philippi

Caesarea Philippi is where this exchange occurred. The location, Caesarea Philippi, was the perfect backdrop for Peter's dramatic declaration, as the setting was rich with symbolic possibilities due to the layers of religious and historical structures that were in place by the first centuries BC and AD. Together these contributed compelling imagery as the exchange between Jesus and his disciples unfolded. We need to explore "backstage" in order to appreciate the rich implications of the question and the answers Jesus posed and the disciples gave.

- Where are we? Jesus and His disciples are on the road to Caesarea Philippi. The setting is significant. Jesus has started down the long road that will lead Him to Jerusalem and His death. Pointing toward that goal, He begins with the challenge "Who am I?" in the land of pagan gods.
- Caesarea Philippi is the place where gods are born and made. In ancient history, the city gained its fame as the center for Baal worship, carrying the name Balinas in honor of the Phoenician god. Greeks, too, found their god of gods at the same site.

- According to Greek mythology, the birth of Pan, god of nature, took place in a cave from which sprang the waters of the Jordan River. In recognition of this god of the Hellenists, the city also became known as Panias. Today, it still carries the derivative name of its religious history. With Baal's altar and Pan's grotto vying for pilgrims of the two religions, perhaps its current name, Banias, is a commercial compromise between the gods in favor of the tourist traffic.
- By Jesus' time, Banias is a province of the Roman Empire and the site of a magnificent marble temple built in honor of Caesar Augustus, the emperor of Rome. Even though Caesarea Philippi appears to be out of the way on Jesus' journey to Jerusalem, it stands as the religious fortress of the pagan world which challenges His Godhead. Furthermore, Christians in Rome, for whom Mark writes, need to know that Jesus Christ, the God to whom they pledge allegiance, has gone before them to deny the deity of Caesar. So, in the arena of Caesarea Philippi, where gods duel to the death, Jesus asks His disciples, "Who do you say that I am?" (v. 29). If He is the Christ who comes, there is no alternative. The half-gods of Baal, Pan, and Caesar must go, and go forever.

McKenna, D. L., & Ogilvie, L. J. (1982). Mark (Vol. 25, p. 170). Nashville, TN: Thomas Nelson Inc.

It is Here – Spiritual Mecca

Caesarea Philippi was a spiritual mecca, it was a commercial mecca of spirituality, you could come there to celebrate just about every major religion of it's day. People would make pilgrimages there, they would take off the whole week to come and celebrate, they would buy gifts (carved idols of their gods), both for themselves, and to give others. People would look forward to their pilgrimages to Caesarea Philippi all year.

- If you were into Baal worship (which represented, fertility (sex), prosperity (bringer of rain for good crops), then this was your place to worship him. Of course temple prostitutes were plentiful for fleshly indulgences.
- If Pan was your god, the god of nature, and what a beautiful place it is for scenic nature (I have been there myself), absolutely beautiful, then Caesarea Philippi was the place to be to worship Pan. They would make sacrifices and through them into the cave that was the opening of an underground water cavern; which they thought led to the underworld (remember that for next study when Jesus speaks of the gates of hell/hades).
- Now if government was your hope, Caesarea Philippi was the place to be as it was the place for Caesar worship. This declaration here of Peter was vital to the Roman's and the Greeks who is Mark's main targeted audience, for their would be a price to pay to say there is but one God, Jesus the Christ. Many would be fed to the lions in the colosseum for doing so.
- Caesarea Philippi, maybe you remember our study from the Book of Judges (17-18), was where the Tribe of Dan (one of the 12 tribes of Israel) resettled themselves. And being that Jerusalem was too far and too inconvenient to make the pilgrimage to, they set up their own place a worship, their own form of Judaism, where they worshipped in their own way. It was here at Caesarea Philippi they did that.

The Foundation is Laid

It is here at Caesarea Philippi that Jesus literally lays the foundation of Christianity. Caesarea Philippi was solid rock. And Jesus with all the other religions, all the commercialism, all the misconceptions of the One True God or all the self-made religions, that Jesus asks the question..... "who do you say I am?".

To which Peter responds, "You are the Christ, the Son of the living God". To which Jesus says, with all this solid rock around them, on that statement, I will build My church. Again that statement, "You are the Christ, the Son of the living God".

Matthew 16:13–19 (NKJV) ¹³ When Jesus came into the region of Caesarea Philippi, He asked His disciples, saying, "Who do men say that I, the Son of Man, am?" ¹⁴ So they said, "Some say John the Baptist, some Elijah, and others Jeremiah or one of the prophets." ¹⁵ He said to them, "But who do you say that I am?" ¹⁶ Simon Peter answered and said, "You are the Christ, the Son of the living God." ¹⁷ Jesus answered and said to him, "Blessed are you, Simon Bar-Jonah, for flesh and blood has not revealed this to you, but My Father who is in heaven." ¹⁸ And I also say to you that you are Peter, and on this rock I will build My church, and the gates of Hades shall not prevail against it. ¹⁹ And I will give you the keys of the kingdom of heaven, and whatever you bind on earth will be bound in heaven, and whatever you loose on earth will be loosed in heaven."

Tied Together (Christ & Son)

Two things are tied together here, the "Christ" and the "Son", that the "Christ" is the "Son of God".

I See the Parallel – Jesus Standing in the Midst of gods

And I see the parallel of then and now. Jesus the Christ, the Son of God, standing in the midst of the sea of gods and spirituality all around, a government (Roman government) trying to control religion, and there Jesus standing in the midst of all the overloading of the human sensory, saying who do you say I am? For us today A Babe in the Manger, a tiny baby, almost a side item of Christmas, in the flood of sensory (sight, sounds, tastes), and we look upon Him and say, who is He that lies in that manger?

The Babe in the Manger – Not Just any Son – But Son of God

The baby in the manger is a Son, and not just any son, but the Son of God. Sons are born; the Son of God was born in a manger, through the virgin birth, just as prophesied.

Micah 5:2 (NKJV) ² “But you, Bethlehem Ephrathah, Though you are little among the thousands of Judah, Yet out of you shall come forth to Me The One to be Ruler in Israel, Whose goings forth are from of old, From everlasting.”

Isaiah 7:14 (NKJV) ¹⁴ Therefore the Lord Himself will give you a sign: Behold, the virgin shall conceive and bear a Son, and shall call His name Immanuel.

Isaiah 9:6 (NKJV) ⁶ For unto us a Child is born, Unto us a Son is given; And the government will be upon His shoulder. And His name will be called Wonderful, Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace.

His Purpose – Save People from Sin

And His purpose, was to save people from their sins:

Matthew 1:21 (NKJV) ²¹ And she will bring forth a Son, and you shall call His name JESUS, for He will save His people from their sins.”

Because – Our Sin Separates us From Holy God

The Son was given, to save people from their sins, because our sins separate us from the Holy God.

Ecclesiastes 12:14 (NKJV) ¹⁴ For God will bring every work into judgment, Including every secret thing, Whether good or evil.

Jeremiah 17:10 (NKJV) ¹⁰ I, the LORD, search the heart, I test the mind, Even to give every man according to his ways, According to the fruit of his doings.

Romans 3:23 (NKJV) ²³ for all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God,

God’s Law Finds us Guilty – Colossians 2 (Record of Debt)

The Commandments of God (thou shall not lie, shall not steal, shall not use the Lord’s name in vain, and the likes) find us guilty. Colossians 2 says it so perfectly and clearly, there was a “record of debt” against us, a payment was to be made for our sin against God, and we are all spiritually bankrupt, we cannot pay our debt, and the penalty for that debt is “death”.

Romans 3:20 (NKJV) ²⁰ Therefore by the deeds of the law no flesh will be justified in His sight, for by the law is the knowledge of sin.

Colossians 2:13–14 (ESV) ¹³ And you, who were dead in your trespasses and the uncircumcision of your flesh, God made alive together with him, having forgiven us all our trespasses, ¹⁴ by canceling the record of debt that stood against us with its legal demands. This he set aside, nailing it to the cross.

Romans 6:23 (NKJV) ²³ For the wages of sin is death, but the gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord.

The Son is the Christ (Messiah – Take Away Sin)

The Son was given, but He was a special Son, He was the Son of God, and the other part of Peter’s rock-solid foundational statement..... He is the Christ. The meaning of Christ is drawn from the Old Testament. God promised the ancient Israelites that a Messiah would come to deliver them from sin. The idea of the Messiah is carried over into the New Testament with the title Christ. The Greek word Christos, from which we get the English word Christ, is the translation of the Hebrew term Mashiach, which is the source for the English word Messiah. Mashiach, in turn, is related to the Hebrew verb masach, which means “to anoint.” Therefore, when the New Testament speaks of Jesus Christ, it is saying “Jesus the Messiah,” which literally means, “Jesus the Anointed One.”

Daniel 9:24–25 (NKJV) ²⁴ “Seventy weeks are determined For your people and for your holy city, To finish the transgression, To make an end of sins, To make reconciliation for iniquity, To bring in everlasting righteousness, To seal up vision and prophecy, And to anoint the Most Holy. ²⁵ “Know therefore and understand, That from the going forth of the command To restore and build Jerusalem Until Messiah the Prince, There shall be seven weeks and sixty-two weeks; The street shall be built again, and the wall, Even in troublesome times.

The Christ will Trade Places

The Christ, would trade places, take our sin upon Himself, to pay our debt of sin against the Holy God. Jesus is drawing this out, here in the spiritual mecca, where multiple religions were intersecting, and Jesus is bring the foundational statement, not all roads lead to God, only one road/way, and that is through Jesus the Christ, Messiah, chosen One.

Isaiah 53:5–6 (NKJV) ⁵ But He was wounded for our transgressions, He was bruised for our iniquities; The chastisement for our peace was upon Him, And by His stripes we are healed. ⁶ All we like sheep have gone astray; We have turned, every one, to his own way; And the LORD has laid on Him the iniquity (guilt, record of debt) of us all.

2 Corinthians 5:21 (NKJV) ²¹ For He made Him who knew no sin to be sin for us, that we might become the righteousness of God in Him.

He is Jesus – God’s Gift to You / You Can Only Receive/Reject a Gift

Jesus the Christ, is God the Father’s Son, and He is God’s gift to us. And there are only two things you can do with a gift, receive it, or reject it. On Christmas Day, the gift you are given is just that, a gift, nothing you earned, simply a gift given by a gift giver. And so Jesus the Christ, God’s gift to us, nothing we earned, nothing we can boast about, only something we freely receive.

John 3:16–18 (NKJV) ¹⁶ For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have everlasting life. ¹⁷ For God did not send His Son into the world to condemn the world, but that the world through Him might be saved. ¹⁸ “He who believes in Him is not condemned; but he who does not believe is condemned already, because he has not believed in the name of the only begotten Son of God.

Ephesians 2:8–9 (NKJV) ⁸ For by grace you have been saved through faith, and that not of yourselves; it is the gift of God, ⁹ not of works, lest anyone should boast.

Don’t Remove the X in Xmas

The abbreviation (X for Xmas) offends 6 in 10 evangelicals, but its history is deeply Christian (see a well-researched article below at the end of this study)

The “X” in X-mas is not really an “X” at all. It’s chi, the Greek letter at the start of the word Christ, or Christos (Χριστός). Since the earliest era of political Christendom, “X” has been used as a shorthand for Christ,

- Using “X” as an abbreviation for Christ is also thought to have appeared in many Greek manuscripts of the New Testament.
- An ancient Hellenistic Christian slogan espoused the Greek acronym/acrostic IXΘΥΣ (ichthys) for Ἰησοῦς Χριστός, Θεοῦ Υἱός, Σωτήρ ("Iēsous Christos, Theou Yios, Sōtēr"), which translates into English as 'Jesus Christ, Son of God, Saviour'; the Greek word ichthys translating to 'fish' in English. The first appearances of fish symbols as adopted in Christian art and literature date to the 2nd century CE
- Constantine (312AD) combined the first two Greek letters of Christ to create the XP or chi–rho sign as a symbol for Jesus

The “X” in the Greek represents Jesus Christ. And with no “X”, there is no forgiveness of sin, the record of debt owed to God for sin, still needs to be paid.

Colossians 2:13–14 (ESV) ¹³ And you, who were dead in your trespasses and the uncircumcision of your flesh, God made alive together with him, having forgiven us all our trespasses, ¹⁴ by canceling (ἐξαλείφω – to wipe away, to erase, to obliterate, to blot out, to anoint – which means to smear and smother) *the record of debt that stood against us with its legal demands. This he set aside, nailing it to the cross.*

I was reading an account of a trial in Egypt in A.D. 85, and the governor Egypt gave the order in the course of the trial, “let the hand-writing be crossed out”, and we see an application/corresponding of Colossians 2:14 in a world setting outside the scriptures. And what I like about the “X” is, that as we “X” out something out on a piece of paper, the “X” supersedes what is written under it, the “X” has the authority, but the remembrance of what was written previously can still be seen to remember our indebtedness.

Christmas reminds us of what was once written against us, and the cross reminds us what has been “X” out regarding the “record of debt”.

No “X”, no forgiveness, our debt is stilled owed. I pray you will receive the “Xmas” of Christmas. How do you do that, it is as simple as A-B-C.

The Gospel (A-B-C) & a D:

Admit

Romans 3:23 (NKJV) ²³ for all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God,

Romans 6:23 (NKJV) ²³ For the wages of sin is death, but the gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord.

Believe

John 3:16–17 (NKJV) ¹⁶ For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have everlasting life. ¹⁷ For God did not send His Son into the world to condemn the world, but that the world through Him might be saved.

Confess

Romans 10:9–10 (NKJV) ⁹ that if you confess with your mouth the Lord Jesus and believe in your heart that God has raised Him from the dead, you will be saved. ¹⁰ For with the heart one believes unto righteousness, and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation.

Disciple

Matthew 16:24–26 (NKJV) ²⁴ Then Jesus said to His disciples, “If anyone desires to come after Me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross, and follow Me. ²⁵ For whoever desires to save his life will lose it, but whoever loses his life for My sake will find it. ²⁶ For what profit is it to a man if he gains the whole world, and loses his own soul? Or what will a man give in exchange for his soul?

Conclusion

Christmas truly is about gifts, and He is Jesus the Christ, God’s Gift to you. Will you receive the Gift God offers you today?

Keep the X in X-Mas

The abbreviation offends 6 in 10 evangelicals, but its history is deeply Christian
GRIFFIN PAUL JACKSON DECEMBER 21, 2018 9:00 AM

Though the demand for “more Christ in Christmas” seems to be losing momentum, most evangelicals still believe the holiday—and its seasonal greetings—should more explicitly reference the Savior.

Overall, the number of Americans who say Christmas should be more about Jesus has dropped from 79 percent in 2014 to 65 percent in 2018, according to LifeWay Research.

“Saying Christmas should be more about Jesus is a little like saying Thanksgiving should be more about giving thanks. It’s in the name of the holiday,” said Scott McConnell, LifeWay Research’s executive director. “Yet, it appears there is less cultural expectation for celebrations of the Christmas holiday to include the religious aspect.”

American nones and those of other faiths account for the bulk of the shift. In LifeWay’s 2014 report, 63 percent of members of non-Christian faiths and nearly half of the country’s nones (46%) said Christmas should be more about Jesus. Four years later, those percentages dropped to 35 percent and 28 percent, respectively.

Even Christians are slightly less likely to want to see a greater emphasis on Jesus, with 8 in 10 agreeing this year compared to 9 in 10 in 2014. But nearly all evangelicals by belief, 97 percent, still insist on more Jesus.

A majority of evangelicals (65%) say they take offense when someone says, “Happy Holidays” instead of “Merry Christmas,” though fewer than half of Christians (42%) and a third of Americans (32%) agree.

Over the years, LifeWay found the abbreviation “X-mas” to be just as controversial as “Happy holidays” or more, with 42 percent of Christians and 33 percent of Americans saying it was offensive in this year’s survey. Nearly 6 in 10 of those with evangelical beliefs (59%) find the use of “X-mas” instead of Christmas offensive.

The great irony in the distaste for the term “X-mas” is that it is thoroughly Christian, rather than an effort to remove the word Christ from the holiday.

The “X” in X-mas is not really an “X” at all. It’s chi, the Greek letter at the start of the word Christ, or Christos (Χριστός). Since the earliest era of political Christendom, “X” has been used as a shorthand for Christ, as LifeWay’s own Facts & Trends pointed out.

Constantine, the first emperor to convert to Christianity and whose Edict of Milan sought to free Christians from persecution, instructed his soldiers to inscribe the letter on their shields before the landmark Battle of Milvian Bridge. The chi “X” was paired with “P,” representing the Greek letter rho, the first two letters of and a signifier for the name Christ. Legend has it, the chi rho symbol came to Constantine in a vision.

Using “X” as an abbreviation for Christ is also thought to have appeared in many Greek manuscripts of the New Testament.

Even incorporating “X” into an English-language abbreviation for Christmas dates back a millennium. In the year 1021, an Anglo-Saxon scribe condensed Christmas to “XPmas,” and eventually the “P” was dropped to shorten the term even further, First Things noted.

According to the Christian Research Institute, the church was substituting “Christ” with “X” in the middle of the fifteenth century to save space and money when using newly invented printing presses, and Webster’s dictionary recognizes “X-mas” as a common term by the sixteenth century.

Matthew Schmitz, senior editor of First Things, states, “That Xmas sounds for a time more commercial than Constantinian is no reason to give up on its use, not if we expect the Christian faith to outlast capitalist society.”

In the eighteenth century, one of England’s most famous poets, Samuel Taylor Coleridge, was using “X-mas” in his writing.

More recently, in a 1954 essay called “Xmas and Christmas,” C. S. Lewis describes a mythical people who celebrate a winter festival called, critically, “Exmas” and find themselves hopelessly entangled, then exhausted, by the holiday rush. He uses the story to decry Christmas’ commercial abuses. Fellow English writer G.K. Chesterton, too, wrote a short poem called “Xmas Day.”

“What Does the X in Xmas Mean?” was one of 300 questions theologian R. C. Sproul compiled in a 1996 book.

“The X in Christmas is used like the R in R. C. My given name at birth was Robert Charles, although before I was even taken home from the hospital my parents called me by my initials, R.C., and nobody seems to be too scandalized by that,” he said in his response, now posted on the Ligonier Ministries website.

Even two decades ago, the late teacher defended the term against Christian skepticism.

“People seem to express chagrin about seeing Christ’s name dropped and replaced by this symbol for an unknown quantity X. Every year you see the signs and the bumper stickers saying, ‘Put Christ back into Christmas’ as a response to this substitution of the letter X for the name of Christ,” he said.

“There’s a long and sacred history of the use of X to symbolize the name of Christ, and from its origin, it has meant no disrespect.”

WHY X-MAS ACTUALLY KEEPS CHRIST IN CHRISTMAS

December 12, 2018

For many looking for the frontlines in the “War on Christmas,” X marks the spot. Historically, however, X-mas is closer to Christmas than you may realize.

On the surface, X-mas seems like the definition of “taking Christ out of Christmas.” It literally replaces His name with an X. But when properly understood, it’s more like using “JFK” to refer to John F. Kennedy than removing a reference to Jesus from the celebration of His birthday.

WHEN X IS NOT REALLY X

The first part of understanding where X-mas originated is to recognize that the letter used in the abbreviation is not actually the English letter “x.” It’s the Greek letter chi and is the first letter of Christ.

In Greek, Christ looks like this: Χριστός.

Because of this, X has been used as an abbreviation for Christ very early in Christianity.

The so-called Jesus Fish symbol comes from an acronym that incorporates X as a stand-in for Christ. ΙΧΘΥΣ is the Greek word for fish, but early Christians used it as shorthand for “Jesus Christ, Son of God, Savior.”

Chi-rho XP (Chi-rho symbol – see web for image)

On October 27, 312 A.D., Constantine, in a fierce battle with Maxentius over the Roman Empire, claimed to vision instructing him to mark the shields of his soldiers with a sign for Christ.

Constantine combined the first two Greek letters of Christ to create the XP or chi-rho sign as a symbol for Jesus.

“Constantine instructed his soldiers to scrawl the letters on their shield before the Battle of Milvian Bridge, his victory in which led to the unlikely establishment of a Christian empire,” writes Matthew Schmitz at First Things.

“Far from a symbol of secularization, then, Xmas carries echoes of the clash of battle that inaugurated political Christendom.

X-MAS’ LONG HISTORY

The first use of X in an abbreviation for Christmas dates all the way back to an Anglo-Saxon scribe in 1021, who wrote “XPmas” as shorthand.

The Webster’s Dictionary of English Usage describes several variations of “Xtian” being used as an abbreviation for Christian since the 1400s.

X had become so closely tied to Christ that illiterate Jews at Ellis Island would not sign using the letter, according to a story relayed in Garner’s Modern American Usage. They instead chose to mark with an O.

“Xmas,” specifically, appeared in the letters of writers like Lord Byron and Lewis Carroll in the 1800s. Supreme Court justice Oliver Wendell Holmes used it in 1923.

For years, people would simply read Xmas as “Christmas.”

“There’s a long and sacred history of the use of X to symbolize the name of Christ,” wrote theologian R.C. Sproul, “and from its origin, it has meant no disrespect.”

But that doesn’t stop many followers of Christ from seeing the term negatively. More than 4 in 10 Christians (42 percent) say it is offensive when people say “X-mas” instead of “Christmas,” according to a new study from LifeWay Research.

Instead of being offended, Christians could see someone using “X-mas” as a gospel opportunity.

X MARKS THE GOSPEL SPOT

People are open to faith-filled conversations this time of year. They expect to talk about Christ during Christmas.

Four in 10 Americans who never attend church (41 percent) say Christmas should be more about Jesus.

In 2015, LifeWay Research found 61 percent of Americans typically attend church at Christmastime. And among those who do not attend, 57 percent said they were likely to attend if someone they knew asked them.

In 2010 LifeWay Research asked people when they are more open to considering matters of faith. Christmas was the most common response. Almost half (47 percent) said they were more open to thinking about faith during the holiday season.

With non-Christians ready to talk about Jesus this time of the year, someone using “X-mas” could open the door for a conversation about that X.

Ask if they know how the abbreviation started. Talk about how X-mas still points to Christ. Bring up why early Christians used the fish as a symbol.

Whether others recognize it or not, the X is a reminder of who Jesus is—the Messiah sent by God as a humble baby at the first Advent, but who will return one day in the second Advent as the conquering King.

You may not want to use X-mas personally, but someone else using the shorthand can give you an opportunity to talk about the long history of Christians recognizing Jesus as the Christ.

End of Study (Mark 8:27-29)

Mark 8:29 & Mark 1:1 (Christmas Eve 2018)

Silent Night

Communion Together

Did you get a Communion Element? As we are going to have communion together, as the Lord told us to, to do this in remembrance of Him, and what a perfect night to do this on, our Christmas Eve celebration.

Billboard Top Christmas Songs

So what are some of your favorite Christmas songs? According to “Billboard Music Charts”, here are some of the top requested/played songs for this week:

- Andy Williams – It’s the Most Wonderful Time of the year
- Bobby Helms – Jingle Bell Rock
- Brenda Lee – Rockin Around the Christmas Tree
- Burl Ives – A Holly Jolly Christmas
- Of course, such songs as Rudolf the Red Nose Reindeer, Jingle Bells, Santa Claus is Comin to Town, and Feliz Navidad, are all up there in the Top Ten

Festive and Busy

These are very festive songs, rather busy songs with their upbeat tempo and fast-moving lyrics. Again, quite a parallel to what we have looked in our last study, the foundational statement of Christianity, made there up at Caesarea Philippi, as Peter would say upon the question that every man and woman must answer, who do people say I am, to which Peter said, You are the Christ, the Son of the living God. That statement, that foundational statement, was made at Caesarea Philippi, which was a busy, fast-paced tempo, of spirituality, and commercialism, where many of the religions of the world converged.

Mark 8:27–29 (NKJV) ²⁷ Now Jesus and His disciples went out to the towns of Caesarea Philippi; and on the road He asked His disciples, saying to them, “Who do men say that I am?” ²⁸ So they answered, “John the Baptist; but some say, Elijah; and others, one of the prophets.” ²⁹ He said to them, “But who do you say that I am?” Peter answered and said to Him, “You are the Christ.”

Matthew 16:16 (NKJV) ¹⁶ Simon Peter answered and said, “You are the Christ, the Son of the living God.”

Holy Night – Silent Night

You know two of my favorites, “O’Holy Night” and “Silent Night”. Which ranked 72 and 92 in the Top 100 this week. Holy night it was, a night divine! A silent night it was..... darkness of the night enveloping Bethlehem..... until the silence was broken through, by the cry of a child. The first sound of God (in the flesh) on the earth..... was a cry. And darkness was broken through, as the Light of the World was born. And so was the beginning of the gospel of Jesus Christ, the Son of God.

Mark 1:1 (NKJV) ¹ The beginning of the gospel of Jesus Christ, the Son of God.

Darkness & Silence of Creation

4,000 years prior darkness had covered the world, and the world sat in silence..... until the voice of God would break through the darkness and the silence.

Genesis 1:1–3 (NKJV) ¹ In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth. ² The earth was without form, and void; and darkness was on the face of the deep. And the Spirit of God was hovering over the face of the waters. ³ Then God said, “Let there be light”; and there was light.

God Spoke through Prophets for 3600 Years

And God would speak to man through the prophets for 3,600 years..... and then silence. And for 400 years, there was silence. God spoke not through the prophets, 400 years of silence upon the land. And the land became darkness and silence again.

Malachi 4:6 (NKJV) ⁶ And he will turn The hearts of the fathers to the children, And the hearts of the children to their fathers, Lest I come and strike the earth with a curse.”

400 Years Until the Silence Broken by a Cry

400 hundred years of silence, until this silent night, this dark night, was pierced with the sound of child. The first sound of God (in the flesh) on the earth, was a cry, the cry of a child.

4-6 Months Before the Cross

And here in Mark 8, the foundational statement made by Peter, "You are the Christ, the Son of the living God", is probably 4-6 months before the cross. And once again, darkness and silence will fall on the earth. For the last 3 hours of Jesus the Christ there upon the cross, taking the sin of man, the whole earth was enveloped in total darkness (as the Light of the World was being put to death, extinguishing His life), to which you could be sure, silence fell so loud you could hear it. The earth and heaven would be silent. Then, breaking through, piercing through silence, the cry of God again..... Why have you forsaken Me (as God turned His back on His son as He took on the sins of the world, for a Holy God cannot look upon sin (Habakkuk 1:13), and then the final cry of God on earth, It is done! God would come into the world with a cry, and then exit the world with a cry.

Matthew 27:45–46 (NKJV) ⁴⁵ Now from the sixth hour until the ninth hour there was darkness over all the land. ⁴⁶ And about the ninth hour Jesus cried out with a loud voice, saying, "Eli, Eli, lama sabachthani?" that is, "My God, My God, why have You forsaken Me?"

John 19:30 (NKJV) ³⁰ So when Jesus had received the sour wine, He said, "It is finished!" And bowing His head, He gave up His spirit.

Habakkuk 1:13 (NKJV) ¹³ You are of purer eyes than to behold evil, And cannot look on wickedness. Why do You look on those who deal treacherously, And hold Your tongue when the wicked devours A person more righteous than he?

Disciples 3 Days of Darkness

But..... on the third day! Imagine the darkness and silence the disciples sat in. What happen to our Jesus, how can He be dead. And the three days of darkness they sat in their hearts, the silence of unanswered questions, were pierced through and broken through with a shout from heaven and quake of the earth! He is Alive!

Matthew 28:1–8 (NKJV) ¹ Now after the Sabbath, as the first day of the week began to dawn, Mary Magdalene and the other Mary came to see the tomb. ² And behold, there was a great earthquake; for an angel of the Lord descended from heaven, and came and rolled back the stone from the door, and sat on it. ³ His countenance was like lightning, and his clothing as white as snow. ⁴ And the guards shook for fear of him, and became like dead men. ⁵ But the angel answered and said to the women, "Do not be afraid, for I know that you seek Jesus who was crucified. ⁶ He is not here; for He is risen, as He said. Come, see the place where the Lord lay. ⁷ And go quickly and tell His disciples that He is risen from the dead, and indeed He is going before you into Galilee; there you will see Him. Behold, I have told you." ⁸ So they went out quickly from the tomb with fear and great joy, and ran to bring His disciples word.

Take a Silent Moment

I want to take a silent moment tonight, and then break this bread together and drink this cup, and remember the silence, and the darkness, that God came and broke through.

Song – Silent Night

End

Revelation 21:1–7 (NKJV) ¹ Now I saw a new heaven and a new earth, for the first heaven and the first earth had passed away. Also there was no more sea. ² Then I, John, saw the holy city, New Jerusalem, coming down out of heaven from God, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband. ³ And I heard a loud voice from heaven saying, "Behold, the tabernacle of God is with men, and He will dwell with them, and they shall be His people. God Himself will be with them and be their God. ⁴ And God will wipe away every tear from their eyes; there shall be no more death, nor sorrow, nor crying. There shall be no more pain, for the former things have passed away." ⁵ Then He who sat on the throne said, "Behold, I make all things new." And He said to me, "Write, for these words are true and faithful." ⁶ And He said to me, "It is done! I am the Alpha and the Omega, the Beginning and the End. I will give of the fountain of the water of life freely to him who thirsts. ⁷ He who overcomes shall inherit all things, and I will be his God and he shall be My son.

He has come, He has overcome, and He is coming again. He is Jesus Christ, the Son of the living God; He is God's gift to you. Merry Christmas

John 3:16 (NKJV) ¹⁶ For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have everlasting life.

O'Holy Night Lyrics

O holy night The stars are brightly shining
It is the night of our dear Savior's birth
Long lay the world in sin and error pining
til He appeared and the soul felt its worth
A thrill of hope the weary world rejoices
For yonder breaks a new and glorious morn
Fall on your knees Oh hear the angel voices
Oh night divine Oh night when Christ was born
Oh night divine Oh night Oh night divine

Truly He taught us to love one another
His law is love and His Gospel is peace
Chains shall He break for the slave is our brother
And in His name all oppression shall cease
Sweet hymns of joy in grateful chorus raise we
Let all within us praise His holy name
Fall on your knees Oh hear the angel voices
Oh night divine Oh night when Christ was born
Oh night divine Oh night Oh night divine

Fall on your knees
Oh hear the angel voices
Oh night divine
Oh night when Christ was born
Oh night divine
Oh night Oh night divine

Silent Night Lyrics

Silent night, holy night
All is calm, all is bright
'Round yon virgin Mother and Child
Holy infant so tender and mild
Sleep in heavenly peace
Sleep in heavenly peace
Silent night, holy night!
Shepherds quake at the sight!
Glories stream from heaven afar;
Heavenly hosts sing Al-le-lu-ia!
Christ the Savior is born!
Christ the Savior is born!
Christ the Savior is born!
Silent night, holy night
Son of God, oh, love's pure light
Radiant beams from Thy holy face
With the dawn of redeeming grace
Jesus, Lord at Thy birth
Jesus, Lord at Thy birth
Jesus, Lord at Thy birth

End of Message: Mark 8:29 & Mark 1:1 (Christmas Eve 2018)

Mark 8:31-38

Mark 8:27–38 (NKJV) ²⁷ Now Jesus and His disciples went out to the towns of Caesarea Philippi; and on the road He asked His disciples, saying to them, “Who do men say that I am?” ²⁸ So they answered, “John the Baptist; but some say, Elijah; and others, one of the prophets.” ²⁹ He said to them, “But who do you say that I am?” Peter answered and said to Him, “You are the Christ.” ³⁰ Then He strictly warned them that they should tell no one about Him. ³¹ And He began to teach them that the Son of Man must suffer many things, and be rejected by the elders and chief priests and scribes, and be killed, and after three days rise again. ³² He spoke this word openly. Then Peter took Him aside and began to rebuke Him. ³³ But when He had turned around and looked at His disciples, He rebuked Peter, saying, “Get behind Me, Satan! For you are not mindful of the things of God, but the things of men.” ³⁴ When He had called the people to *Himself*, with His disciples also, He said to them, “Whoever desires to come after Me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross, and follow Me. ³⁵ For whoever desires to save his life will lose it, but whoever loses his life for My sake and the gospel’s will save it. ³⁶ For what will it profit a man if he gains the whole world, and loses his own soul? ³⁷ Or what will a man give in exchange for his soul? ³⁸ For whoever is ashamed of Me and My words in this adulterous and sinful generation, of him the Son of Man also will be ashamed when He comes in the glory of His Father with the holy angels.”

Matthew 16:16 (NKJV) ¹⁶ Simon Peter answered and said, “You are the Christ, the Son of the living God.”

Where we Left Off / Bringing Vision into Perfect Clarity

We left off in verse 30. Jesus asking the disciples who do men say that I am; and then asking them directly, who do you say that I am. Caesarea Philippi is where this exchange occurred; it was a spiritual (so-called) mecca, where many false religions and philosophies of the world co-existed together. It was a buzz of religious, economic, and carnal activities. In the midst of all this “noise”, and all these “sights”, Jesus asks who do people say that I am, and then, but who do you say that I am? Peter answers it, with what we call a foundational statement of our faith, You are the Christ, the Son of the living God. Jesus is only months away from the cross at this point in time. Jesus is bringing His disciples faith and understanding into perfect clarity. The Holy Spirit through divine inspiration, this discourse of “who do men say that I am, has been woven together with the man who was deaf and speech impediment, and the blind man.

Mark 7:31–35 (NKJV) ³¹ Again, departing from the region of Tyre and Sidon, He came through the midst of the region of Decapolis to the Sea of Galilee. ³² Then they brought to Him one who was deaf and had an impediment in his speech, and they begged Him to put His hand on him. ³³ And He took him aside from the multitude, and put His fingers in his ears, and He spat and touched his tongue. ³⁴ Then, looking up to heaven, He sighed, and said to him, “Ephphatha,” that is, “Be opened.” ³⁵ Immediately his ears were opened, and the impediment of his tongue was loosed, and he spoke plainly.

Mark 8:22–25 (NKJV) ²² Then He came to Bethsaida; and they brought a blind man to Him, and begged Him to touch him. ²³ So He took the blind man by the hand and led him out of the town. And when He had spit on his eyes and put His hands on him, He asked him if he saw anything. ²⁴ And he looked up and said, “I see men like trees, walking.” ²⁵ Then He put His hands on his eyes again and made him look up. And he was restored and saw everyone clearly.

Today Foundational / Remind – Refine - Repent

And today, what a passage for the New Year, what a passage for anytime, for everyday; We are on foundational truths. Jesus is the Christ, Jesus is the Son of God, and the Lord is going to lay the foundational truth of what is required of anyone to be His.

- Remind – as it is easy to forget, to get distracted, of this Holy (uncommon) calling.
- Refine – as we may be challenging to make some changes in our lives, to get us back on what matters most.
- Repent – God may put His finger on something today, and say it has got to go, this is not My will.

Prayer – Boldly Ask Your God

The Word of God is Living and Powerful, and is ready, and will do a mighty work in our lives.

Hebrews 4:12 (NKJV) ¹² For the word of God is living and powerful, and sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing even to the division of soul and spirit, and of joints and marrow, and is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart.

In Every Study

- Who Is God? (How Great is He?)
- What Does He Think of Me? (How Wonderful Are His Thoughts Towards Me?)
- What Does He Want Me to Do?
- What Can I Boldly Request of Him?
- What Do I Need to Be on Guard of When I Leave Here Today?

Boldly come to the throne of grace, ask God to reveal Himself in a mighty way to you, and to do I might work in you, and through you.

Hebrews 4:16 (NKJV) ¹⁶ Let us therefore come boldly to the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy and find grace to help in time of need.

There is a Prayer Team Available to Pray with and for You

Jesus Predicts His Death and Resurrection (8:31-33)

Mark 8:31 And He began to teach them that the Son of Man must suffer many things, and be rejected by the elders and chief priests and scribes, and be killed, and after three days rise again.

Turning Point of Ministry / Identity - Destiny

Realize, Jesus' trip to Caesarea Philippi marked a turning point in His ministry. He used this occasion to refocus the perspective of His disciples. Think of it this way, up until now it's been the first of two semesters in the school of Jesus... Part one was His identity. For the first semester of His ministry He was teaching and showing His disciples who He is... Who else can raise the dead, calm the storm, cast out demons, heal the sick, multiply fish and bread, and walk on water... Jesus is obviously the Messiah.

But now He's shifting gears. He's changing His focus from who He is - to where He's going... Call this second semester, His Destiny. Until Caesarea Philippi the focus was His Identity - now it's His Destiny. The Jews in general - even the disciples - were convinced Messiah would come to reign and rule. But now Jesus presents a different vision of His mission... *The path He's traveling leads to a cross, before a crown – to a brutal death, before a reign of glory - first to a tree, before a throne - a grave,then to greatness...* This is Jesus' focus for the rest of His ministry.

Have you asked Jesus for the forgiveness of your sins?

Mark 8:32 He spoke this word openly. Then Peter took Him aside and began to rebuke Him.

Peter Thinks Things are Going Backwards

On the one hand, we're floored with Peter's brashness – that Peter would rebuke the Master. But think about it from his perspective... He's been on a miracle ride. He's excited. The multitudes are in the palm of Jesus' hand. Momentum is on their side. Peter is thinking of a coronation – not a crucifixion. Peter can't believe He's shifting gears... This seems like they're going backwards. This has to be a mistake.

Mark 8:33 But when He had turned around and looked at His disciples, He rebuked Peter, saying, "Get behind Me, Satan! For you are not mindful of the things of God, but the things of men."

A to F / Celebration & Salvation. – Only via the Cross / Embrace His Identity – Also Embrace His Destiny

Peter's highest high and lowest low take place just minutes apart. He gets an A+ for the first semester. He's sure of Jesus' identity. But his second semester starts out with a big fat, F. Peter knows who Jesus is - but He has no clue where He's going or why.

For the rest of His time on earth, Jesus tries to teach His disciples that you get to the celebration, the victory, the salvation... by traveling the path of the cross. This was true of Jesus, and it's also true of us. It's one thing to embrace Jesus' identity - it's quite another to embrace His destiny. Yet Jesus calls us to do both.

Jesus teaches His disciples that there's not only a cross in His future - there's one in theirs as well if they want to follow Him.

Life Application #1 – Love & Emotion Can be Wrong / Often Love Doesn't have Rest of Story

Let me give a couple key life applications here before we move on. Sometimes in love we can be wrong. Peter loved the Lord, yet his reasoning was wrong. We can feel like we are led to do something, and say I am doing this because of love, therefore it must be the Lord's will, but believe it or not, it could be wrong.

Where did Peter go wrong? He went wrong in verse 31. Peter went wrong in the Word, Peter let his personal feelings supersede the Word of God. Jesus clearly said in verse 31 that He must suffer and die. The Word of God rules over any feelings or man's logic.

- Two people who dearly love each can say it is their love that can justify pre-marital sex - wrong.
- Two parents can say it is their love for their child that can justify not disciplining them - wrong.
- We can say it is because of love for a brother or sister that we will not rebuke or correct them when they have blatantly violated God's Word - wrong. It is God's Word that directs our actions, but let our actions be done in love.

So often love doesn't have the rest of the story; for in the rest of the story in verse 31 Jesus said I must rise again. Peter missed that part. Let the Word of God rule in your life and actions.

Life Application #2 – God Is Good/Control/Right all the Time / David Reminds Himself of This when Distressed

And here is another application, key take away, and that is that God is good, all the time, and all time, God is good. God is in control, and God is always right. I, nor you, need to try to defend that He is good, that He is in control, and that He is always right. Our job, is not to defend, but to declare! And I need to hear that myself, declare that to myself. There are times that bad things happen, and the world looks (sometimes saying it to us, sometimes we know they are thinking it, and sometimes that person is ourselves!), how could your loving God allow this. I like what David did, he talks to himself, not in the poor mind way, but in faith and encouragement, he asks himself "why are you cast down my soul, why are you disquieted (distressed), Hope in God!" He reminds himself, God is good, good is in control, and God is always right.

Psalm 42:title-11 (NKJV) To the Chief Musician. A Contemplation of the Sons of Korah. ¹ As the deer pants for the water brooks, So pants my soul for You, O God. ² My soul thirsts for God, for the living God. When shall I come and appear before God? ³ My tears have been my food day and night, While they continually say to me, "Where is your God?" ⁴ When I remember these things, I pour out my soul within me. For I used to go with the multitude; I went with them to the house of God, With the voice of joy and praise, With a multitude that kept a pilgrim feast. ⁵ Why are you cast down, O my soul? And why are you disquieted within me? Hope in God, for I shall yet praise Him For the help of His countenance. ⁶ O my God, my soul is cast down within me; Therefore I will remember You from the land of the Jordan, And from the heights of Hermon, From the Hill Mizar. ⁷ Deep calls unto deep at the noise of Your waterfalls; All Your waves and billows have gone over me. ⁸ The LORD will command His lovingkindness in the daytime, And in the night His song shall be with me— A prayer to the God of my life. ⁹ I will say to God my Rock, "Why have You forgotten me? Why do I go mourning because of the oppression of the enemy?" ¹⁰ As with a breaking of my bones, My enemies reproach me, While they say to me all day long, "Where is your God?" ¹¹ Why are you cast down, O my soul? And why are you disquieted within me? Hope in God; For I shall yet praise Him, The help of my countenance and my God.

Cross Made No Sense at the Time – Except to God

The cross made no sense to anyone at the time, and yet it would later be understood, it was and is the only way of salvation. God was good, God was in control, God was right. And so too many things today do not make sense to me, and I can say, not so Lord, or I can say You are good, You are in control, and You are always right! I declare that, and I can rest in that, and I can triumph in the midst of the things that don't make sense to me.

Christian – What Might You be Questioning

Right now, what thing or things in your life may you be questioning the Lord's goodness, control, or being right. You can say Lord, I am simply going to "hope in You", and I yield that you are in control, you are good, and as always, You are right. And then do what David did, praise Him, and you will find what David found..... peace! Peace in the midst of the distress, and the storm, and the uncertainty.

Jesus Bringing Perfect Clarity to Disciples – Will do Same for You

Jesus is bringing His disciples faith and understanding into perfect clarity; He will do the same for you as well, just keep walking with Him like the disciples did.

Take Up the Cross and Follow Me (8:34-38)

Mark 8:34 When He had called the people to Himself, with His disciples also, He said to them, “Whoever desires to come after Me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross, and follow Me.

Cost of Discipleship / Salvation is Free – Discipleship Cost You Your Life

The cost of discipleship; It has been said, “Salvation is free, but discipleship will cost you your life.”

Lopsided Emphasis – Christ & Son(Lord)

Equal emphasis must be put on both Salvation and Discipleship. The lopsided emphasis is obvious today in the world as it is getting harder and harder to tell the difference between Christians and non-Christians. Son of God, would make Him Lord, for God is King, thus Jesus is Lord, the Prince (a male member of a royal family). This word for “prince” in the original language means (leader, ruler, captain, prince, prince-overseer). Christ speaks of Savior, and the Son of God speaks of being Lord. He is both Savior and Lord, He is the Lord Jesus Christ.

Daniel 9:25 (NKJV) ²⁵ “Know therefore and understand, *That* from the going forth of the command To restore and build Jerusalem Until Messiah the Prince, *There shall be* seven weeks and sixty-two weeks; The street shall be built again, and the wall, Even in troublesome times.

3 Conditions (Must be 3 for 3)

Jesus gives 3 conditions on being His disciple - One out of three or two out of three won't cut it. Three for three is the only way. Deny Self, take up the Cross, Follow Him.

1..) Deny Self

Utterly Disown

The word deny here means, “to deny utterly, to disown.” It is a compound word in the Greek, with the main word meaning to “deny, disown”, and the prefix meaning “utterly”. So not just disown, but a strong clear, for Jesus is bringing His disciples (that is you and me also) into clarity, perfect far off clarity. This word, it means to give up anything and everything that is contrary to God's word and is sin. In verse 33 Jesus tells Peter that he was not mindful of the things of God, but the things of man. To deny oneself is more than to be self-denying or unselfish. It means the utter setting aside of the self-life, that Christ alone may be seen. It means disowning the old life of satisfying self, but serving Jesus.

Have no identification with who that person is. Peter would have no identification with who Jesus was (same Greek word used in Peter's denial as here in our passage). Peter's denial unlocks for us what is being said and required of us. When they entered the court of the Jews, and Peter warmed himself by the fire, and the servant girl said you are with Him, to which Peter said I utterly do not know this man and I have no association with this man. And we see the calling for us, regarding the old man/woman, we are to say we have no association with that old person, that old way of life, I utterly disassociate myself from that person.

John 18:24–27 (NKJV) ²⁴ Then Annas sent Him bound to Caiaphas the high priest. ²⁵ Now Simon Peter stood and warmed himself. Therefore they said to him, “You are not also one of His disciples, are you?” He denied it and said, “I am not!” ²⁶ One of the servants of the high priest, a relative of him whose ear Peter cut off, said, “Did I not see you in the garden with Him?” ²⁷ Peter then denied again; and immediately a rooster crowed.

Ephesians 4:17–24 (NKJV) ¹⁷ This I say, therefore, and testify in the Lord, that you should no longer walk as the rest of the Gentiles walk, in the futility of their mind, ¹⁸ having their understanding darkened, being alienated from the life of God, because of the ignorance that is in them, because of the blindness of their heart; ¹⁹ who, being past feeling, have given themselves over to lewdness, to work all uncleanness with greediness. ²⁰ But you have not so learned Christ, ²¹ if indeed you have heard Him and have been taught by Him, as the truth is in Jesus: ²² that you put off, concerning your former conduct, the old man which grows corrupt according to the deceitful lusts, ²³ and be renewed in the spirit of your mind, ²⁴ and that you put on the new man which was created according to God, in true righteousness and holiness.

Romans 12:1–2 (NKJV) ¹ I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that you present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable to God, which is your reasonable service. ² And do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind, that you may prove what is that good and acceptable and perfect will of God.

You've heard it said, "I disown you." From the negative aspect people say this to others when they don't want anything to do with them, absolutely no association. That is what this word means here, we disown the old person, the self-seeking person, we want absolutely nothing to do with that person. However..... It doesn't mean we have to live in poverty and be in church everyday, and reading the Bible and praying every second of our life.. That's not what Jesus did. It comes down to simply living a life according to the Word of God. It comes down to in all that we do we ask ourselves, "What would Jesus do?" It is no longer I that lives, but Christ in me.

(Gal 2:20 NKJV) "I have been crucified with Christ; it is no longer I who live, but Christ lives in me; and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave Himself for me."

2..) Pick up the Cross

Die to Self

Taking up the cross, always says just what it means, to die to ourselves.

It's Good that Church isn't a Business

It's a good thing that church is not a business, for this teaching would be really bad for business. But do you want to be free, do you want to live in power, do you want to live the victorious Christian life, than oh what a great message God has for you today!

Would have Been Shocking Statement / Instrument of Death – for a Criminal / God's Grace

Pick your cross would have been a shocking statement to every listener. The cross was an instrument of death, and it was an instrument of death for criminals. A takeaway application here for us is, that we were once alienated, criminals, guilty before God because of our sin; but His grace gave us a pardon of sin, the record of debt, written against us for breaking God's holy law, has been wiped clean, obliterated, x-out! Grace will make you follow the Lord to the ends of the earth, because grace is freeing, grace is connecting our heart to His heart, because we know what true love is, and He has that true love for us.

Cross was Brutal / Today it is Jewelry

People can't grasp the brutality of the cross. Today people wear the cross around their neck as jewelry, just for looks, they truly don't know how horrible death by crucifixion was. I believe for many people, especially non-believers, the cross as jewelry is a ploy of the enemy to weaken the seriousness of the cross and crucifixion. When we get to the crucifixion of Christ in Mark chapter 15 we will go into detail in just what Our Lord went through for us.

(Please Note, I am not saying there is anything wrong with wearing the cross as jewelry, for many it is a continual, warming, wonderful reminder of the goodness of God. I am just making the point of how brutal the cross was in that culture, and how shocking this statement would be to the hearer.)

Today if we were to talk about taking up the cross, we would say, "take up your electric chair", or "enter into the gas chamber". If Jesus was to come today instead of 2000 years ago - the Via-de-rosé, the way to the cross would not have been streets through Jerusalem, but a walkway down death row. Golgotha would have been a Federal Penitentiary, and the cross would have been an electric chair, or lethal injection. Still yet all the above is nothing compared to the brutality of the cross.

How many people today would wear an electric chair charm around their neck? Not many.

Two-Fold Meaning / Put the Old Man to Death

Picking up the cross has a twofold meaning. First it is Galatians 2:20, dying to sin. When Jesus went to the cross sin and death were defeated. We are saying when we pick up the cross that the old sinful disobedient to God person is dead, and a new person living for Christ has risen.

Take Up Anchor – Cut the Weight of the World

The word for “take” in this verse, is the very same word they used when they were ready to sail a boat. They would “take up the anchor.” Picking up the cross is taking up the anchor we have weighed in this world, and setting sail on a life of following Jesus, not our own desires. Before we can follow Jesus, we have to be mindful of the things of God, not man.

Hebrews 12:1–2 (NKJV) ¹ Therefore we also, since we are surrounded by so great a cloud of witnesses, let us lay aside every weight, and the sin which so easily ensnares us, and let us run with endurance the race that is set before us, ² looking unto Jesus, the author and finisher of our faith, who for the joy that was set before Him endured the cross, despising the shame, and has sat down at the right hand of the throne of God.

Picture of Baptism

It is the picture of baptism, the burying of the old man, the won who is dead to sin, but alive in Christ. New Years is upon us, if you haven’t been baptized, how about now?

Romans 6:1–14 (NKJV) ¹ What shall we say then? Shall we continue in sin that grace may abound? ² Certainly not! How shall we who died to sin live any longer in it? ³ Or do you not know that as many of us as were baptized into Christ Jesus were baptized into His death? ⁴ Therefore we were buried with Him through baptism into death, that just as Christ was raised from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life. ⁵ For if we have been united together in the likeness of His death, certainly we also shall be in the likeness of His resurrection, ⁶ knowing this, that our old man was crucified with Him, that the body of sin might be done away with, that we should no longer be slaves of sin. ⁷ For he who has died has been freed from sin. ⁸ Now if we died with Christ, we believe that we shall also live with Him, ⁹ knowing that Christ, having been raised from the dead, dies no more. Death no longer has dominion over Him. ¹⁰ For the death that He died, He died to sin once for all; but the life that He lives, He lives to God. ¹¹ Likewise you also, reckon yourselves to be dead indeed to sin, but alive to God in Christ Jesus our Lord. ¹² Therefore do not let sin reign in your mortal body, that you should obey it in its lusts. ¹³ And do not present your members as instruments of unrighteousness to sin, but present yourselves to God as being alive from the dead, and your members as instruments of righteousness to God. ¹⁴ For sin shall not have dominion over you, for you are not under law but under grace.

Secondly – Sacrificing and Serving Others

But secondly, picking up the cross means serving and sacrificing for others. Jesus didn’t die for Himself, but for others. He didn’t have to put to death the old man, for He was sinless. The cross is the ultimate act of sacrifice for others.

James Calvert – Fiji Island

When James Calvert went out as a missionary to the cannibals of the Fiji Islands, the captain of the ship sought to turn him back. "You will lose your life and the lives of those with you if you go among such savages," he cried. Calvert only replied, "We died before we came here."

Book of Mark Theme – Jesus the Servant

We are talking about discipleship here, and discipleship is not only dying to self, but serving other. The major theme we talked about in the Book of Mark is Jesus Christ the servant. Jesus is calling us to die to ourselves, and die for others. Can you imagine the world around us if we all lived to serve others? There would be no more divorces, wars, and crimes. Everybody would be too focused on the needs of others to think about hurting someone. (Go back to Jesus’ teaching on inner purity Mark 7:17-23)

3.) Follow Me

Repentance means Turn and Follow

Repentance means to turn and follow. Jesus calls us to a life of intimacy, oneness, communion with Him.

What an Invitation

Of course, there is the comfort of following the Chief Shepherd. Or Shepherd will keep us in His perfect peace. Maybe today, you are not in peace, filled with anxiety, fears; maybe it is because you haven’t denied self, picked up your cross, and turned to follow Him, trusting fully, that He is who He says He is, and is able to do all that He says He can do.

Psalms 23 (NKJV) A Psalm of David. ¹ The LORD is my shepherd; I shall not want. ² He makes me to lie down in green pastures; He leads me beside the still waters. ³ He restores my soul; He leads me in the paths of righteousness For His name’s sake. ⁴ Yea, though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil; For You are with me; Your rod and Your staff, they comfort me. ⁵ You prepare a table before me in the presence of my enemies; You anoint my head with oil; My cup runs over. ⁶ Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me All the days of my life; And I will dwell in the house of the LORD Forever.

Isaiah 26:3-4 (NKJV) ³ You will keep him in perfect peace, Whose mind is stayed on You, Because he trusts in You. ⁴ Trust in the LORD forever, For in YAH, the LORD, is everlasting strength.

Imprinting

Imprinting: A friend told me about "Imprinting" her Colt. She said she just knew that particular night was the night her colt was going to be born. Every few minutes she would shine a flashlight out into the barn from her bedroom. Two eyes, two eyes, then four eyes.

She immediately got up and ran out to the barn. Then she said she "Imprinted" the colt. She "imprinted" him by putting her chest to his chest, and then wrapping her arms all the way around his body including the hind legs, kind of like cradling him. As she cradles him, his face is next to her face and he is smelling her.

She says from that day on, that colt knew her and would run to her and follow her all around the field when she would come out. Two years later, even though she does not live there right now, she says the colt (now a horse) still comes to her and follows.

The same is true for the Christian. The moment you accept Christ as your personal Lord and Savior - He "Imprints" you. He wraps you up, and you know Him and you will desire to follow Him. The "Imprint" is called being sealed. *Ephesians 1:12-14 (NKJV)* ¹² that we who first trusted in Christ should be to the praise of His glory. ¹³ In Him you also trusted, after you heard the word of truth, the gospel of your salvation; in whom also, having believed, you were sealed with the Holy Spirit of promise, ¹⁴ who is the guarantee of our inheritance until the redemption of the purchased possession, to the praise of His glory.

The Greek word for seal is sphragizo, (sfrag-id'-zo) which means "to stamp (with a signet or private mark) for security or preservation." In those days when the King would send a letter or decree, he would roll the paper up and put melted wax where the edge of the paper was. He would then take his ring and press it into the wax leaving the ring impression. Whoever was to receive letter would know it was from the King when they saw the King's seal "imprinted" on the paper. The seal that God leaves his children is the Holy Spirit (as we read in Ephesians 1:12-13). The Holy Spirit is "imprinted" on the believer.

Holy Spirit will Guide you on How/Where to Follow

When the Holy Spirit comes to reside in your heart, after you accept Christ as your Savior, He will guide you (one of the many things the Spirit will do for the believer).

(John 16:13 NKJV) "However, when He, the Spirit of truth, has come, He will guide you into all truth; for He will not speak on His own authority, but whatever He hears He will speak; and He will tell you things to come.

If the Spirit is guiding you, then where to follow should not be a problem - but will you follow is totally up to you. If you see that in your life you have not been following the Lord as you should, don't be depressed and defeated as you read this, rather be challenged. You know God loves you, He sealed you, He imprinted you, that is proof of how much He loves you. We have seen over the last few chapters as Jesus was taking His disciples from babes to leaders; He will do the same for you if that is your desire. Your desire will be evident by points one and two: Have you denied self, and taken up your cross?

Just a side note, when we are sealed, that is also God's promise that He is going to take care of us (see Ephesians 1:12-13). He puts His imprint on us saying to the devil, they are mine, don't touch. If you have a US Passport, you will see the Seal of the United States of America on that passport. The seal says to any foreign country you are traveling in, "if you mess with this person, you are messing with the United States of America, and you will pay a price for it." Christian, why wouldn't you want to follow Him?

Mark 8:35 For whoever desires to save his life will lose it, but whoever loses his life for My sake and the gospel's will save it.

The Paradox

This paradox of finding life by losing it is open to the test of experience. Mature Christians attest to its validity. This is a verse that I think you have to live and experience before you can truly understand it. For when you do die to the old self, and let the new life of walking with Jesus rule your life, you'll never want to leave.

Not Act of Desperation but Devotion / Nor Isolation

Notice Jesus ties the two together, Himself and the Gospel. To lose yourself is not an act of desperation, it is an act of devotion. Personal devotion should lead to practical duty, the sharing of the Gospel with the lost world. If it was just for Jesus' sake, we could lead into "isolation." We see that today as there are churches and groups who try to isolate themselves from the world. Many times they get way off track on what is the truth. So it must be balanced with "and the Gospel." Because we live for Him, we live for others also.

Like a Glass of Milk

Here is the paradox of the Christian life... Life is like a glass of milk. It's a perishable commodity. Hold on to you life for too long and it sours. The only way to keep a glass of milk is to drink it up. And this is true with our lives. Live it for Jesus and it'll live on. Hold on to it for yourself and it will spoil.

Serve for Gospel Sake

Notice the for the gospel sake; we serve for the gospel sake. When we are serving others, the purposes behind serving is to bring people to the understanding the opportunity, of the Gospel, the Good News, that their sins can be blotted out, that they can have a personal relationship with God their creator. Because this world is perishing and will continue to perish. For..... The next verse, what it profit to get anything out of this world and in the end lose your soul. Our mission and calling on this earth with this life, to tell man the Gospel!

Mark 8:36 For what will it profit a man if he gains the whole world, and loses his own soul?

Mark 8:37 Or what will a man give in exchange for his soul?

Don't give What Lasts – For What Leaves Tomorrow

This world is not what it's cracked up to be. Don't throw away your integrity for cheap thrills and moldy bread. Why give up what lasts forever for what's going to leave you empty tomorrow?

I Live to 70-80 / Lord Talking About Eternity

If I live to be 70 or 80, then I've almost lived 1% of history, of the time of history since Adam. Man! What a shocking thought! So, if you gain the world, how long do you think you could hold it? How long could you enjoy it? A hundred years? Do you think you're going to live to be a hundred years old? Do you think by the time you were 98 you'd still enjoy it? You see, the Lord is talking about eternity now. "What would it profit a man if he would gain the whole world and yet lose his own soul?" That's eternal. The gaining of the world is only for a short time. Moses chose rather to suffer affliction with the children of God than to enjoy the pleasures of sin for a season, because he knew that sin is always limited. That pleasure in sin has its definite time limitations, but that walk with God is forever.

Roman Emperor Charlemagne

An interesting story surrounds the burial of the famous Roman emperor Charlemagne. Legend has it that he asked to be entombed sitting upright in his throne, He asked that his crown be placed on his head and his scepter in his hand. He requested that the royal cape be draped around his shoulders and an open book be placed in his lap.

That was A.D. 814. Nearly 200 years later, Emperor Othello determined to see if the burial request had been carried out. He allegedly sent a team of men to open the tomb and make a report. They found the body just as Charlemagne had requested. Only now, nearly two centuries later, the scene was gruesome. The crown was tilted, the cape moth-eaten, the body disfigured. But open on the skeletal thighs was the book Charlemagne had

requested – the Bible. One bony finger pointed to Matthew 16:26: “What good will it be for a man if he gains the whole world, yet forfeits his soul?”

To which I would wonder..... what would be his answer today?

Mark 8:38 For whoever is ashamed of Me and My words in this adulterous and sinful generation, of him the Son of Man also will be ashamed when He comes in the glory of His Father with the holy angels.”

Every Believer Needs Stand Up to be Accounted For / John Hancock

Every believer needs to be willing to stand up and be counted! If we stand up for Jesus, He'll stand up for us. When the first representative signed the Declaration of Independence, he sprawled his signature across the page in large and flowing letters. John Hancock said he wrote his name in giant print so King George could read it without putting on his glasses. Hancock wanted the British monarch to know exactly where He stood. Today, when you sign a document, people say, “Put your John Hancock right here.” It's a way of saying, that by adding your signature you're taking a stand. And this is what Jesus says to us. “Take a stand for Me on earth, then I'll stand for you in the life to come!”

The Reward – Become Like Him

Is there a reward for being a true disciple of Christ? Yes, you become more like Him, and then one day you will get to hear those words from Him, Well done they good and faithful servant, enter into the joy of the Lord.”

Ohh to hear those words from the King of Kings, what could the world possibly offer me in comparison.

Cortez Conquest of Mexico in 1519

When Cortez landed at Vera Cruz in 1519 to begin his conquest of Mexico with small force of 700 men, he purposely set fire to his fleet of 11 ships. His men on the shore watched their only means of retreat sinking to the bottom of the Gulf of Mexico. With no means of retreat, there was only one direction to move, forward into the Mexican interior to meet whatever might come their way. In paying the price for being Christ's disciple, you too must purposefully destroy all avenues of retreat. Resolve that whatever the price for being His follower, you will have to pay it.

Prayer – Boldly Ask Your God

The Word of God is Living and Powerful, and is ready, and will do a mighty work in our lives.

Hebrews 4:12 (NKJV) ¹² For the word of God is living and powerful, and sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing even to the division of soul and spirit, and of joints and marrow, and is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart.

In Every Study

- Who Is God? (How Great is He?)
- What Does He Think of Me? (How Wonderful Are His Thoughts Towards Me?)
- What Does He Want Me to Do?
- What Can I Boldly Request of Him?
- What Do I Need to Be on Guard of When I Leave Here Today?

Boldly come to the throne of grace, ask God to reveal Himself in a mighty way to you, and to do I might work in you, and through you.

Hebrews 4:16 (NKJV) ¹⁶ Let us therefore come boldly to the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy and find grace to help in time of need.

There is a Prayer Team Available to Pray with and for You

End of Study

Mark 9

Mark 9:1-13

A True Mountaintop Experience

Jesus Transfigured on the Mount (9:1-13)

Mark 9:1–13 (NKJV) ¹ And He said to them, “Assuredly, I say to you that there are some standing here who will not taste death till they see the kingdom of God present with power.” ² Now after six days Jesus took Peter, James, and John, and led them up on a high mountain apart by themselves; and He was transfigured before them. ³ His clothes became shining, exceedingly white, like snow, such as no launderer on earth can whiten them. ⁴ And Elijah appeared to them with Moses, and they were talking with Jesus. ⁵ Then Peter answered and said to Jesus, “Rabbi, it is good for us to be here; and let us make three tabernacles: one for You, one for Moses, and one for Elijah”—⁶ because he did not know what to say, for they were greatly afraid. ⁷ And a cloud came and overshadowed them; and a voice came out of the cloud, saying, “This is My beloved Son. Hear Him!” ⁸ Suddenly, when they had looked around, they saw no one anymore, but only Jesus with themselves. ⁹ Now as they came down from the mountain, He commanded them that they should tell no one the things they had seen, till the Son of Man had risen from the dead. ¹⁰ So they kept this word to themselves, questioning what the rising from the dead meant. ¹¹ And they asked Him, saying, “Why do the scribes say that Elijah must come first?” ¹² Then He answered and told them, “Indeed, Elijah is coming first and restores all things. And how is it written concerning the Son of Man, that He must suffer many things and be treated with contempt? ¹³ But I say to you that Elijah has also come, and they did to him whatever they wished, as it is written of him.”

A True Mountaintop Experience

The title of this Bible study is “A True Mountaintop Experience”. We use the phrase often for high moments, for special moments, and here we have in the Scriptures, a true mountaintop experience. True means, according to Webster’s Dictionary, “the quality or state of being accurate (as in alignment or adjustment). And in our passage today, the Lord through His Divine Word will put key life necessities into straight and accurate clarities for us, so we may have mountaintop experiences with Him. Not just occasional, but as often as we choose to make the journey to meet with Him.

Outline Mark 9:1-13 (A “True” Mountaintop Experience):

- “Transcending” for Prayer (9:1-2)
- “Transfiguration” of the Power and the Glory (9:2-3)
- “Talked” to of the Power and the Passion (9:4)
- “Trouble” with Building Projects (9:5-6)
- “Truth” Comes from the Word (9:7-8)
- “Transfer” of Power and Passion (9:9-10)
- “Thinking” on the Spiritual Things (9:11-13)

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In Every Study

- Who Is God? (How Great is He?)
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Boldly come to the throne of grace, ask God to reveal Himself in a mighty way to you, and to do I might work in you, and through you.

Hebrews 4:16 (NKJV) ¹⁶ Let us therefore come boldly to the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy and find grace to help in time of need.

[“Transcending” for Prayer \(9:1-2\)](#)

Mark 9:1 And He said to them, “Assuredly, I say to you that there are some standing here who will not taste death till they see the kingdom of God present with power.”

Mark 9:2 Now after six days Jesus took Peter, James, and John, and led them up on a high mountain apart by themselves; and He was transfigured before them.

Early Church Misconception

Now the early church thought that this statement meant that Jesus would return to the earth to establish His earthly kingdom before these disciples would die. If I was standing there hearing this, I could see how they came to that conclusion based on their limited understanding. But we have the advantage of seeing the whole picture, and we can see that Jesus is talking about what is going to happen up on the mountaintop several days from now.

There are great systematic studies of all the theology of “The Kingdom of God”, but here is my simplistic theological definition of the Kingdom of God, and what it all means, and the very base of it the Kingdom of God is where the King is, and whatever the King possesses is part of His kingdom. Jesus is the King, so where ever Jesus is, is the Kingdom of God. Thus, the kingdom of God is closer than I realize, until I am reminded, where ever the King is, is where the Kingdom is, and therefore let me get to Jesus..... right now. Come Jesus, join us here, walk in our Midst. For the kingdom is where ever the King is, and whatever the King possess. Lord take me, I am Yours.

Mount Hermon

Remember Jesus and His men were in the Golan Heights, near the town of Caesarea Philippi. A little north was Mount Hermon, a snow-capped mountain, 9200 feet above sea level.

Mark 8:27 (NKJV) ²⁷ Now Jesus and His disciples went out to the towns of Caesarea Philippi; and on the road He asked His disciples, saying to them, “Who do men say that I am?”

Probably Mount Hermon / Not Told so No One Would Build 3 Tabernacles

Most likely, this is Mount Hermon where Jesus just was there at Caesarea Philippi.

- Some think it's Mount Tabor and that's because Constantine's mother in 326AD, when he was promoting Christianity as the one faith, she would go about to the various sites in the Holy Land and say, this is where I feel that this happened. She would say that the spirit was coming upon her to tell her where the transfiguration was, where the tomb was, the virgin birth, etc.. But at the time of Jesus and this account, historical writings say that Mount Tabor had a Roman garrison, so it's doubtful that this is where it happened, and Mount Tabor is only 1,886 feet in elevation, which isn't that high, but still is somewhat high. Mount Tabor is only 47 miles from Caesarea Philippi, so six days is plenty of time to walk that distance.
- Some will say it happened on the Mount of Olives, but that is only 2700 feet in elevation, and it is about 120 miles from Caesarea Philippi, so that is doable, but quite a push in 6 days.
- But, there are other possibilities as well, as there are other mountains and high places in the land.

Most likely it was Mount Hermon, but we are not told in the Scriptures exactly where. The event is what matters most. I am sure the exact location was purposely omitted from the scriptures, so somebody didn't go up there to build three tabernacles.

Textual Criticism

Mark, along with Matthew (17:1), indicates that the transfiguration took place six days after the promise Jesus gave, recorded in verse 1. Luke, however, placed it “some eight days” later (9:28). There is no contradiction; Luke included the day the Lord made the promise and the day of the transfiguration, while Matthew and Mark referred to the six days between those two events. So what this tells us is that they were up on the mountain for about two days in prayer.

Luke 9:28 (NKJV) ²⁸ Now it came to pass, about eight days after these sayings, that He took Peter, John, and James and went up on the mountain to pray.

Pushing Through to Prayer – See Lord Clearly

Luke's Gospel says that they ascended, as Jesus took them to go pray and there's a word here, and it is the beauty of transfiguration prayer. When we get with the Lord will see him clearly, we will see His radiance and brilliance.

Luke 9:28–29 (NKJV) ²⁸ Now it came to pass, about eight days after these sayings, that He took Peter, John, and James and went up on the mountain to pray. ²⁹ As He prayed, the appearance of His face was altered, and His robe became white and glistening.

Remember as we've been saying, based on our past studies in chapter eight, Jesus is bringing them into perfect clarity and it's a process, but he wants to bring them into seeing things and as we said, the word clarity there was radiant. As this blind man would see, his vision became radiant, that he could see crystal clear afar off, and as we said, these things are woven together as we see the Lord drawing his disciples to bring them into seeing things clearly who the Christ is and what his mission is.

Mark 8:27–29 (NKJV) ²⁷ Now Jesus and His disciples went out to the towns of Caesarea Philippi; and on the road He asked His disciples, saying to them, "Who do men say that I am?" ²⁸ So they answered, "John the Baptist; but some say, Elijah; and others, one of the prophets." ²⁹ He said to them, "But who do you say that I am?" Peter answered and said to Him, "You are the Christ."

No Path – Get Above the Noise

They're going up the mount. This is a high elevation mountain and there's no path. This isn't a tourist spot. These guys are going to have to do some working to get up to this place that Jesus wants them to go, to be with him for prayer, time alone time. And there's something to be said here, that sometimes there is a journey, sometimes you got to push through to get away, to get to a place to meet with Jesus, to connect with the Father in prayer. Jesus gives the example, he's going to make the climb and these disciples make the climb. It becomes worth it to them because they get to see Jesus glorified and many times and most all times when you really push through to prayer and you get away and you get up, get high in elevation away from the crowds below and the noise. You'll see Jesus in a way you've never seen him before. How's your prayer life Christian? Regardless your answer, I doubt there is a person in this room who would say they are totally content in their prayer life. Because prayer will always be leaving you wanting more, desiring more of the Lord. So if it is 3 minutes, 13, 33, or 133 minutes, you will always be saying "I want more", because the more we see of Him, the more we want of Him, for we are made for Him, and Him for us.

Deuteronomy 19:15

Deuteronomy Chapter Nineteen, verse 15 says, by the mouth of two or three witness a matter is established, so Jesus brings those disciples to establish this, not that they had more holiness above the others, but they were simply chosen to bear the witness and I think that's so much the ministry. Pastors, evangelists, Sunday school teachers, and the likes, they're not more holy by any means, all washed and redeemed through Jesus Christ, just who got picks to bear witness so matters can be established in the glory, can be told, retold.

Deuteronomy 19:15 (NKJV) ¹⁵ "One witness shall not rise against a man concerning any iniquity or any sin that he commits; by the mouth of two or three witnesses the matter shall be established.

2 Peter 1:16–18 (NKJV) ¹⁶ For we did not follow cunningly devised fables when we made known to you the power and coming of our Lord Jesus Christ, but were eyewitnesses of His majesty. ¹⁷ For He received from God the Father honor and glory when such a voice came to Him from the Excellent Glory: "This is My beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased." ¹⁸ And we heard this voice which came from heaven when we were with Him on the holy mountain.

"Transfiguration" of the Power and the Glory (9:2-3)

Mark 9:3 His clothes became shining, exceedingly white, like snow, such as no launderer on earth can whiten them.

God Incarnate / 3 Decades – The Great I Am Shines Forth

God incarnate, John chapter one burst through the veil of man that surrounds "The Great I AM". For three decades the deity of Jesus was under the cover of His humanity, and here for this moment, deity shines greater than the morning sun.

John 1:14 (NKJV) ¹⁴ And the Word became flesh and dwelt among us, and we beheld His glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth.

Metamorphosis / Change the Outside by What was on the Inside

Change the outside by what was on the inside. The Greek word translated “transfigured” is the term from which we get the English word, “metamorphosis” - which speaks of “an abrupt and dramatic change.” We use it to describe the transformation of a caterpillar into a butterfly. This is who was in the Babe in Bethlehem, this is who hung on the cross!

3339 μεταμορφώω [metamorphoo /met-am-or-fo-o/] v. From 3326 and 3445; TDNT 4:755; TDNTA 607; GK 3565; Four occurrences; AV translates as “transfigure” twice, “transform” once, and “change” once. 1 to change into another form, to transform, to transfigure. 1A Christ appearance was changed and was resplendent with divine brightness on the mount of transfiguration. Additional Information: For synonyms see entry 3345, metaschematizo. See entry 5863 for comparison of synonyms.

Strong, J. (1995). Enhanced Strong's Lexicon. Woodside Bible Fellowship.

Jesus – In His Glory

We are seeing Jesus in His glory, just as we read of the only physical description of Jesus in the Bible given in Revelation chapter 1. I wonder when John saw Jesus on their Island of Patmos if he said, “hey I know you, we met up on Mount Hermon a few years ago”.

Revelation 1:12–16 (NKJV) ¹² Then I turned to see the voice that spoke with me. And having turned I saw seven golden lampstands, ¹³ and in the midst of the seven lampstands One like the Son of Man, clothed with a garment down to the feet and girded about the chest with a golden band. ¹⁴ His head and hair were white like wool, as white as snow, and His eyes like a flame of fire; ¹⁵ His feet were like fine brass, as if refined in a furnace, and His voice as the sound of many waters; ¹⁶ He had in His right hand seven stars, out of His mouth went a sharp two-edged sword, and His countenance was like the sun shining in its strength.

His Garment Bright White / Robed in Righteousness – Though Our Sins Like Scarlet – White As Snow

His garment was bright white, to which you could say as white as snow, Jesus was sinless and so too someday we shall be robed exactly like this because of what Christ has done for us. We will be given a robe of righteousness. We will put on the robe of righteousness, perfect whiteness, purity. We will be out of these bodies and into our new bodies that are perfect and pure and our garments will be as such as here, white as snow. There's definitely a parallel happening here on this mount of transfiguration of how one day we too shall be transfigured. Oh, I love it. Though our sins were as scarlet. We shall be white as snow, and as our brother Paul tells us in Corinthians, we will be changed in the twinkling of an eye. Whether that's by rapture or last breath here on earth, and we shall be metamorphized is the word as a butterfly breaks forth from the cocoon into the beauty of the butterfly, so to shall we one day.

Isaiah 1:18 (NKJV) ¹⁸ “Come now, and let us reason together,” Says the LORD, “Though your sins are like scarlet, They shall be as white as snow; Though they are red like crimson, They shall be as wool.”

Isaiah 61:10 (NKJV) ¹⁰ I will greatly rejoice in the LORD, My soul shall be joyful in my God; For He has clothed me with the garments of salvation, He has covered me with the robe of righteousness, As a bridegroom decks himself with ornaments, And as a bride adorns herself with her jewels.

2 Corinthians 5:21 (NKJV) ²¹ For He made Him who knew no sin to be sin for us, that we might become the righteousness of God in Him.

2 Corinthians 5:17 (NKJV) ¹⁷ Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation; old things have passed away; behold, all things have become new.

1 Corinthians 15:51–53 (NKJV) ⁵¹ Behold, I tell you a mystery: We shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed—⁵² in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trumpet. For the trumpet will sound, and the dead will be raised incorruptible, and we shall be changed. ⁵³ For this corruptible must put on incorruption, and this mortal must put on immortality.

Hold on to that Promise / Remember that of the Person to Left/Right

Hold on to that promise. Remember that promise. You may need that promise more so right now than ever before.

- Maybe your past is barking out at you.
- Maybe a current struggle is screaming out to you in the world,
- the devil and the flesh there to pile on to remind you that your sins are as scarlet.

May you claim, celebrate, rejoice. White as snow? beloved, some day we will put off this old tent and step into a glorious body and be robed in righteousness as bright and as white as this one here as Jesus

And when we see each other, we'll be known, and we'll know. And every one of us will all be robed in righteousness. There will be no remembrance for the former things have passed away. There will be no sorrow,

nothing to remind us of the past. And this is beautiful, when people look upon us, there will be nothing for them to remember or know about us other than robed in righteousness.

And may we start now with that position of that person to your left or to your right, that they will be robed in righteousness, and the former things have passed away.

Live Life Backwards / Look in Mirror or Devil Reminds Me – I am Going to be Transformed

They are seeing the power and the glory, they are getting a taste of heaven right here on earth. Can I remind you? For it's been a long time since I have, the key to living life is to live life backwards. Live life backwards, who we shall be, who we're becoming, and when I look into the mirror or somebody reminds me of who I am right now in this body, when I live life backwards, I'll remember, yes, some day I'll be white as snow robed in righteousness;; and secondly what the power of living life backwards will be. It will keep my life in proper perspective. It will remind me of what's important today and it will, as we discussed in prophecy, it will set our priorities and it will call us the purity because we know soon and very soon we're going to see the King, and we know that soon and very soon our opportunity to win people to Christ, to witness for him the things that really matter are very short time left for us.

"Talked" to of the Power and the Passion (9:4)

Mark 9:4 And Elijah appeared to them with Moses, and they were talking with Jesus.

Moses Here = Grace / Numbers (Faithful) to Them / Faithful to Us – because He Can't Deny Himself

Here Moses is, in the Promised Land. God showed it to him, but he wasn't allowed to enter it because he struck the rock (a picture of Christ) twice, and misrepresented God before the people by getting angry with them, as if God was angry with them. God took him up on a high mount to show him the land, but didn't let him enter the land, but now here he is, entering into it. What a picture of grace, God's grace. He's always a God of grace. He's always a God of second chances. He's always a God who wants to take his people deeper. That's truly the picture of the book of numbers known as the wilderness wandering, but I called the title "Faithfulness of God" because God was continually faithful even in disobedience and rebellion, lack of faith and trust. Yet, God's still sustain the people and kept the people and loved on the people, gave them water from the Rock, gave them manna from heaven, their shoes and their clothes didn't wear out. He was still faithful even when they weren't, and there's a message for us is that even when we're faithless, he still faithful to us.

Numbers 20:10–12 (NKJV) ¹⁰ And Moses and Aaron gathered the assembly together before the rock; and he said to them, "Hear now, you rebels! Must we bring water for you out of this rock?" ¹¹ Then Moses lifted his hand and struck the rock twice with his rod; and water came out abundantly, and the congregation and their animals drank. ¹² Then the LORD spoke to Moses and Aaron, "Because you did not believe Me, to hallow Me in the eyes of the children of Israel, therefore you shall not bring this assembly into the land which I have given them."

Numbers 27:12–14 (NKJV) ¹² Now the LORD said to Moses: "Go up into this Mount Abarim, and see the land which I have given to the children of Israel. ¹³ And when you have seen it, you also shall be gathered to your people, as Aaron your brother was gathered. ¹⁴ For in the Wilderness of Zin, during the strife of the congregation, you rebelled against My command to hallow Me at the waters before their eyes." (These *are* the waters of Meribah, at Kadesh in the Wilderness of Zin.)

Numbers 1:1 (NKJV) ¹ Now the LORD spoke to Moses in the Wilderness of Sinai, in the tabernacle of meeting, on the first day of the second month, in the second year after they had come out of the land of Egypt, saying:

2 Timothy 2:13 (NKJV) ¹³ If we are faithless, He remains faithful; He cannot deny Himself.

May we Remember God Still Faithful to That Brother/Sister Too

By the way, when you're about to give up on other Christians, just remember the wilderness wandering, how God never gave up on them, so as we receive God's grace that he never gives up on us and that he's faithful. May We be faithful to that brother and sister who right now we look at and they're not doing so well. May we remember that God is still faithful to them.

Elijah Taken Up in Whirlwind

Now Elijah, you recalled he was raptured. He was taken into "Paradise" (as no one could enter heaven until after the cross) in a whirlwind, and he never died. And so an interesting passage in that it says, it's appointed to man to die once and then the judgment, well, two men did not die, Enoch and Elijah. Now Enoch is a picture of the church

and that he was raptured before the wrath of God come through the flood. Elijah, I believe he will face death. I believe that Elijah and Moses will be the two witnesses at the wall in the time of tribulation (Elijah for sure, a very good maybe for Moses). These two will be killed and these two will be resurrected before the eyes of man, and then they will ascend back into heaven. So interesting. As we look at these things and marvel at these things, Elijah, if you recalled called fire down from heaven and will see that at the mid tribulation point when they come to seize them, anyone that would, they will be consumed by fire.

2 Kings 2:11 (NKJV) ¹¹ Then it happened, as they continued on and talked, that suddenly a chariot of fire appeared with horses of fire, and separated the two of them; and Elijah went up by a whirlwind into heaven.

Revelation 11:3–6 (NKJV) ³ And I will give power to my two witnesses, and they will prophesy one thousand two hundred and sixty days, clothed in sackcloth. ⁴ These are the two olive trees and the two lampstands standing before the God of the earth. ⁵ And if anyone wants to harm them, fire proceeds from their mouth and devours their enemies. And if anyone wants to harm them, he must be killed in this manner. ⁶ These have power to shut heaven, so that no rain falls in the days of their prophecy; and they have power over waters to turn them to blood, and to strike the earth with all plagues, as often as they desire.

I think we live in the time where the time is up and we're just waiting for the last Gentle, the fullness of the gentiles, before the rapture

Moses (The Law) & Elijah the (Prophets)

So Elijah represents the prophets and Moses represents the law and we're told that Jesus fulfilled both the prophets and the law.

Jesus Could Have Walked into Heaven on His Perfect Keeping of Law

I believe at this moment, Jesus could have walked into heaven, been received "as a man" based on His perfection, the keeping of the entire Law of God. He was perfect and blameless. God's standard is perfection, and Jesus met the standard. Jesus, as fully man, proved that it could be done; He could have said I showed you that it can be done, not do it, and you too can walk into heaven based on your good works; but obviously, although He could, we couldn't, and we would be doomed and damned, and so rather than walking into heaven, He, descended the mountain, and kept His walk towards the cross.

James 2:10 (NKJV) ¹⁰ For whoever shall keep the whole law, and yet stumble in one point, he is guilty of all.

What did they Talk About?

So what did they talk about? Luke's account tells us they talked about Jesus' upcoming death upon the cross for the sins of world. Therefore, they talked about you. I believe there's an encouragement going on here of Moses (represents the Law) and Elijah (represents the prophets). Jesus would have had joy talking to somebody who "got it", haha, and understood what this all meant as His disciples just don't seem to be getting even after Jesus clearly tells them.

So the prophets and the Law that were written against us. And Jesus, the answer to release us through grace, the finished work of the cross. Jesus is encouraged for the joy that set before him. He knows it's worth it. It's worth it to deny self. Pick up his cross and follow the will of the father.

Luke 9:30–31 (NKJV) ³⁰ And behold, two men talked with Him, who were Moses and Elijah, ³¹ who appeared in glory and spoke of His decease which He was about to accomplish at Jerusalem.

Hebrews 12:1–2 (NKJV) ¹ Therefore we also, since we are surrounded by so great a cloud of witnesses, let us lay aside every weight, and the sin which so easily ensnares us, and let us run with endurance the race that is set before us, ² looking unto Jesus, the author and finisher of our faith, who for the joy that was set before Him endured the cross, despising the shame, and has sat down at the right hand of the throne of God.

Jesus had Just Said to Them – (Deny, Pickup, Follow) / Don't Faint / Because Jesus is Worth It

May God remind us today, it's worth it, to run this race with endurance, to not faint, to not give up, be that on ourselves or that person that needs a touch from the Lord (salvation, depression, ready to faint), that it is worth it. Continue on. Don't turn back. It's worth it for those who you're going to take with you and lead into glory and we will stand before him in glory to say, I finished my course. I finished the race that you've put before me because you were worth it, Lord.

Mark 8:34–38 (NKJV) ³⁴ When He had called the people to Himself, with His disciples also, He said to them, "Whoever desires to come after Me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross, and follow Me. ³⁵ For whoever desires to save his life will lose it, but whoever loses his life for My

sake and the gospel's will save it. ³⁶ For what will it profit a man if he gains the whole world, and loses his own soul? ³⁷ Or what will a man give in exchange for his soul? ³⁸ For whoever is ashamed of Me and My words in this adulterous and sinful generation, of him the Son of Man also will be ashamed when He comes in the glory of His Father with the holy angels."

We Shall Know & Be Known

First Corinthians 13 says, we will know as we are known, there won't be no need for introductions, will know each other and we'll know. Hey, there's King David. Oh Elijah, so glad to meet you. Moses loved the Red Sea thing. That was awesome. It was quite entertaining as you were running away from the snake the first time you cast your staff down. We will know and be known, and we see a picture of that here in that these disciples, they knew it was Moses and Elijah without an introduction dead hundreds of years, and yet they knew who they were. Quite interesting.

1 Corinthians 13:12 (NKJV) ¹² For now we see in a mirror, dimly, but then face to face. Now I know in part, but then I shall know just as I also am known.

Exodus 4:2-4 (NKJV) ² So the LORD said to him, "What is that in your hand?" He said, "A rod." ³ And He said, "Cast it on the ground." So he cast it on the ground, and it became a serpent; and Moses fled from it. ⁴ Then the LORD said to Moses, "Reach out your hand and take it by the tail" (and he reached out his hand and caught it, and it became a rod in his hand),

Let's Not Wait Until heaven to Get to Know Each Other

See, family knows each other, and I say, let's not wait to heaven. Let's get to know each other more. Here inside our fellowship, I pray that this would be a home for you, that you would have friends place to be able to share burdens and carry other people's burdens, to pray for one another, just to share hearts. And that's what Koinia" in the Greek literally means. It means oneness.

"Trouble" with Building Projects (9:5-6)

Mark 9:5 Then Peter answered and said to Jesus, "Rabbi, it is good for us to be here; and let us make three tabernacles: one for You, one for Moses, and one for Elijah"—

Mark 9:6 because he did not know what to say, for they were greatly afraid.

Build 3 Memorials / Lets Make a Ritual

Peter says, let's build three tabernacles. He doesn't know what to say, but he is saying something that is in his mindset and mentality and see, peter wants to memorialize this moment. He wants to turn it into a ritual. Something that people would come to and see and look and say, Oh wow, this is where it happened, and then people would start making pilgrimages there. People would start to think, this is where you can meet with God. This is where you can see the glory of God. This is where you'll hear the voice of God and then people will miss the whole point of entering into the presence of God by turning it in to some routine and ritual.

It happens all the time in the church. Probably one of the greatest things that has to be resisted and fought back is the turning of church into a routine, into a ritual, into here's the formula that this pastor used or here's a book I read or even we take things from the business world and the way things succeed in the successful business, and then we try to incorporate it into church and what happens is things turned into mechanical operations. They turn into rituals, they turn into dead experiences because you could have made the tabernacle, three of them, but the fact is that living bodies, the living beings that were there are no longer there. You have to seek the Lord a fresh and new every day for his presence to where he is. Yes, let things be done decently and in order, but not to the point that they're choked out.

Hear Him – Don't Forsake God is Supernatural

And I liked this also, a supernatural experience just happened and I'm the first to say, don't discount that God still does the supernatural. Don't be afraid of entering into God being a supernatural God. But here's the counter and here's the balance to it only in accordance to what the word of God says. So when you see people going off on strange things, as we talked about, one of the signs of the last days, the great deception, the falling away, people will be falling into so-called spiritual things, but they won't be anything remotely spiritual. They will be fully carnal, but plenty of churches people say, wasn't that such a spiritual experience, but the fact is none of it was in accordance with the word of God and when you see supernatural, look at it and check it in accordance with the

word, and if it's not in alignment with the word, then it wasn't from the Lord and be careful and fearful then what supernatural that would have been because it's very well could have been demonic.

No Rolling on the Ground

And speaking of that, do you notice when the presence of God, the spirit of God comes these disciples, they don't get bowled over, they don't fall down, they don't start rolling. They don't start running through a tunnel of fire thinking that their clothes are on fire. God comes on them as gentle as a dove. The last time we heard this is my beloved son, it was the spirit descending like a dove and so these extreme things that are going around the church and they always go around, holy laughter, drunk in the spirit getting high in the spirit and fallen over and rolling, convulsing; are nowhere in the word of God, you find it and nowhere. Do you see the experience of that happening to anybody in the scriptures? Especially here is clear as can be seen with these disciples. The presence of God falling upon them, over shadowing them, and yet they don't fall over and they don't start doing crazy stuff. Be on guard. So many things I never thought I would have to teach, but I need to because I can't even allow one person to be deceived by this, even if it takes up the time of the other 99. Sometimes we have to teach for the one because God cares about the one.

"Truth" Comes from the Word (9:7-8)

Mark 9:7 And a cloud came and overshadowed them; and a voice came out of the cloud, saying, "This is My beloved Son. Hear Him!"

Mark 9:8 Suddenly, when they had looked around, they saw no one anymore, but only Jesus with themselves.

The Father's Pleasure with the Son

Three times in the Gospel's God the Father speaks from heaven declaring His pleasure of Jesus:

Mark 1:9–11 (NKJV) ⁹ It came to pass in those days that Jesus came from Nazareth of Galilee, and was baptized by John in the Jordan. ¹⁰ And immediately, coming up from the water, He saw the heavens parting and the Spirit descending upon Him like a dove. ¹¹ Then a voice came from heaven, "You are My beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased."

Mark 9:7 (NKJV) ⁷ And a cloud came and overshadowed them; and a voice came out of the cloud, saying, "This is My beloved Son. Hear Him!"

John 12:27–33 (NKJV) ²⁷ "Now My soul is troubled, and what shall I say? 'Father, save Me from this hour'? But for this purpose I came to this hour. ²⁸ Father, glorify Your name." Then a voice came from heaven, saying, "I have both glorified it and will glorify it again." ²⁹ Therefore the people who stood by and heard it said that it had thundered. Others said, "An angel has spoken to Him." ³⁰ Jesus answered and said, "This voice did not come because of Me, but for your sake. ³¹ Now is the judgment of this world; now the ruler of this world will be cast out. ³² And I, if I am lifted up from the earth, will draw all peoples to Myself." ³³ This He said, signifying by what death He would die.

Perfect & Acceptable Lamb

The path to glory went through a rugged Roman cross. And before the cross. God, the Father speaks out loud to the Son, I'm well pleased with you. You're perfect in all of your ways. Before the priest would examine him as the spotless Lamb of God, the Father would declare it that he was perfect and pure and that the father in heaven was well pleased with him. You may proceed to be the lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world, and I'm well pleased that in your heart you would do it to come rescue and redeem them.

John 1:29 (NKJV) ²⁹ The next day John saw Jesus coming toward him, and said, "Behold! The Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world!"

Luke 23:4 (NKJV) ⁴ So Pilate said to the chief priests and the crowd, "I find no fault in this Man."

Cloud = Presence / Overshadowed – Jesus Radiate / You will Find Glory When You Press into the Presence

The cloud as we saw in the time of Moses cloud represents the presence of God himself and here the presence of God is here and he's going to speak. Now I want you to imagine a cloud overshadowing. I think what we would see is darkness and as the darkness surrounds them who radiates from them to them, but Jesus Christ, he's radiating glory and here's what you'll always find Christian. The more you press into the presence of God through the Word, through prayer, through worship, through getting up on the mountain and separating from all the busyness down in the world. Yes, even ministry because they'll return down the mountain and come right into the ministry and it's going to be busy, but here they are, up in the mountains, separated from it all, and the presence of the father overshadows them. And what you always find is Jesus radiates more glorious than ever before and anywhere else in our lives.

Numbers 9:15–16 (NKJV) ¹⁵ Now on the day that the tabernacle was raised up, the cloud covered the tabernacle, the tent of the Testimony; from evening until morning it was above the tabernacle like the appearance of fire. ¹⁶ So it was always: the cloud covered it by day, and the appearance of fire by night.

The Father Clarifies / Spend Time and God Clarifies

The father speaks and says, this is my beloved son in whom I'm well pleased. The last time that was said was back at the baptism and so there's a tying back to the Lamb of God who takes away the sins of the world as John the Baptist would say, and as they are confused about next statements about death and resurrection, these things tie themselves together for clarity, and of course that's what you always find as you spend time in the presence of God. Things that were clouded and overshadowed, become radiant and brilliant and brought into clarity and understanding.

Jesus Silent / Hear Him (Continual Verb Tense)

And I like it that Jesus says nothing immediately after this. So there's no confusion that what would have been said was the most important thing. Instead, what we have is the Father saying, hear him, and since it wasn't an immediate word spoken and so the word to hear him, is to hear his every word that he speaks and has spoken these words in red, tell us what to hear him say. The verb tense used here is a continual verb tense, it means to continually hear Him. Even Peter seeing this with his very eyes, when he writes of it, He still says that the Word is more sure than what he saw with his eyes.

2 Peter 1:16–21 (NKJV) ¹⁶ For we did not follow cunningly devised fables when we made known to you the power and coming of our Lord Jesus Christ, but were eyewitnesses of His majesty. ¹⁷ For He received from God the Father honor and glory when such a voice came to Him from the Excellent Glory: "This is My beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased." ¹⁸ And we heard this voice which came from heaven when we were with Him on the holy mountain. ¹⁹ And so we have the prophetic word confirmed, which you do well to heed as a light that shines in a dark place, until the day dawns and the morning star rises in your hearts; ²⁰ knowing this first, that no prophecy of Scripture is of any private interpretation, ²¹ for prophecy never came by the will of man, but holy men of God spoke as they were moved by the Holy Spirit.

Acts 17:11 (NKJV) ¹¹ These were more fair-minded than those in Thessalonica, in that they received the word with all readiness, and searched the Scriptures daily to find out whether these things were so.

2 Timothy 2:15 (NKJV) ¹⁵ Be diligent to present yourself approved to God, a worker who does not need to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth.

2 Timothy 3:13–17 (NKJV) ¹³ But evil men and impostors will grow worse and worse, deceiving and being deceived. ¹⁴ But you must continue in the things which you have learned and been assured of, knowing from whom you have learned them, ¹⁵ and that from childhood you have known the Holy Scriptures, which are able to make you wise for salvation through faith which is in Christ Jesus. ¹⁶ All Scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness, ¹⁷ that the man of God may be complete, thoroughly equipped for every good work.

The Whole Mountain Lite up

I have to believe the whole mountain was the glow with his glory. Even at 10,000 feet, there'd be no hiding that glory and I wonder those who were left down below. When the disciples came down, they said, was that what happened? We saw the mountain light up with the glow.

"Transfer" of Power and Passion (9:9-10)

Mark 9:9 Now as they came down from the mountain, He commanded them that they should tell no one the things they had seen, till the Son of Man had risen from the dead.

Mark 9:10 So they kept this word to themselves, questioning what the rising from the dead meant.

The Way to Glory – through the Cross only

The Way to glory is through one pathway only. It's not Moses and the law. It's not Elijah and the prophets. The path to glory is one way and one way only and it's though, the cross, the cross of Jesus Christ.

Clarity Comes with Resurrection

Only after the resurrection will everything be crystal clear and lots of people today, they see a baby born in a manger, they see the Christ on the cross, but until they get to the resurrection power, they can't fully understand what it all means. The virgin birth and the sinless sacrifice is not enough for salvation. The power is in the resurrection that he is alive. And I think sometimes we do focus too much on the birth and we do focus too much

on the cross can we say, and rightly so, a God who would step into this earth and the God who would die for me what love, but there's the other side that needs to continually be reminded in us, but the God who has the power to overcome sin and death, and I can live my life backwards knowing that I will see him face to face because of the resurrection power. And I know that I can overcome sin because the same power that rose Jesus from the grave lives in me and is available for me. And that's a promise to you today that God wants to remind you of

What it Like to See Him go Back to Carpenter's Body / We Can Choose back to Flesh or Changed by what Saw

Then as quick, in a moment Jesus steps back in to the body of a carpenter from Nazareth, God incarnate in human flesh. And what that must've been like in the eyes of the disciples, they see Jesus in full glory, then to become a man again; and I think there is something to be said there for each and every one of us is there are times that God shows us his glory. He shows us what the intent of our lives are to be and can be, and we get to make a choice to step into that glory and then follow that glory. Or we could step back and just become simple men and women again in the flesh. For these disciples, how it must have been to watch that, from glory back into the flesh again.

They will be willing to lay down their lives and when they tell others about what they have seen, others will get a taste of the glory in this world, in this flesh will have nothing to compare to that glory and you can taste that glory today because God shows us his glory. I believe he's speaking to many right here and now. I want you to see my glory. I want you to get a taste of this glory that will be eternal forevermore and that this world has nothing to offer you as he weaves the scriptures together to deny myself, to pick up that cross and follow him laying down of our flesh in this world, picking up the cross, the only pathway to glory and following him all the way into glory,..... it is simply glorious.

Jesus' Passion – Passed to these Disciples

The passion and power that Jesus had displayed here on the mount, will forever burn in these men, who will ignite many others too. They will never be the same.

Peter Never the Same

Peter will write of it because they have now been given a taste of the glory and what it is and can be, and they will live accordingly. When Peter would go to his martyr's death, it was this glory that would keep him from denied his Lord because he knew the glory was next for him. Church history says that he refused to be crucified right side up and he requested and was granted to be crucified upside down, and so sure was he in his faith and then attempt to break him down. They took his wife before him to the martyr's death first, and church history says that he said to his wife, remember thou the Lord for so sure was he of the Glory of the only begotten.

James Never be Same

James will be the first to see the glory. This will be in his mind as he is martyred for his faith, but he will not move off of his faith because he's seen this glory.

Acts 12:1–2 (NKJV) ¹ Now about that time Herod the king stretched out his hand to harass some from the church. ² Then he killed James the brother of John with the sword.

John Never be the Same

John was there and it's been said and noted that this account has been recorded in Matthew, Mark, and Luke, but not in the book of John, to which I say not exactly in specifics, but oh, exactly, in content, as he'll start the book of John with, we beheld his glory as the only begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth. John saw the glory and recorded the glory and on the island of Patmos when they would torture him, he would endure because he saw and tasted the glory.

Moses Never the Same

Moses said to the Lord, show me Your glory. And as that Third Day song so rightly puts it, and I know I'll never be the same, Moses was never the same again after he seen the glory of God. Being president of over 2-3 million people, being the first president of the nation, if you would, meant nothing to him, the world and all that it had to offer him was nothing. Once Moses saw the glory of God, he never wanted to leave the mountain top. God had to send him down. Moses could have stayed up there forever, but when he came down, he was never the same. And I

pray that we rekindle that glory in our life, that remembrance of who he is, the glory that we taste, maybe tasted and lost sight of the today. The Lord would rekindle that in each and every one of our lives.

Exodus 33:18-23 (NKJV) ¹⁸ And he said, "Please, show me Your glory." ¹⁹ Then He said, "I will make all My goodness pass before you, and I will proclaim the name of the LORD before you. I will be gracious to whom I will be gracious, and I will have compassion on whom I will have compassion." ²⁰ But He said, "You cannot see My face; for no man shall see Me, and live." ²¹ And the LORD said, "Here is a place by Me, and you shall stand on the rock. ²² So it shall be, while My glory passes by, that I will put you in the cleft of the rock, and will cover you with My hand while I pass by. ²³ Then I will take away My hand, and you shall see My back; but My face shall not be seen."

"Thinking" on the Spiritual Things (9:11-13)

Mark 9:11 And they asked Him, saying, "Why do the scribes say that Elijah must come first?"

Mark 9:12 Then He answered and told them, "Indeed, Elijah is coming first and restores all things. And how is it written concerning the Son of Man, that He must suffer many things and be treated with contempt?"

Mark 9:13 But I say to you that Elijah has also come, and they did to him whatever they wished, as it is written of him."

Elijah Must Come (Sovereignty & Foreknowledge of God)

Elijah must come first and this is an amazing point where we can get ourselves wrapped around with sovereignty of God and foreknowledge of God. But if they would have received the witness of John the Baptist for the nation of Israel, then the kingdom could have been restored right then and there, but they rejected him. And therefore, Elijah does still have to come and that will be during the tribulation period. It is the long way and the hard way to come to Jesus. And so too, it is with us. So many times we can come the long way and the hard way rather than accepting what God has sent

Malachi 4:4-6 (NKJV) ⁴ "Remember the Law of Moses, My servant, Which I commanded him in Horeb for all Israel, With the statutes and judgments. ⁵ Behold, I will send you Elijah the prophet Before the coming of the great and dreadful day of the LORD. ⁶ And he will turn The hearts of the fathers to the children, And the hearts of the children to their fathers, Lest I come and strike the earth with a curse."

Revelation 11:3-6 (NKJV) ³ And I will give power to my two witnesses, and they will prophesy one thousand two hundred and sixty days, clothed in sackcloth. ⁴ These are the two olive trees and the two lampstands standing before the God of the earth. ⁵ And if anyone wants to harm them, fire proceeds from their mouth and devours their enemies. And if anyone wants to harm them, he must be killed in this manner. ⁶ These have power to shut heaven, so that no rain falls in the days of their prophecy; and they have power over waters to turn them to blood, and to strike the earth with all plagues, as often as they desire.

The Disciples are Thinking

I like their question, it is a really deep question when you get down to it. Even all the post-knowledge we have today, the whole scriptures, we struggle to fully and clearly explain this question regarding Elijah must come first. The final take away for us today is this, when you spend time up on the mount, and you come into seeing the glory, you will start to think and ponder on the spiritual things of the Lord. So the climb is always worth it, and we will pick up on this theme next week when Jesus says, kind like this can only come out with much fasting and prayer.

Mark 9:29 So He said to them, "This kind can come out by nothing but prayer and fasting."

Conclusion

Many take away from this mountaintop experience; how then shall we respond, what shall we ask of the Lord, what is it that we want to ask the Lord based on what we just saw and heard?

Outline Mark 9:1-13 (A "True" Mountaintop Experience):

- "Transcending" for Prayer (9:1-2)
- "Transfiguration" of the Power and the Glory (9:2-3)
- "Talked" to of the Power and the Passion (9:4)
- "Trouble" with Building Projects (9:5-6)
- "Truth" Comes from the Word (9:7-8)
- "Transfer" of Power and Passion (9:9-10)
- "Thinking" on the Spiritual Things (9:11-13)

Prayer – Boldly Ask Your God

The Word of God is Living and Powerful, and is ready, and will do a mighty work in our lives.

Hebrews 4:12 (NKJV) ¹² For the word of God is living and powerful, and sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing even to the division of soul and spirit, and of joints and marrow, and is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart.

In Every Study

- Who Is God? (How Great is He?)
- What Does He Think of Me? (How Wonderful Are His Thoughts Towards Me?)
- What Does He Want Me to Do?
- What Can I Boldly Request of Him?
- What Do I Need to Be on Guard of When I Leave Here Today?

Boldly come to the throne of grace, ask God to reveal Himself in a mighty way to you, and to do I might work in you, and through you.

Hebrews 4:16 (NKJV) ¹⁶ Let us therefore come boldly to the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy and find grace to help in time of need.

There is a Prayer Team Available to Pray with and for You

End of Study

Mark 9:14-29
Jesus in the Valley

Recap

We finished last week in verse 13, the story of the Mount of Transfiguration, where Jesus took three of His disciples (Peter, James, and John) up to the mountain to pray, and while there Jesus was transfigured, metamorphosed, His glory as God burst forth from His carpenter's body, and there Moses and Elijah appear, and they discuss Jesus' soon death in Jerusalem. And as I say, anytime Jesus discusses the cross, He is talking about you, for His love for you was why He came, and why He suffered, and why He died. He could have entered heaven on His own accomplished works, but stayed to do a work we couldn't accomplish, to pay the price for sin, for the wages of sin is death.

Luke 9:30-31 (NKJV) ³⁰ And behold, two men talked with Him, who were Moses and Elijah, ³¹ who appeared in glory and spoke of His decease which He was about to accomplish at Jerusalem.

Romans 6:23 (NKJV) ²³ For the wages of sin is death, but the gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord.

Hebrews 12:2 (NKJV) ² looking unto Jesus, the author and finisher of our faith, who for the joy that was set before Him endured the cross, despising the shame, and has sat down at the right hand of the throne of God.

Let's Celebrate Communion:

1 Corinthians 11:23-26 (NKJV) ²³ For I received from the Lord that which I also delivered to you: that the Lord Jesus on the same night in which He was betrayed took bread; ²⁴ and when He had given thanks, He broke it and said, "Take, eat; this is My body which is broken for you; do this in remembrance of Me." ²⁵ In the same manner He also took the cup after supper, saying, "This cup is the new covenant in My blood. This do, as often as you drink it, in remembrance of Me." ²⁶ For as often as you eat this bread and drink this cup, you proclaim the Lord's death till He comes.

Thank You Jesus

We praise You Jesus, You are so good to us, we thank You for the cross, and the cleansing of our sin, and now being robed in righteousness, as the perfect and spotless bride.

Today

So we pick up our study through the Book of Mark here in verse 14, as Jesus and His disciples come down from the mountain, right back into a valley, the valley of spiritual warfare. Last study we saw Jesus on the mountain top, and today we see Jesus in the valley, and just as on the mountain top, we still see His glory in the valley. How important for us too, to be the same person in the valley, as we are on the mountain top.

A Boy is Healed – But Only Through Much Prayer and Fasting (9:14-29)

Mark 9:14-29 (NKJV) ¹⁴ And when He came to the disciples, He saw a great multitude around them, and scribes disputing with them. ¹⁵ Immediately, when they saw Him, all the people were greatly amazed, and running to Him, greeted Him. ¹⁶ And He asked the scribes, "What are you discussing with them?" ¹⁷ Then one of the crowd answered and said, "Teacher, I brought You my son, who has a mute spirit. ¹⁸ And wherever it seizes him, it throws him down; he foams at the mouth, gnashes his teeth, and becomes rigid. So I spoke to Your disciples, that they should cast it out, but they could not." ¹⁹ He answered him and said, "O faithless generation, how long shall I be with you? How long shall I bear with you? Bring him to Me." ²⁰ Then they brought him to Him. And when he saw Him, immediately the spirit convulsed him, and he fell on the ground and wallowed, foaming at the mouth. ²¹ So He asked his father, "How long has this been happening to him?" And he said, "From childhood. ²² And often he has thrown him both into the fire and into the water to destroy him. But if You can do anything, have compassion on us and help us." ²³ Jesus said to him, "If you can believe, all things are possible to him who believes." ²⁴ Immediately the father of the child cried out and said with tears, "Lord, I believe; help my unbelief!" ²⁵ When Jesus saw that the people came running together, He rebuked the unclean spirit, saying to it, "Deaf and dumb spirit, I command you, come out of him and enter him no more!" ²⁶ Then the spirit cried out, convulsed him greatly, and came out of him. And he became as one dead, so that many said, "He is dead." ²⁷ But Jesus took him by the hand and lifted him up, and he arose. ²⁸ And when He had come into the house, His disciples asked Him privately, "Why could we not cast it out?" ²⁹ So He said to them, "This kind can come out by nothing but prayer and fasting."

Cross References

The cross-references for this account are Matthew 17:14-21, and Luke chapter 9:37-47.

Why Listen

What a mighty word the Lord has for someone today, someone in need, someone who feels they have nothing left, someone who may feel as this defeated father feels, may you find comfort and power in the passage today.

Outline Mark 9:14-29:

- A “Dispute” with the disciples and the scribes (9:14-16)
 - Critics will always quench your focus and fire
- The “Details” of what that dispute was about. (9:17-18)
 - Share your heart with Jesus for He cares about every detail of your life
- The “Declaration” by Jesus of a faithless generation. (9:19)
 - Jesus declares so He might deliver not rebuke
- A “Defeated” father pleads. (9:20-24)
 - Bring your child, bring that issue to Jesus – and Believe Jesus can do Something about It
- The “Delivery” of the boy by the God of compassion. (9:25-27)
 - God loves to delivery so to lift us before the world as His trophy of grace
- The “Disciples” are disciplined. (9:28-29)
 - God gives us a power promise (through the discipline of fasting and prayer)

What is Your Need Today?

What along this outline and list may you find yourself in need of prayer of today?

Prayer – Boldly Ask Your God

The Word of God is Living and Powerful, and is ready, and will do a mighty work in our lives.

Hebrews 4:12 (NKJV) ¹² For the word of God is living and powerful, and sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing even to the division of soul and spirit, and of joints and marrow, and is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart.

In Every Study

- Who Is God? (How Great is He?)
- What Does He Think of Me? (How Wonderful Are His Thoughts Towards Me?)
- What Does He Want Me to Do?
- What Can I Boldly Request of Him?
- What Do I Need to Be on Guard of When I Leave Here Today?

Boldly come to the throne of grace, ask God to reveal Himself in a mighty way to you, and to do I might work in you, and through you.

Hebrews 4:16 (NKJV) ¹⁶ Let us therefore come boldly to the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy and find grace to help in time of need.

A “Dispute” with the disciples and the scribes (9:14-16)

- Critics will always quench your focus and fire

Mark 9:14 And when He came to the disciples, He saw a great multitude around them, and scribes disputing with them.

Debate = Quench / Scribes Don’t Care about Boys Suffering

Verse 14. Here these disciples are, they’re debating with the scribes. As we have read the context of the story, they are debating over this boy with the unclean spirit, demonic spirit, that was torturing and tormenting this young boy.

Like these scribes, you can read scripture, you can quote scripture, you can win every theological debate all day long and yet still not have a changed heart and still not have the heart of God. These scribes were master of the word of God but had no linking to the of the heart of God behind his word.

Beloved if you want to quench your faith, surround yourself with a bunch of critics. Surround yourself with a bunch of people who have no passion or compassion for the hurting and the lost. These scribes were disputing how come you couldn't heal them. These scribes are probably gloating in the failure of them not to heal. But these scribes could care less about this boy and about this father, about the burn scars upon his body and the miserable life that they have been living.

And here are the disciples, drawn in and dragged in, totally losing the focus of what is before them, this boy in need. Instead they are drawn into the debate and the dispute with this critics and quenchers.

If you want to quench your faith and the move of the spirit in your life, surround yourself with the critics who criticize and come with scriptural challenges, debates. And you know what? That doesn't just have to be among people who don't believe, but among believers themselves. They would rather debate, even argue, scripture rather than go and give themselves to someone who is hurting, someone who is need, someone who is lost and dying. And we need to be careful that they don't draw us in, so that we ourselves lose the focus on what our calling is, and what matters most.

Mark 9:15 Immediately, when they saw Him, all the people were greatly amazed, and running to Him, greeted Him.

Mark 9:16 And He asked the scribes, "What are you discussing with them?"

Whatcha Talking About – Papa Bear Comes Out

Verse 16. Jesus immediately says, "What are you guys talking about?". He doesn't ask the disciples that He has now walked with for close to three years, has a close relationship with, the kind that you can say what are they saying to you, instead He asks these scribes what are you talking about with my boys. He comes as the papa bear as these scribes are challenging his disciples. He comes and he's not gonna let anybody mess with his kids, and he comes and stands before these scribes as the papa bear.

Jesus Can Challenge a Person Better than We Can

I think there's a word to be said there also in that Jesus can challenge that brother or sister of yours much better than you can, and sometimes we come, and we challenge that disciple, that follower of Christ and really we're getting in a place that God hasn't called us to. He can challenge them better. He's gonna challenge them better. He's gonna use this as a learning experience for them as he grows them and disciples them, but just a word for us in that when we see a brother or sister that may need some challenging, the first place is to go before the Lord in prayer and lift them up before the Lord and intercede for them before the Lord, and do that for some period of time and then if God speaks to you, to be an instrument that he's gonna use in his hand. Then you would go. Many people, they go and as accurate as they may be from a scriptural position, they're not going in the heart of God. Jesus, he doesn't like someone rising up and challenging his disciples and he's gonna stand up for him.

The "Details" of what that dispute was about. (9:17-18)

- **Share your heart with Jesus for He cares about every detail of your life**

Mark 9:17 Then one of the crowd answered and said, "Teacher, I brought You my son, who has a mute spirit.

Mark 9:18 And wherever it seizes him, it throws him down; he foams at the mouth, gnashes his teeth, and becomes rigid. So I spoke to Your disciples, that they should cast it out, but they could not."

Dad Doesn't Wait for Answer – Doesn't Care about Debate / His Son is Sick

Verse 17. Dad jumps in before the scribes start talking. He's not gonna wait around for the scribes and the disciples to explain what they were disputing and arguing over, because he really doesn't care about doctrine and theology, and who would when their son is sick and Jesus the healer is present to do something about him. So he doesn't give them chance to talk. He jumps in and does the talking, looking and hoping for Jesus to engage.

It's Mute spirit / Father Identifies it

Verse 17. The father identifies this as a mute spirit. He recognizes what it is.

Father Was Looking for Jesus First / How Far Did they Walk – What Talk About

Verse 17. This father was looking for Jesus first but He was until up on mountain praying. I wonder how far they walked, we don't know where they had come from. But the dad heard Jesus was near, and made haste to find him. I wonder their thoughts as they walked. But what did they talk about as they walked? (But only the father could communicate). Maybe the father said, son there's a healer, and there's hope. The son thinking, wishing to say to the father, "Dad, we put our hope in so many things before. Doctors who ripped us off. Prayer, chants, and whatever it may be." Can you imagine the son, "Dad, I just want to be healed. I just want to be like the other kids." How heartbreaking.

Father God – Understands Heart of Father

Verse 17. God the Father is a father, and therefore, because of him being a father he can understand the heart of a father and here he is, ministering to this father as much as he is to this son.

Put Yourself in the Story

Verse 20. There's always a power as we read these stories to put ourselves into the story. Put yourself into the story.

- Consider the father desperate and heartbroken as he watches his son get thrown into the fire, as he watches his son get thrown into the water to be drowned. Mom and dad will have no rest. They'll always be looking and being on guard. They'll never be able to just kick back because there will always be, "What if he throws himself into the fire?" How many times did they eat cold food? How many times did they live in a cold room because they said it just wasn't worth the risk of building a fire? Imagine the heartbreak of a father and a mother looking at all the scars and disfiguration of their son because of all the times his skin touched those hot coals. How many times the father became a lifeguard and jumped in the water to pull his son out. This dad is heartbroken. He is desperate. We have no idea how long he traveled to find Jesus but he was at the end where he knew there was no other hope except Jesus.
- Luke tells us that the father says, this is his only son and the form of the word used here puts this boy very young, four or five years old. It's his baby love of his life.
- How about this child? What was his life like? You think he had friends? Or you think he was the brunt of the jokes of the kids in the neighborhood? Think he didn't live with the consciousness, I could be playing, I could be one of the kids and then in a split second I could fall down and I could convulse, foam at the mouth? And my friends would freak out, they wouldn't know what to do. They'll distance themselves or they'll make fun of him. How cruel kids can be. What was this child's like?
- We're told that the boy can't speak, but he can scream. Imagine that, imagine that being a dad can't communicate with the boy. If there any communication is screams, screams of pain. It'd be painful for both of them. Imagine the boy. I can't communicate. All I can do is scream screams of pain for both of them.
- It was very common in this day for those experience these type of things, and even as it is today, that because of what was happening, the family becomes ostracized and they say it's a judgment of God upon you. And their world gets smaller and smaller because people distance themselves more and more.
- And how about these disciples? Hey, we did it before. Now, what? They try, they step in, and they can't. And they come to a ... I'm not as mighty. I'm not all that I thought I was. I thought I was this mighty man of God, but I've been humbled down to prove that I am not so.

Put Yourself in That's Person Story

Put yourself in the story of other people's lives and it will change your life.

- Put yourself in the story of that single mother and you'll have a whole new compassion for her.
- Put yourself in the story of that family with special needs and your heart will move for them.
- Put yourself in the story of that person who is struggling with depression or an addiction and your heart will be drawn to them.

- Put yourself in the story of that person who is deceived by the lie of the devil and is on their way to eternal hell, and your heart for evangelism will change greatly.

Putting yourself into the story will lead us to compassion and our hearts then we'll be joined and knitted together to their heart because they will become part of our hearts. So the power of putting ourselves into the story.

The Father Gives the Details to Jesus

The father is giving Jesus all the details, he is sharing his burden and his pain with Jesus, and as he does Jesus keeps asking for more information, because He wants the details. He is God, He knows the details, so why is He asking for details, because with the details of the pain, this father is sharing his pain with Jesus, and here we see Jesus wanting to share the burden and the pain. Oh Christian cast all your care upon Him for He cares for you.

1 Peter 5:7 (NKJV) ⁷ casting all your care upon Him, for He cares for you.

Disciples Tried But Couldn't Deliver

Verse 18 and 28 shows us that the disciples tried but they could not deliver.

Disciples Tried – Lost Power / We Run on Contact Principal

But give disciples credit. They tried. They had been given power back in Mark 6, but could not deliver. What happened? They lost contact with the power source.

Mark 6:13 (NKJV) ¹³ And they cast out many demons, and anointed with oil many who were sick, and healed them.

Christianity runs on the contact principal, not the reserve. It's like the trolley cars in the city. They'd have to be continually attached to that electric power cable above them that keeps the trolley car in continual contact with the trolley. So different from the car, which we fill up the tank and we run it till it's empty and we fill it up again.

Jesus Takes Ownership of His Disciples

Verse 18. It says, your disciples, and Jesus doesn't dismiss that. Jesus takes ownership even when we're not doing well. He has full faith in them that eventually when He is done with His work of them, they are going to turn the world upside down. So too with you.

The "Declaration" by Jesus of a faithless generation. (9:19)

- **Jesus declares so He might delivery not rebuke**

Mark 9:19 He answered him and said, "O faithless generation, how long shall I be with you? How long shall I bear with you? Bring him to Me."

Parents Bring Your Child to Jesus

Verse 19. Jesus said, "bring him to me." And parents, do you hear that invitation today? Bring your child to Jesus. Whatever the state is. Bring your child to Jesus. Bring your child to Jesus today, right here and now. And say, "Lord, I bring my child to you." Whatever that situation is with your child, good or bad. Your child's doing good, great. Bring them to Jesus. Say, "Lord, hold onto my child." Your child's not doing well, maybe deceived. Maybe prodigal. Maybe involved in things they shouldn't be. Bring them to Jesus. And say, "Lord, I can't. But you can. I'm going to lay my child before you and ask the God of compassion to touch my child."

Perfect Doctrine/Theology Couldn't Change

Verse 16 and 19. Certain things you can talk about, debate, reason and be absolutely theologically correct but it won't matter, and it won't change anything apart from prayer and fasting as we see. They were theologically and doctrinally correct, but they couldn't change this situation. They needed Jesus

Jesus Declares – so He Might Delivery

Jesus declares this weakness of faith, not to rebuke, but so He might deliver. He wants to be asked, so He can do something about as we will see. And so too and true it is in your life too. Let's read on.

A “Defeated” father pleads. (9:20-24)

Bring your child, bring that issue to Jesus – and Believe Jesus can do Something About It

Mark 9:20 Then they brought him to Him. And when he saw Him, immediately the spirit convulsed him, and he fell on the ground and wallowed, foaming at the mouth.

Difference Between Unclean Spirit and Illness

Verse 20. It clearly says this boy has an unclean spirit which we will talk more of, so let us differentiate the difference of a physical ailment as a result of a fallen world as compared to an unclean spirit. Maybe your translation may say the boy has epilepsy but that is just a term that was used to describe the falling down and convulsing, rather a unfortunate translation considering today many do suffer with the physical ailment of epilepsy or seizures. May we be sensitive and may we be compassionate to those who suffer these things and the hardship that they endure through them and because of them. When I was in Russia they very much ... the early church as the gospel was coming in when I was there in '93, they thought epilepsy or someone who was having seizures was demon possessed and quite a different story here.

Demons will Bow

Verse 20. The demons will bow just as it says in Philippians 2, and I say for us there's a place that we just tag out and let the Lord come in and take over and wrestle. As the scripture says, when he rolls up his sleeves and shows the bare arm of the Lord, anyone who is in the way should get out of the way. So tag out in these places and let the Lord come and do the wrestling for you.

Philippians 2:9–11 (NKJV) ⁹ Therefore God also has highly exalted Him and given Him the name which is above every name, ¹⁰ that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of those in heaven, and of those on earth, and of those under the earth, ¹¹ and that every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father.

Mark 9:21 So He asked his father, “How long has this been happening to him?” And he said, “From childhood.

The Portal

Verse 21. The portal to this demonic realm of this unclean spirit was opened somehow. I don't think these things happen by chance even in the darkest place. I don't think that they happen by chance. There's a portal that was opened somehow and based on this boy's age, it very well could be because of the father was dabbling in something. The mother was dabbling in something and it opened up a portal for the demonic realm that was invited in and now the consequences of that.

There's something that maybe we don't live in that dark realm as is exposed in some of the other countries that practice some dark spiritual invitations, but I think we should, as parents, guard ourselves on what could be an influence. Maybe not the influence that's gonna become a demon possession but the influence that could come into an opening to a dark realm. So as parents, we should be asking what are you watching? We should be checking what websites they go to. We should be seeing what the parental controls are on the remote, on the iPad, whatever it may be, and we need to be the ones who guard them from any influence that could take them away and take them into a place that's not gonna be of the Lord.

Mark 9:22 And often he has thrown him both into the fire and into the water to destroy him. But if You can do anything, have compassion on us and help us.”

Goal of Devil to Destroy

Verse 22. Here we always see the goal of the evil one and it's to destroy anything that bears the image of God, and man was created in his image, and here this demon is trying to destroy that image.

Plural - We

Verse 22. It says plural, we. The dad is one with his son. Maybe even the mother's there but she's not written down in this account, but we see a dad talking as a we because when a son hurts, the dad hurts. Here we see that no one suffers alone.

Compassion Can't Walk By

Verse 22. Here again, as we always see, compassion can't walk by. The Lord's full of compassion and he has to stop, to which I just ask the Lord, "Please make me that man of compassion. Lord, give me your compassion." And he'll say, "I will." And you'll say, "How?" And say, "Prayer and fasting. Come away with me."

Mark 9:23 Jesus said to him, "If you can believe, all things are possible to him who believes."

Luke 1 – With God All Things Possible

Verse 23. Luke 1 says, "With God nothing will be impossible." May we remember that always and claim that as a promise.

Luke 1:37 (NKJV) ³⁷ For with God nothing will be impossible."

Mark 9:24 Immediately the father of the child cried out and said with tears, "Lord, I believe; help my unbelief!"

Father Cries because Can't Change Situation

Verse 24. His father has tears because he's saying, "I can't change this. I've tried. I've begged I've pleaded. And I've failed. I failed as a father. I failed my son and I have to sit by and watch." And yes, maybe, it was him who opened the portal and he has to live with what he brought into the influence of his family and his home and his son, his pain, because of his sins. He's a broken man.

What a Great Prayer / There is no Strength in Me

Verse 24. He says, "I believe. Help my unbelief." What a great prayer. I think there's a time where I often ... I'm beaten down. I'm worn down. I'm worn out. The situation seems hopeless and I just can't will myself into overcome. I'm just in this place where I'm like, "Lord, if you don't help me, I can't. There's no strength left in me. I am weak and I am beaten down, and as much as I want to try to psyche myself up and hype myself, nothing's gonna change because my heart is just beaten down, dry and empty and it displays where I'm in faith at this point."

Verb Tense – Continual Unbelief

The verb tense here is continually help my unbelief and we can all relate to that, I believe, but I continually find myself falling into unbelief.

I Put Pressure on Me to Move Mountains

Verse 27. You know, here's what I find and maybe you do too. I can be like this father in the one sense I believe, but help my unbelief. And there's a place where I put the pressure of faith upon myself. If I believe, if I have faith, if I call out in faith, but when I look at myself, as I've said, there's a place that I can come and just go I don't have anything left in me to believe anymore. I'm prayed out, I'm emptied out and everything I've been doing in this situation is a continual failure. And if you see what I'm saying is I put the faith upon myself that if I had more faith, the situation would change. But here's the thing, I'm not the one who moves mountains, nor heals the sick, nor raises the dead, nor convinces a sinner to repentance. It is God and God only who moves mountains, heals the sick, raises the dead and convinces the person to repent.

Faith is – God I Believe You Can

Here's what faith is. Faith is saying God, I believe you can. Unbelief is not believing he can, whether it's because he doesn't care or his distance, won't because of me. That is what unbelief is, that I think it's something to do with me. Faith is simply saying, believing, God, I believe you can. God I believe you can if it's your will. Faith is submitting to his will. Faith is believing that he can. And now it doesn't become about me moving mountains. The pressure isn't on me. For if it is, I'll quit. I'll quit every time if I think it comes down to me. But if I come to I believe you can bring my prodigal home. Not only that you can, but you want to. And you know what? When you say, I believe you can, just the simplicity I believe you can, you know what you do? You begin to pray and you begin to

pray in power. And rather than defeat and hopelessness, you find yourself in hope and power. I believe you can heal. I believe you can change. I believe it isn't helpless and hope goes along way in prayer.

Lord, there's nothing left I can do to make this rent, but I believe you can make this rent. And you will believe that his favor is upon you.

Mustard seeds have a DNA code in them when watered with faith, if you will, the grain sprouts and grows and grows. And as faith waters it it grows and it grows. Faith wants to grow. It just needs to be watered with I believe. Lord, I believe you can do this thing.

And you need to come, and maybe this a word for someone here today. Lord I believe you can change me. I need change. It seems like I'll never change. And you simply say Lord, I believe you can change me. And Lord, please change me. And I will rejoice in advance that you'll change me.

Hands Ready to Receive

1st Timothy 2:8 requires our prayer to be without doubt, lifting up hands as a position of humbleness and a position of receiving. I can't, but you can. I lift my hands to receive what you want to put into my hands.

1 Timothy 2:8 (NKJV) ⁸ I desire therefore that the men pray everywhere, lifting up holy hands, without wrath and doubting;

Faith Comes by Hearing

Verse 24. I can ask for increase in faith. One way is through the word. For faith comes by hearing, and hearing by the word of God. And an increase in faith comes when we realize who God is. That he's compassionate, he's merciful, he's long suffering, he's loving. And then, when we come to, "And what does he think of me?" We know that he thinks so much of me to give his only begotten Son for me. To transcend time and go to a hill outside of Jerusalem and be crucified and when I look at who God is and what does he think about me, they will shape my prayers, because I will have faith that God is for me. And if God is for me, who can be against me? And with God all things are possible.

Romans 10:17 (NKJV) ¹⁷ So then faith comes by hearing, and hearing by the word of God.

If you think you are a number, or he is a distant God, or not a God of compassion, or an angry God, a God who's upset with you because you didn't read three chapters today and pray and feed the hungry or whatever it may be. Or maybe your feelings that you failed this week. You fill in the blank. Those things will keep you from prayer. But if you come back to a merciful, compassionate, loving God as we can read in this story, somehow this portal was opened by this father, and yet Jesus doesn't give him a lecture, and Jesus doesn't say, "You brought this upon yourself." Jesus stops. Jesus touches. Jesus has compassion. And Jesus loves.

If you believe that he loves you, and that he's precious, he finds you precious, that'll change the way you prayer, when you know the nature of God. And hence why we study this Bible chapter by chapter and verse by verse.

The "Delivery" of the boy by the God of compassion. (9:25-27)

- **God loves to deliver so to lift us before the world as His trophy of grace**

Mark 9:25 When Jesus saw that the people came running together, He rebuked the unclean spirit, saying to it, "Deaf and dumb spirit, I command you, come out of him and enter him no more!"

No Thrill Show

Verse 25. More crowds are coming. Jesus is not going to make this boy a side show or a thrill show for the seekers and the look-and-see. He has compassion and he doesn't want this boy to be a topic of ridicule among his peers. He doesn't want him to be the center of attention and Jesus heals before the mass of the crowd comes.

Demons Must Bow

Verse 25. Jesus says, "Come no more" and the demons must obey, because Philippians tells us every knee will bow and every tongue will confess, and as we say, we wrestle not against flesh and blood but against principalities in

power. It's best to tag out and let Jesus be your partner, your wrestling tag team partner, because he's still undefeated.

Mark 9:26 Then the spirit cried out, convulsed him greatly, and came out of him. And he became as one dead, so that many said, "He is dead."

Mark 9:27 But Jesus took him by the hand and lifted him up, and he arose.

Jesus Lifts him As a Trophy of Grace

Verse 27. Jesus lifts him up as a trophy of grace, of his power to deliver and his compassion to do so, and so he does with each and every one of us and he displays us to the world and goes, "Look at my trophies that are dear to me."

The "Disciples" are disciplined. (9:28-29)

God gives us a power promise (through the discipline of fasting and prayer)

Mark 9:28 And when He had come into the house, His disciples asked Him privately, "Why could we not cast it out?"

Mark 9:29 So He said to them, "This kind can come out by nothing but prayer and fasting."

The 9 Disciples Are Cruising

Verse 29. I think when Jesus is up on the mountain with Peter, James, and John, I can tell you what's not going on is prayer and fasting. Because if it was, the two days that they were up on the mount Jesus wouldn't have said to them, "Without much prayer and fasting." Because they would have said, "We were already praying and fasting while you were up on the mountain." I think there's no prayer and fasting going on with these disciples who were left behind. They may have found themselves, "Jesus isn't coming back anytime soon." Or, "Jesus isn't around, nothing's going to come to be. There's not going to be some great ministry before us, because Jesus is up on the mountain, so let's just kick back for a couple days and rest."

- I like what Leonard Ravenhill, great ministry of prayer and fasting, and he would say, "Many would come to me as I got in my later years asking for me to lay hands on them to transfer my mantle, my anointing, so-called onto them. As if that could possibly be done." But he goes onto say, "Many want my mantle and my anointing, but nobody wants my sackcloth and ashes." As he lived such a life of prayer and fasting knowing there was only one source for power. And it was through prayer and fasting. Separating unto the Lord.

They Disputed – Rather than Prayed / Such a Picture – We Talk About Rather than Talk To

Remember how they were disputing with the scribes? Here is a classical case and point; so often, way too often, we can spend more time talking about something, rather than praying about it. We can spend more time complaining about something or someone, than we do praying about it. We can gather in a crowd, sit around and point at how terrible something is, hours, days, that go into weeks and months, and not spend a "real" moment praying and fasting over it. People love to tear down pastors, ministries, servants, and churches, feel self-righteous about it, but not bend one knee for them, nor shed one tear asking the Lord to work in them. So often, and way too often, the church and its people can complain about a world doing sinful things, rebelling against God and His Word, hours and hours, yet never bend a knee, lift a prayer, asking the God who "can", to do something about it. These disciples should have been praying, instead they were disputing.

We Know Not When Enemy Will Strike

As a father, I have no other recourse than to maintain a life of prayer and fasting because I never know when the Enemy will strike one of my kids. He has; he does; he will. And as a believer, I have no other recourse than to maintain a close walk with God because I never know the next conversation that will open up before me at the grocery store or in the park with a neighbor that will impact them for eternity

Not a Program – Draws us Close to the Person of Jesus Christ

Please note it's not a program. Fasting and prayer is not a program, but it is a great discipline, that draws us closer to the person of Jesus Christ. But don't turn it into a ritual or routine. Verse 14, the scribes, they were the masters of the letter of the law. And they knew the word of God and they could master it to every last detail.

Can't be a Hobby

Verse 29. Prayer can't be a hobby if there's truly a spiritual warfare going on.

F-A-S-T-I-N-G

Here's an acronym for fasting to consider.

- Focus - Fasting has us focus on, that there's a war going on around me. Every time my stomach pings and pleads for food, I'm reminded of why I'm fasting, because there is a spiritual war that I'm engaged in.
- Attaches - Fasting attaches me to God and it detaches me from the world.
- Slowing - The S in fasting silences all the noise around me always calling for my attention and it slows me down. As I say so often, I'm going too fast spelled with a T-O-O, therefore I'm going to fast spelled with a T-O.
- Training - The T in fasting is training my body. It's to put my flesh in subjection to my spirit and not the other way around. But it is a training. It is a discipline.
- Invigorating - But when we fully engage in fasting, we'll find the I in fasting. It invigorates me. It takes me away from my lukewarmness and my laziness. It lights a fire in me because I'm reminded of why I'm doing it and what's at stake.
- Necessary - In the end, it's necessary. Jesus didn't say this was optional. It's not a hobby. It's necessary and Jesus said so. But truly, it's a promise that fasting and prayer produces power.
- God - And the G in fasting is God. It's not about me. Fasting actually has me say no to me. It brings in the clarity that there's something bigger going on. It's about God and what God is doing and desiring to do.

Practically

What's this fasting look like practically?

- Maybe you fast for lunch and you replace it with prayer and the word, going for a walk and just simply worshipping the Lord.
- Maybe it's a fast from social media or the news or television.
- Maybe it's a fast of a night away from coming home and calling it a night and coming out to a corporate prayer meeting on a Tuesday set apart for the Lord.
- Maybe it's the two day fast. Maybe it's a three day fast.

Point is God will tell you what it is. And as you step forward in it, he'll meet you there.

Outline Mark 9:14-29:

- A "Dispute" with the disciples and the scribes (9:14-16)
 - Critics will always quench your focus and fire
- The "Details" of what that dispute was about. (9:17-18)
 - Share your heart with Jesus for He cares about every detail of your life
- The "Declaration" by Jesus of a faithless generation. (9:19)
 - Jesus declares so He might deliver not rebuke
- A "Defeated" father pleads. (9:20-24)
 - Bring your child, bring that issue to Jesus – and Believe Jesus can do Something about It
- The "Delivery" of the boy by the God of compassion. (9:25-27)
 - God loves to deliver so to lift us before the world as His trophy of grace
- The "Disciples" are disciplined. (9:28-29)
 - God gives us a power promise (through the discipline of fasting and prayer)

Prayer – Boldly Ask Your God

The Word of God is Living and Powerful, and is ready, and will do a mighty work in our lives.

Hebrews 4:12 (NKJV) ¹² For the word of God is living and powerful, and sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing even to the division of soul and spirit, and of joints and marrow, and is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart.

In Every Study

- Who Is God? (How Great is He?)
- What Does He Think of Me? (How Wonderful Are His Thoughts Towards Me?)
- What Does He Want Me to Do?
- What Can I Boldly Request of Him?
- What Do I Need to Be on Guard of When I Leave Here Today?

Boldly come to the throne of grace, ask God to reveal Himself in a mighty way to you, and to do I might work in you, and through you.

Hebrews 4:16 (NKJV) ¹⁶ Let us therefore come boldly to the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy and find grace to help in time of need.

There is a Prayer Team Available to Pray with and for You

End of Study

Mark 9:30-50

Do You Want to Be Great in God's Kingdom?

Shifting & Transitioning

Caesarea Philippi is North, and the direction of travel is South to Jerusalem. Jesus is on his way. We're literally turning South, Jesus as Isaiah 50:7 says, his face was like flint and he's heading towards Jerusalem where a buffeting bag awaits him, a whip to scourge him, three nails and a cross, and a spear to his side, yet Jesus is turning South and he's on his way. Yet sadly, the disciples argue over who's going to be the greatest when before them is the greatest God with the greatest love going to perform the greatest act for his greatest passion, you and me.

[Isaiah 50:7 \(NKJV\)](#) ⁷ "For the Lord God will help Me; Therefore I will not be disgraced; Therefore I have set My face like a flint, And I know that I will not be ashamed.

Jesus is beginning a withdraw from public ministry and will spend more time and that of it, more intimate time, investing in His disciples. Chapter 10, they turn and they start to travel to Jerusalem for the Passover. In chapter 11, we enter into the triumphal entry. So this is how close we are the cross, less than a couple months away is my estimate.

[Mark 10:32 \(NKJV\)](#) ³² Now they were on the road, going up to Jerusalem, and Jesus was going before them; and they were amazed. And as they followed they were afraid. Then He took the twelve aside again and began to tell them the things that would happen to Him:

[Mark 11:1-2 \(NKJV\)](#) ¹ Now when they drew near Jerusalem, to Bethphage and Bethany, at the Mount of Olives, He sent two of His disciples; ² and He said to them, "Go into the village opposite you; and as soon as you have entered it you will find a colt tied, on which no one has sat. Loose it and bring it.

We are going to see a transitioning of our studies into more teaching. Jesus will be teaching on such subjects as humility, serving, marriage, divorce, children, heaven and hell, which is all a big change for us, as the majority of our studies up to this point have been miracles and story of interaction with people such as the crowd, Pharisees, scribes, religious leaders and the sort. Yeah, we'll still have a few more miracles and interactions, but mostly what we're gonna see is teaching.

The miracles and healings, the transfiguration, they proved out who Jesus is. He is God. As we always say in our study,

- who is God and what does He think of me? We've spent this time through these eight chapters seeing that Jesus is God. Mark 8 was a high-water mark of the question to Peter, "But who do you say that I am?" He will say, "You are the Christ, the Son of the living God."
- We say, "What does He think of me?" We see He's a God of compassion because everything and everywhere that He went was with great compassion, and all that He did was with great love.
- Now we're gonna move in as this teaching becomes more the emphasis is what does He want me to do. So wonderful balance when we look at the book as a whole. Of course, we always go through those points and look for when we're in individual studies. Today will be no different.

[Matthew 16:15-16 \(NKJV\)](#) ¹⁵ He said to them, "But who do you say that I am?" ¹⁶ Simon Peter answered and said, "You are the Christ, the Son of the living God."

Outline Mark 9:30-50:

- The Greatest in the Kingdom is the Attendant of All (9:33-36)
 - All the While as He Wraps this Child in His Arms of Love
- The Greatest in the Kingdom Makes Others Their Own (9:37)
 - All the While as He Wraps this Child in His Arms of Love
- The Greatest in the Kingdom Unites the Family, not Divides It (9:38-41)
 - All the While as He Wraps this Child in His Arms of Love
- The Greatest in the Kingdom Protects the Innocent and the Needy (9:42)
 - All the While as He Wraps this Child in His Arms of Love
- The Greatest in the Kingdom Lives in Purity before God (9:43-48)
 - All the While as He Wraps this Child in His Arms of Love
- The Greatest in the Kingdom is a Living Sacrifice unto God (9:49)

- All the While as He Wraps this Child in His Arms of Love
- The Greatest in the Kingdom Lives in Peace with the Body of Christ (9:50)
 - All the While as He Wraps this Child in His Arms of Love

Do You want to Be Great?

Do you want to be great? Every point of his discourse of do you want to be great? Let me tell you how to be great. You'll be great by being a servant, by receiving, by uniting, by protecting, by living in purity, by being a living sacrifice and living in peace among your brothers and sisters. Do you want to be great?

The theme of our study, do you want to be great in the Kingdom of God? And may I remind you, the Kingdom of God is where the King is. Do you want to be great before God? You can be great, it is God's desire for you. God is speaking to you how to be great and it's not the way the world sees greatness, it's greater.

Prayer – Boldly Ask Your God

The Word of God is Living and Powerful, and is ready, and will do a mighty work in our lives.

Hebrews 4:12 (NKJV) ¹² For the word of God is living and powerful, and sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing even to the division of soul and spirit, and of joints and marrow, and is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart.

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Hebrews 4:16 (NKJV) ¹⁶ Let us therefore come boldly to the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy and find grace to help in time of need.

Jesus Again Predicts His Death and Resurrection (9:30-32)

Mark 9:30 Then they departed from there and passed through Galilee, and He did not want anyone to know it.

Mark 9:31 For He taught His disciples and said to them, “The Son of Man is being betrayed into the hands of men, and they will kill Him. And after He is killed, He will rise the third day.”

Mark 9:32 But they did not understand this saying, and were afraid to ask Him.

Jesus Teaches in 3rd Person

Verse 31, it's interesting, Jesus is speaking in third person like he refers to himself as a he, he doesn't refer to himself as myself. I like that because I see this like, you can destroy my body, but you can't destroy the me. The Mount of Transfiguration is Jesus, not the carpenter body. And so too for us we're just inside these tents. The he of the tent, is not the me that's inside this new creation, and I'm looking forward to getting out of this body. You can have this body. I'm done with this body. I'm so over it. I'm ready for my new body when the Lord decides.

Death – Burial – Resurrection

Verse 31. Jesus always talked of the Resurrection when He talked of His death. He never talked to His death apart from the Resurrection, because that is the power of God, that death and sin can't hold Him in the ground. He rose again, because He was the perfect Lamb of God.

Son of Man

Verse 31. Son of Man ties us back to Daniel Chapter 7, as a reference to the Messiah to come. Here the Son of Man, the Messiah, God Himself is getting alone with these (His) disciples.

Daniel 7:13–14 (NKJV) ¹³ “I was watching in the night visions, And behold, One like the Son of Man, Coming with the clouds of heaven! He came to the Ancient of Days, And they brought Him near before Him. ¹⁴ Then to Him was given dominion and glory and a kingdom, That all peoples, nations, and languages should serve Him. His dominion is an everlasting dominion, Which shall not pass away, And His kingdom the one Which shall not be destroyed.

He Taught / Disciple of Christ – Get Some Alone Time with Him

Verse 31, it says, "For He taught." This is why He didn't want a crowd, so He could invest in His disciples and definitely the same today. As profitable as church fellowship and study is, He wants some alone time with you. Wow, imagine that. God of the universe wants to be with you, alone with you, intimately with you. Don't miss those times, beloved. Seek those times. Get away with Him and have some alone time so that He might teach you something personally and individually.

He Teaches (Not Preaches) / Parents Teach Your Kids the Gospel

Verse 32, it's interesting to me that it's the word taught is used with the gospel. Usually we would consider the gospel as regards to something that is preached. But here, it's something that is being taught. Teach means to instruct. Preach means to proclaim and declare. When something is preached, then the person decides to whether they believe it or not and receive it or reject it. Yet here Jesus teaches them. He's teaching them again, because back in the first round, Mark 8, verse 31, they didn't get what He was saying about His death, burial, and resurrection. But He teaches them again.

A key application for us first is parents teach your children the gospel. Explain what it means, why it is needed. I like to use the five P's as I go over that.

- I explain to them that He's a personal God and has a plan and purpose for their lives. He is so intimate that He formed them in the womb, and knows the number of hairs on their head, and catches every tear they shed. He is not distant God but a God who knows them by name.
- Even with such wonderful news, there's a problem. I explain why the problem is, and it's our sin separating us from a holy God. Even as personal as He is, there's still a problem.
- I explain that there's a penalty, that the wages of sin is death so that they can understand why Jesus comes, because God is holy and loving and perfect and pure.
- Then I tell them about the provision, that God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son.
- Then I teach them the profession, what they need to do, how they come into a personal relationship. I teach them what believe actually means,
 - that it means to recognize a need for a savior,
 - to repent, to turn away from following their ways and their personal desires and then to turn and follow Jesus.
 - And then to receive Him, ask Him into their heart and their life.

Jeremiah 29:11 (NKJV) ¹¹ For I know the thoughts that I think toward you, says the LORD, thoughts of peace and not of evil, to give you a future and a hope.

Romans 3:23 (NKJV) ²³ for all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God,

Romans 6:23 (NKJV) ²³ For the wages of sin is death, but the gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord.

John 3:16–17 (NKJV) ¹⁶ For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have everlasting life. ¹⁷ For God did not send His Son into the world to condemn the world, but that the world through Him might be saved.

Romans 10:9–13 (NKJV) ⁹ that if you confess with your mouth the Lord Jesus and believe in your heart that God has raised Him from the dead, you will be saved. ¹⁰ For with the heart one believes unto righteousness, and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation. ¹¹ For the Scripture says, "Whoever believes on Him will not be put to shame." ¹² For there is no distinction between Jew and Greek, for the same Lord over all is rich to all who call upon Him. ¹³ For "whoever calls on the name of the LORD shall be saved."

Lots of people have heard the gospel proclaimed. They've heard of the death, burial, and resurrection, but they don't understand why He would have to come. It's just a story that never really had a meaning behind it until they come and understand that He is a holy God and that sin separates a person that can't approach. Just as one would so walk into a room, there has to be an invitation to walk in and come into His presence. 1 Timothy 6 speaks of the unapproachable light that He's so perfect and pure we can't just walk in.

Adults – Can Become Unteachable Regarding the Gospel

But something else for application, these disciples are teachable. You don't see Jesus teaching again and again to the scribes and the Pharisees, for we read that their hearts had become hardened. They were no longer, maybe never were, teachable.

As long as you are teachable, you are pliable. God can shape and mold you. Jeremiah 18 speaking of the potter and the clay. But once you become unteachable, you become unmoldable, because you can't shape a hardened piece of clay.

That apply to the gospel, someone here today, you are on the brink. You have countered, challenged, rejected the gospel so many times you've become unteachable, unreachable, unmoldable. I pray you hear this word that will be spoken of in verse 43 through 47 where Jesus is going to give a clear word on hell, that it is a real place, that it does exist, and it's a dreadful place. He says where the worm never dies, where the fire is never quenched.

Jesus Teaches Disciples – Because they Were Teachable / Are You? – Am I?

But how about me, how about you? Maybe you've made the profession, you've been walking with the Lord. You have received Him. The question still comes are you teachable in all areas of your life, moldable, reachable by the Lord in every area of your life, how I can feel regularly on this topic or that topic or this subject or that subject, that I've got it down and I've learned a long time ago that I can tune out and skip over, breeze through truths that Jesus is trying to teach me again to take me deeper to a greater understanding, to teach me again depths and truths that will make me more like Him, but I can find myself saying, "I got this. I'm good." I can even think, "I've overcome. No worries here." You know what happens whatever that subject may, whatever that topic may be? I've just become unteachable at least in that area. When I become untouchable, unteachable, unreachable, unpliant, I've just robbed myself of being molded and shaped and formed into His image.

Not once ever in which I have fully leaned into with all my heart, mind, and soul and said, "You know, Lord, teach me something new, or at the minimum strengthen what I know to be true when I enter into something that's known to me or something that just comes before me." Not once has He ever not taught me something new or strengthened me of something that was once that I know is true.

They Struggle Because He is Prophecy

Verse 32, I can see the position of being afraid to ask Jesus, because He isn't just teaching. He's also prophesying. He's speaking of something that is not yet present, something yet future. This is very confusing to them that's speaking of raising from the dead and these types of things. This is one of the things that God does to prove that He is God as He tells us in the book of Isaiah is you'll know that I'll be gone because I can tell you things which are before they are.

That's why it's always so important for us even as we do our prophecy overviews that we stay abreast of prophecy that is still yet to come, because it proves that this book that we hold is truly inspired as we watch it start to shape and mold and come to pass of things that are spoken 2000 years ago starting to come before our very eyes here in the days that we live, that we call the latter days.

We'll see that God is in control. God is in control. None of these things move Him, and none of these things surprise Him. And He writes prophecy and speaks of future things that

- He's in control of them, so that we don't get filled with anxiety,
- but we would be comforted. "Hey, our God's on the throne and in control." None of these things surprise Him.
- And then, it's used to keep us persevering, to continue on, to not quit, and we'll be rewarded for that.
- Then the point is, we know we're going to see Him soon, and very soon, and that should lead us to purity.
- And then of all of that, it should put us into, "What is our priority? Based on all that we know, and the short time that we have, what should we be investing in? And what should we be separating from?"

- And then lastly, it should always bring a person to preparation, that they would be prepared to see Him, and to meet Him, and know, "I might not have tomorrow. Am I ready to meet Him today."

Mark 13:22–23 (NKJV) ²² For false christs and false prophets will rise and show signs and wonders to deceive, if possible, even the elect. ²³ But take heed; see, I have told you all things beforehand.

John 14:28–30 (NKJV) ²⁸ You have heard Me say to you, 'I am going away and coming back to you.' If you loved Me, you would rejoice because I said, 'I am going to the Father,' for My Father is greater than I. ²⁹ "And now I have told you before it comes, that when it does come to pass, you may believe. ³⁰ I will no longer talk much with you, for the ruler of this world is coming, and he has nothing in Me.

John 16:2–4 (NKJV) ² They will put you out of the synagogues; yes, the time is coming that whoever kills you will think that he offers God service. ³ And these things they will do to you because they have not known the Father nor Me. ⁴ But these things I have told you, that when the time comes, you may remember that I told you of them. "And these things I did not say to you at the beginning, because I was with you.

John 16:31–33 (NKJV) ³¹ Jesus answered them, "Do you now believe? ³² Indeed the hour is coming, yes, has now come, that you will be scattered, each to his own, and will leave Me alone. And yet I am not alone, because the Father is with Me. ³³ These things I have spoken to you, that in Me you may have peace. In the world you will have tribulation; but be of good cheer, I have overcome the world."

Isaiah 46:9–10 (NKJV) ⁹ Remember the former things of old, For I am God, and there is no other; I am God, and there is none like Me, ¹⁰ Declaring the end from the beginning, And from ancient times things that are not yet done, Saying, 'My counsel shall stand, And I will do all My pleasure,'

Isaiah 48:3–5 (NKJV) ³ "I have declared the former things from the beginning; They went forth from My mouth, and I caused them to hear it. Suddenly I did them, and they came to pass. ⁴ Because I knew that you were obstinate, And your neck was an iron sinew, And your brow bronze, ⁵ Even from the beginning I have declared it to you; Before it came to pass I proclaimed it to you, Lest you should say, 'My idol has done them, And my carved image and my molded image Have commanded them.'

1 Thessalonians 4:16–18 (NKJV) ¹⁶ For the Lord Himself will descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of an archangel, and with the trumpet of God. And the dead in Christ will rise first. ¹⁷ Then we who are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air. And thus we shall always be with the Lord. ¹⁸ Therefore comfort one another with these words.

1 John 3:2–3 (NKJV) ² Beloved, now we are children of God; and it has not yet been revealed what we shall be, but we know that when He is revealed, we shall be like Him, for we shall see Him as He is. ³ And everyone who has this hope in Him purifies himself, just as He is pure.

Matthew 6:33 (NKJV) ³³ But seek first the kingdom of God and His righteousness, and all these things shall be added to you.

John 3:16–17 (NKJV) ¹⁶ For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have everlasting life. ¹⁷ For God did not send His Son into the world to condemn the world, but that the world through Him might be saved.

Don't Be Afraid to Ask What You Don't Understand

Verse 32. Don't be afraid to ask Him, "Hey, I don't understand these things." Sit down and go, "Man, I don't understand these things." What I want to just encourage you is, we have a plethora of resources we can go to. And I love commentaries. Commentaries are great. But we are told in John 16 that the Spirit will be our teacher. And as a general rule, I read something, I think over it, I read through it seven times before I'll go to the commentary. Not that seven's a magical number, but it forces me to read through it, and to think, and to pray, and let the Lord work on my heart, and molding, and shaping, and giving me something rather than quickly going to a commentary or asking someone, even as good as that may be. But I'm spending time with the Lord and letting Him speak to me.

If we go to the commentary too soon, we could miss God revealing His spiritual truth to us. And it may be different from something that we would've got if we would have sat and just meditated on His word. And what's totally awesome, too, is when you get an answer from the Lord, and then you go to a commentary of some great, such as a Pastor Chuck, or a J. Vernon McGee, and they've said the same thing that God's just revealed to you, you'll find out that you're in great company, and that God speaks to you just like He spoke to the so-called greats. And really, really tough ones, where I go, I sit down, and I get it, or I don't get it, and then I go, I totally don't get it, even after seven times. And I'll go to a commentary, and I'll go to one of the great, and I'll find out that they'll skip that verse. They don't even comment. Then I go, "Oh, you didn't get it either."

The Greatest in the Kingdom is the Attendant of All (9:33-36)

- All the While as He Wraps this Child in His Arms of Love

Jesus Tells Who is the Greatest (9:33-37)

Mark 9:33 Then He came to Capernaum. And when He was in the house He asked them, "What was it you disputed among yourselves on the road?"

Peter's House

Verse 33. They're probably at Peter's house. That's what we've seen many times, when they come to Capernaum.

Picture 12-Wide Walking the Road

Verse 33. Picture the scene. Picture where these guys' heart and minds' at. Jesus just said, "I'm going to die." You would expect silence, stunned confusion. But no, we read, they debate who would be the greatest. And if you could picture it, Jesus would have, for this to happen, would have been ahead of them or behind them. He wouldn't have been amongst them as they were walking the road. But by the word of knowledge, He knows what they are talking about. But here He is, ahead or behind. And that means that there's 12 of them ahead of Him. And they are arguing who would be the greatest. So you know what this would say? None of them are going to be walking behind another. Have you ever walked with 12 people and tried to talk? It would be a site, especially if they are elevating themselves. They would jump out in front of the other, until someone else pushed forward to speak. If they were disputing who is the greatest, then at a minimum, we have this straight line, 12 long, because no one wanted to be behind. They'd all want to be in the first row. Because if you are in the second row, you'd already be acknowledging that you were second. No one would want to be all the way on the end. And if you think about it, even an American road can't hold 12 wide. This is way smaller in that time. So, 12 of them trying to fit and stay equal would have been quite the site.

But of course, Peter, James, and John, they would have obviously been laughing to themselves, going, "Well, you guys can argue, but we already know that we are at least in the top three." But they would still be struggling of, "Top three's not good enough."

Mark 9:34 But they kept silent, for on the road they had disputed among themselves who would be the greatest.

Mark 9:35 And He sat down, called the twelve, and said to them, "If anyone desires to be first, he shall be last of all and servant of all."

Mark 9:36 Then He took a little child and set him in the midst of them. And when He had taken him in His arms, He said to them,

Servant Means Attendant

The word here is servant not slave. We are slaves (doulos) to Christ, but the word "servant" (diakonos) here means to be "an Attendant", like a waiter. An attendant's job is to make someone else's life better, to lift their burden, to meet their needs.

Philippians 1:1 (NKJV) ¹ Paul and Timothy, bondservants of Jesus Christ, To all the saints in Christ Jesus who are in Philippi, with the bishops and deacons:

1 Corinthians 7:22 (NKJV) ²² For he who is called in the Lord while a slave is the Lord's freedman. Likewise he who is called while free is Christ's slave.

World's Greatness Based on How Many Serve You

Verse 35, world's greatness is the number of people that serve you. That's how the world determines what greatness is. God is saying the kingdom greatness is the number of people that you serve. Do you want to be great in the kingdom of God? It's easier than you think, but it's harder to do because our flesh so much wants to be served and the world around us so much says serve yourself.

Deny Self / Servant Makes Others Life Better

Verse 35. Mark Chapter 8 says, "Deny ourselves, pick up the cross, and follow." And here's where Jesus is going, Servant of all. The only thing crazier than verse 31's statement is verse 35. They think, "Jesus, you're going to be setting up the Kingdom and overthrowing Rome." They're wondering who gets Pilate's throne. They're not

wondering who gets the kitchen chamber, to serve and cook. The word servant means to be an attendant. And an attendant's job is to make someone else's life better. This is what Jesus is saying, "Greatness in the Kingdom is an attendant making someone else's life greater."

Mark 8:34–37 (NKJV) ³⁴ When He had called the people to Himself, with His disciples also, He said to them, "Whoever desires to come after Me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross, and follow Me. ³⁵ For whoever desires to save his life will lose it, but whoever loses his life for My sake and the gospel's will save it. ³⁶ For what will it profit a man if he gains the whole world, and loses his own soul? ³⁷ Or what will a man give in exchange for his soul?"

The Greatest in the Kingdom Makes Others Their Own (9:37)

- All the While as He Wraps this Child in His Arms of Love

Mark 9:36 Then He took a little child and set him in the midst of them. And when He had taken him in His arms, He said to them,

Mark 9:37 "Whoever receives one of these little children in My name receives Me; and whoever receives Me, receives not Me but Him who sent Me."

Physical Object Example & Spiritual Application (Those who Need Help)

So see the imagery here that Jesus is speaking yes to our responsibility to take care of the children, but there's an imagery here and a illustration that is being made in that a child cannot take care of themselves. If I didn't feed my son, he would be going hungry. If I didn't house my son, he would be homeless. If I didn't clothe my son, he would either be naked or ill prepared for this brutal cold weather that we live in here at this time. Jesus is making the point to the disciples, those who want to be great, He says, "You take care of those who are unable to take care of themselves fully." That goes way beyond material things. Now it takes us into material things and spiritual things as mature Christians need to take care of and look out for the younger Christians.

Verse 37. Children represent need, loneliness, and status, especially in that culture. Children receive time and energy for their advantage, not necessarily the givers advantage.

Receive – Means to Make Your Own

The word 'receives' (dechomai) means, "to welcome in, to make your own". That is a big difference from "to handle and hand back". I love holding babies, until it is diaper changing time (hahah). The greatest in the kingdom receives people as they are, loves them where they are, and loves them in such a way the person knows they will not be rejected, handed back, for any reason. The disciples were and are and will try to determine greatness based on performance, but Jesus is shutting that down; He did not come to make a performance based relationship, that if you do good you will be received, but a relationship that makes others their own regardless of their performance. Does that mean there is no discipline when in error, not at all, Jesus is literally discipling His disciples right now, but still receiving them, still making them His own, and thus Jesus models for us the patience and love it takes to "receive someone and to make them your own".

Jesus JUST BECAME TOUCHABLE

Verse 37. Jesus just became touchable. You will always be able to touch and hold me when I'm gone, simply by loving on people that you'll receive in my name, and serve in my name." Of course we ... Immediately, our minds go to Matthew 25. As Jesus talks about as we do these things, we do them for him; visiting in prison and bringing a meal, and visiting when someone is sick, bringing clothing when somebody is in need.

Matthew 25:31–40 (NKJV) ³¹ "When the Son of Man comes in His glory, and all the holy angels with Him, then He will sit on the throne of His glory. ³² All the nations will be gathered before Him, and He will separate them one from another, as a shepherd divides his sheep from the goats. ³³ And He will set the sheep on His right hand, but the goats on the left. ³⁴ Then the King will say to those on His right hand, 'Come, you blessed of My Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world: ³⁵ for I was hungry and you gave Me food; I was thirsty and you gave Me drink; I was a stranger and you took Me in; ³⁶ I was naked and you clothed Me; I was sick and you visited Me; I was in prison and you came to Me.' ³⁷ "Then the righteous will answer Him, saying, 'Lord, when did we see You hungry and feed You, or thirsty and give You drink? ³⁸ When did we see You a stranger and take You in, or naked and clothe You? ³⁹ Or when did we see You sick, or in prison, and come to You?' ⁴⁰ And the King will answer and say to them, 'Assuredly, I say to you, inasmuch as you did it to one of the least of these My brethren, you did it to Me.'

Whole Discussion – Holding Child in Arms

Verse 36. Jesus is holding this child in His arms. Picture it. As He's telling this story, the dissertation on being the Greatest, He holds a child all the way through it. Every one of these points, the whole discourse, this child is on his lap, wrapped in his arms of love, so everything that he's saying is said in that context.

Not Hard to Be Great – Can I Hold You in Your Time of Need

So we see it really isn't hard to be great in the kingdom, as we put our arms around someone in need. When you find a need and you meet a need, you meet someone and they tell you, "We got surgery this week," or, "We're on furlough," or layoff, or child is wayward, "My health is failing," and you give them a cup of cold water, the water represents refreshment. I know you thirst. I know you're parched. Here I come to give you something to refresh you. But for a moment, but a refreshment, nonetheless.

The Greatest in the Kingdom Unites the Family, not Divides It (9:38-41)

- **All the While as He Wraps this Child in His Arms of Love**

Jesus Forbids Sects (9:38-41)

Mark 9:38 Now John answered Him, saying, "Teacher, we saw someone who does not follow us casting out demons in Your name, and we forbade him because he does not follow us."

John Tried to Say Something Spiritual

Verse 38. After these words of Jesus, John speaks up. I'm speaking, there's kind of a silence in the room. Nobody knows what to say, so John says, "Well, let's change the subject." And everyone's feeling a little humbled after Jesus' response. And so, let me say something spiritual. So they think, and they are probably all, "Good response, John. Yeah, we still look spiritual, even after we were humbled by arguing over who's going to be the greatest.

They Just Became Like the Scribes / Dispute While People Hurt

Verse 38. So, they forbade this man. And who did they just become like? They just became like those scribes back in verse 14. "Hey, let's dispute while people hurt. Let's talk about doctrine and theology while there's people around who are hurting and suffering."

He Did – What They Couldn't (Casting Out Demon) / Pride is Like Bad Breath

Verse 38. I don't think this is a self-sent missionary. I think it is someone who was present when Jesus cast out a demon, or they saw the other 12 disciples doing it back in Mark 6. And he came upon someone who was demon-possessed, and he said, "Okay, this is what I saw Jesus do. I know I can't cast out a demon, but in the name of Jesus, make the demon flee." So, here we go. So, that man, he believed God could, and in faith, used the name of Jesus, and the demons fled. Interesting, they didn't consider this man in the mix of who's the greatest, because he wasn't with them. But it wasn't too long ago that they couldn't cast a demon out of a boy. How quickly they forget, these 12. And no one says, "Hey, shouldn't we include this guy in the greatest in the Kingdom?" We just got embarrassed, and here this guy is, he's casting out demons. But now they jump in there, and they shut him down. But here's this nobody doing what they couldn't do.

It's been said, "Pride is like bad breath. Everyone knows you have it, but you."

They should have been saying, "Jesus," speaking of greatness. I am reminded what David said, "May I simply be a doorkeeper in your Kingdom?" That's the thing to say to Jesus. "I don't want to be great. I'd be happy just to be a doorkeeper. Thank you for opening the doorway for me to enter into the Kingdom."

Mark 9:39 But Jesus said, "Do not forbid him, for no one who works a miracle in My name can soon afterward speak evil of Me.

Mark 9:40 For he who is not against us is on our side.

See Glory – Declare His Glory

Verse 39, when you see glory of God and are part of it, it's pretty hard to be quiet. That's what he's saying here.

No Greatness in Division

Verse 50. There's no greatness in division. And interestingly, one of the first problems that the Apostle Paul has to clean up in a very troubled church is this sectarianism, this division. As people would say, "I am of Paul, I am of Apollos," when it really should be, "We're all of Christ." As it has been said, the more spiritual a person comes, the less denominational they will be. But I guess the same can be true, the more denominational someone is, the less spiritual they will be.

1 Corinthians 1:10–13 (NKJV) ¹⁰ Now I plead with you, brethren, by the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that you all speak the same thing, and that there be no divisions among you, but that you be perfectly joined together in the same mind and in the same judgment. ¹¹ For it has been declared to me concerning you, my brethren, by those of Chloe's household, that there are contentions among you. ¹² Now I say this, that each of you says, "I am of Paul," or "I am of Apollos," or "I am of Cephas," or "I am of Christ." ¹³ Is Christ divided? Was Paul crucified for you? Or were you baptized in the name of Paul?

1 Corinthians 3:3–4 (NKJV) ³ for you are still carnal. For where there are envy, strife, and divisions among you, are you not carnal and behaving like mere men? ⁴ For when one says, "I am of Paul," and another, "I am of Apollos," are you not carnal?

The bottom line basis of it all is the gospel and the truth of the scriptures, those are the non-negotiable. Then, after that, the other things are minor. I thank God that he has a body that meets the needs. Some people need to worship in this manner, some people need to worship in a more reserved manner, some need to worship in a more expressive manner, and God meets them there. I know I'm where I'm supposed to be, and I don't try to change myself to be something that I'm not. I know how I'm made up. I know what fits for me, and that's how we maintain this church. I understand that it doesn't fit for everyone, and if I went to somebody else's church, there's many churches I really wouldn't fit in, that be my brothers and sisters in Christ because we agree on the essentials, but there's things that just don't fit for me, and that's fine. May we keep that attitude. It's vitally important when you go into the mission field, I might add, because there's such a vastness and broadness. We have to be sensitive to these things.

Political Correction Can't Co-Exist with Gospel

So here it says, "You're either for Me or against Me." There's many churches that they try to play the middle ground, political correctness and still spiritually. We see none of that with Jesus as He speaks to His disciples. "You're either for Me or against Me. We deny Me before men, I'll deny you before My Father in heaven." The church can't try to broker middle ground. They have to find out what the Word of God is. That is the ground that they stand on.

Verse 40, there's only two sides, you're either for or against, there is no middle ground. Verse 42, sin against a child is the servant's responsibility to protect the child. And oh, the woe of what is happening in our nation today.

Mark 9:41 For whoever gives you a cup of water to drink in My name, because you belong to Christ, assuredly, I say to you, he will by no means lose his reward.

Not Hard to Be Great / But Have to Engage to Know Needs

Verse 41. What we really see through our studying, it's not hard to be great in God's kingdom. "Can I get you a cup of water? Do you need help? I'll come to help." But of course, if you're gonna help people, you gotta engage with people, to find out what their needs are.

The Greatest in the Kingdom Protects the Innocent and the Needy (9:42)

- All the While as He Wraps this Child in His Arms of Love

Jesus Warns of Sin (Hand, Eye, Foot) – (9:42-48)

Mark 9:42 "But whoever causes one of these little ones who believe in Me to stumble, it would be better for him if a millstone were hung around his neck, and he were thrown into the sea.

Really Shifting Gears (Hell Fire)

Verse 42. Wow, He shifted gears. Healing, feeding, chapters 1 through 8. Then He comes to a literal hellfire and brimstone.

Woe – Woe – Woe

Verse 42. Woe, woe, woe, the stumbling on one of these children. And today, the world is stumbling so many children. Stumbling to trip up, and we have this confusion with how to approach God, we have this confusion of a definition of male and female, the definition of marriage, the stumbling with evolution, science, so-called. And as children, they become adults, and what was fed into them is the development of who they become as adults. Jesus says in verse 42, "Woe to those that stumble one of these little children. Take a millstone," they weigh somewhere around anywhere from 50 to 100 pounds, and He says, "put it around your neck and throw you into the water." He's serious about stumbling little children.

The greatest in the Kingdom protects the innocent; protects the innocence.

The Greatest in the Kingdom Lives in Purity before God (9:43-48)

- **All the While as He Wraps this Child in His Arms of Love**

Mark 9:43 If your hand causes you to sin, cut it off. It is better for you to enter into life maimed, rather than having two hands, to go to hell, into the fire that shall never be quenched—

Mark 9:44 where 'Their worm does not die And the fire is not quenched.'

Mark 9:45 And if your foot causes you to sin, cut it off. It is better for you to enter life lame, rather than having two feet, to be cast into hell, into the fire that shall never be quenched—

Mark 9:46 where 'Their worm does not die And the fire is not quenched.'

Mark 9:47 And if your eye causes you to sin, pluck it out. It is better for you to enter the kingdom of God with one eye, rather than having two eyes, to be cast into hell fire—

Mark 9:48 where 'Their worm does not die And the fire is not quenched.'

Gahanna – the Dump

Verse 43, Hell, the word here is Gahanna and it was a garbage dump with fires outside where they threw the trash in Jerusalem. So he's using some word play here, some picturing that people can tell what and how horrible hell is.

How Serious is Sin

Verse 42 through 48. Speaking of teaching the gospel, why did Jesus die? Here, we see because sin is serious. Sin is so serious that someone will die for it, be that us dying in our sin, or be it Jesus dying for our sin. You will either die in your sin, or let Jesus die for your sin. But you can't do the dying for your sin, because it took a perfect Lamb of God to wash away the sin.

Verse 43, cut it off is figurative language, but it's being told the seriousness of sin.

Repetition to Show Seriousness / The Worm (Remembrance)

Verse 48, in this fire life continues. It never ends. And the worm, I believe, is that thought of "I could've escaped this fire," and for all of eternity is the continual remembrance of rejecting the gift that was offered, and to live in eternity saying, "I played the fool." Was it really worth it?

The repetition is to produce the seriousness.

Some Say Not Sinning Against Others – But You Are by Sinning Against God

Verse 48, some will say, yeah, but it's just a sin within, it's not a sin against someone else, it's my own sin, it doesn't matter, I'm not hurting anyone. What's the big deal? God says it's a big deal because he's holy. He created you and he designed you in his image, and wants you to reflect his image, so it is a big deal. Even if you are not directly sinning against a person, you are sinning against the God who created you.

Not Disconnected Thoughts

These are not disconnected thoughts, like Jesus is changing the subject, He is still talking about being great in the kingdom, and greatness in the kingdom takes sin seriously, and lives in purity before God.

It's About Holiness not Happiness

Verse 48, it isn't about happiness. It's about holiness. Jesus says, whoever would come after me deny himself that would be even if what you're denying was something that was pleasurable and made you happy, because it's not about our happiness, it's about his holiness. These words are just and true by the Lord.

People could call it hell fire and brimstone, but Jesus is declaring so he might deliver, set the captives free from the things that rob, steal, and destroy.

It's about holiness, it's not about happiness, but the amazing thing is when you come into his whole holiness, you'll find true happiness, you'll find that the things that you found so dear that you had to hold onto and didn't want to give up, you actually see how they harmed you and hurt you, everyone of God's commands are to protect and provide. He wants to protect us from things that would hurt us and he wants to provide us what he knows in his perfect wisdom is perfect and wonderful for us. I remember being saved. I remember walking on the cloud. I remember awesome, my sins are forgiving. I'm going to heaven. I got saved. I was a young man, age 27. Then I started reading the Bible. I started reading things that were totally contrary to what the world was promoting, what? Purity, I'm supposed to remain pure. I'm supposed to save myself until marriage. What if I'm single the rest of my life? And then the struggle began. I had to decide between what I would consider my happiness or God's holiness.

I said, these things that were written were written 2000 years ago. They surely can't apply to today. I look around the world, the world doesn't believe these old fashioned words, but I praise God and that I was teachable, and I was pliable, and God was able to teach me and mold me and it didn't take me long. Even as I watched other Christians who I looked up to and respected living contrary to the word of God, even as I looked around the world and it was being promoted and said, God understands how we're made even as there was churches so called who told me, who are afraid to call it what it was, God spoke to me. I knew that his word is the same yesterday, today and forever, and I know that what it meant 2000 years ago is still what it means today. And I said, okay, if that's what you say, then that is the way it will be, and if I'm single the rest of my life that will be fine too.

And I can tell you this, and I can tell you it as if it was yesterday, and at that moment there was a peace which past understanding and notice the key there. It passes understanding. It wasn't something that logically could be understood and processed. It was beyond my understanding. This peace that came, even though I didn't fully understand there was a peace. And now on the other side of that moment, some 20 some years ago, I have full understanding of why he said what he said and what it all meant. But oh, at that moment there was a peace which passed all understanding. And when it did, I remember when the time trials would come, I said, man, I never want to lose that peace. It was such a beautiful peace, and it was such a beautiful place of power. I said, I'm not going to trade away this peace and this power for a moment of happiness. And that was what it was always coming down to, holiness over my happiness. But as I entered into his holiness, I found greater happiness than I could ever find doing my own thing.

Jesus Loves Enough to Talk about Hell

Jesus loves enough to talk about hell, and sin. And so too can we; I tell people they are going to hell, in love. I can love people as they are going to hell, in love. How? By serving them, receiving them, by not attacking them, simply giving myself to them, for they are going to a place where the worm dies not, and the fire is not quenched. We love them as they are perishing, and pray to God that they will turn and take the free gift of salvation. May we let God determine who is going to hell, and may we determine we are going to be servants of "all" as we live here as His ambassadors of the Kingdom of God.

[The Greatest in the Kingdom is a Living Sacrifice unto God \(9:49\)](#)

- **[All the While as He Wraps this Child in His Arms of Love](#)**

[Tasteless Salt is Worthless \(9:49-50\)](#)

Mark 9:49 "For everyone will be seasoned with fire, and every sacrifice will be seasoned with salt.

Mark 9:50 Salt is good, but if the salt loses its flavor, how will you season it? Have salt in yourselves, and have peace with one another."

Hard Verse to Understand

Verse 50. Forget seven times, it's like seven times seven. What does this mean, as you look at this verse? I could read it seven times, but it's still kind of confusing on what it means.

Verse 49, Leviticus and Ezekiel tell us that the sacrifice was to be made with salt and fire, and it can sound cryptic to us and we can say I got to read this 40 or 50 times to understand it, but it wasn't cryptic to them. They have been going down to make sacrifices since their age of understanding, the bar mitzvah age, since they're 12 years old, they were going down to the temple, not only their own personal three times a year going down to the temple to make a sacrifice, but then they would stand in line, and hundreds and hundreds before them would be making the sacrifice, and they would see every sacrifice there on the fire sprinkled with salt, so they would fully understand what's being said. It's this speaking of a sacrifice to make ourselves make yourself as a living sacrifice.

Leviticus 2:12–13 (NKJV) ¹² As for the offering of the firstfruits, you shall offer them to the LORD, but they shall not be burned on the altar for a sweet aroma. ¹³ And every offering of your grain offering you shall season with salt; you shall not allow the salt of the covenant of your God to be lacking from your grain offering. With all your offerings you shall offer salt.

Ezekiel 43:23–24 (NKJV) ²³ When you have finished cleansing it, you shall offer a young bull without blemish, and a ram from the flock without blemish. ²⁴ When you offer them before the LORD, the priests shall throw salt on them, and they will offer them up as a burnt offering to the LORD.

Romans 12:1–2 (NKJV) ¹ I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that you present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable to God, which is your reasonable service. ² And do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind, that you may prove what is that good and acceptable and perfect will of God.

These verses tie back to the life of purity, and all the other points, and being great in the kingdom, and just how far off these disciples were regarding what greatness in God's Kingdom meant and was.

The Greatest in the Kingdom Lives in Peace with the Body of Christ (9:50)

- All the While as He Wraps this Child in His Arms of Love

Mark 9:50 Salt is good, but if the salt loses its flavor, how will you season it? Have salt in yourselves, and have peace with one another."

Greatness Keeps Peace

The greatest in the kingdom, keeps peace. Remember we started all this back in verse 30 of them arguing about who is the greatest, and we end with the call to keep peace with one another, because as they fought who would be great, they were dividing up among themselves, for selfish ambition (to be great before man) will never bring peace among a body.

All the while, holding this child in His arms; that's the peace the Lord calls of us together as a body.

Conclusion:

Outline Mark 9:30-50:

- The Greatest in the Kingdom is the Attendant of All (9:33-36)
 - All the While as He Wraps this Child in His Arms of Love
- The Greatest in the Kingdom Makes Others Their Own (9:37)
 - All the While as He Wraps this Child in His Arms of Love
- The Greatest in the Kingdom Unites the Family, not Divides It (9:38-41)
 - All the While as He Wraps this Child in His Arms of Love
- The Greatest in the Kingdom Protects the Innocent and the Needy (9:42)
 - All the While as He Wraps this Child in His Arms of Love
- The Greatest in the Kingdom Lives in Purity before God (9:43-48)
 - All the While as He Wraps this Child in His Arms of Love
- The Greatest in the Kingdom is a Living Sacrifice unto God (9:49)
 - All the While as He Wraps this Child in His Arms of Love

- The Greatest in the Kingdom Lives in Peace with the Body of Christ (9:50)
 - All the While as He Wraps this Child in His Arms of Love

Do You want to Be Great?

Do you want to be great? Every point of his discourse, you want to be great? Let me tell you how to be great. You'll be great by being a servant, by receiving, by uniting, by protecting, by living in purity, by being a living sacrifice and living in peace among your brothers and sisters. Do you want to be great?

The theme of our studies, do you want to be great in the Kingdom of God? And May I remind you, the Kingdom of God is where the king is. Do you want to be great before God.

You can be great. This is God's desire for you. God is speaking to you how to be great and it's not the way the world sees greatness.

Prayer – Boldly Ask Your God

The Word of God is Living and Powerful, and is ready, and will do a mighty work in our lives.

Hebrews 4:12 (NKJV) ¹² For the word of God is living and powerful, and sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing even to the division of soul and spirit, and of joints and marrow, and is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart.

In Every Study

- Who Is God? (How Great is He?)
- What Does He Think of Me? (How Wonderful Are His Thoughts Towards Me?)
- What Does He Want Me to Do?
- What Can I Boldly Request of Him?
- What Do I Need to Be on Guard of When I Leave Here Today?

Boldly come to the throne of grace, ask God to reveal Himself in a mighty way to you, and to do I might work in you, and through you.

Hebrews 4:16 (NKJV) ¹⁶ Let us therefore come boldly to the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy and find grace to help in time of need.

There is a Prayer Team Available to Pray with and for You

End of Study

Mark 10

10:1-16 (Marriage and Family)

Shifting & Transitioning

Jesus is on His way to Jerusalem, and as we study this Book of Mark we can say quickly. Approximately 115 miles, in a straight line, a couple hundred miles via the roads, north of Jerusalem was Mount Hermon is where we started. Back in chapter 9:1-13 was the Mount of Transfiguration (most assume that was where it occurred) which was north of Caesarea Philippi, where Peter will make the declaration that Jesus is the Christ the Son of God (8:27-33). Last study we were in Capernaum, where Jesus gave the teaching on "The Greatest in the Kingdom". Today Jesus is continuing His direction of travel south, towards Jerusalem, and the prophecy of Isaiah 50:7 says his face was like flint and he's heading towards Jerusalem. There in Jerusalem we know was where a buffeting bag awaits him, a whip to scourge him, three nails and a cross, and a spear to his side, yet Jesus is turning south and he's on his way, for you and for me! Make no doubt about, God Love You! If or when you have those doubts, look to the cross and see what He was willing to pay to make you His own.

Isaiah 50:7 (NKJV) ⁷ "For the Lord God will help Me; Therefore I will not be disgraced; Therefore I have set My face like a flint, And I know that I will not be ashamed.

Mark 8:27–29 (NKJV) ²⁷ Now Jesus and His disciples went out to the towns of Caesarea Philippi; and on the road He asked His disciples, saying to them, "Who do men say that I am?" ²⁸ So they answered, "John the Baptist; but some say, Elijah; and others, one of the prophets." ²⁹ He said to them, "But who do you say that I am?" Peter answered and said to Him, "You are the Christ."

Mark 8:34 (NKJV) ³⁴ When He had called the people to Himself, with His disciples also, He said to them, "Whoever desires to come after Me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross, and follow Me.

Mark 9:2–3 (NKJV) ² Now after six days Jesus took Peter, James, and John, and led them up on a high mountain apart by themselves; and He was transfigured before them. ³ His clothes became shining, exceedingly white, like snow, such as no launderer on earth can whiten them.

We are probably only a few weeks from the cross at this point in our study, and that is an important factor to remember when we get into our study here shortly. We know we are close for verse 32 of chapter 10, they start the travel to Jerusalem for the Passover. In chapter 11, we have the triumphal entry. So this is how close we are to the cross, less than a few weeks away is my estimate.

Mark 10:32 (NKJV) ³² Now they were on the road, going up to Jerusalem, and Jesus was going before them; and they were amazed. And as they followed they were afraid. Then He took the twelve aside again and began to tell them the things that would happen to Him:

Mark 11:1–2 (NKJV) ¹ Now when they drew near Jerusalem, to Bethphage and Bethany, at the Mount of Olives, He sent two of His disciples; ² and He said to them, "Go into the village opposite you; and as soon as you have entered it you will find a colt tied, on which no one has sat. Loose it and bring it.

Jesus has been withdrawing from public ministry and has and will spend more time investing in His disciples, the men He will tap to establish His church. Jesus is teaching them as we saw in our study last week on the Greatest in the Kingdom, and today as He teaches on marriage and children. We will still see some teaching to the crowds, but more so teaching privately to the disciples.

The Great Gift of Marriage

So last week how to be the greatest in the kingdom, and today the great gift of marriage and children.

Mark 10:1–12 (NKJV) ¹ Then He arose from there and came to the region of Judea by the other side of the Jordan. And multitudes gathered to Him again, and as He was accustomed, He taught them again. ² The Pharisees came and asked Him, "Is it lawful for a man to divorce his wife?" testing Him. ³ And He answered and said to them, "What did Moses command you?" ⁴ They said, "Moses permitted a man to write a certificate of divorce, and to dismiss her." ⁵ And Jesus answered and said to them, "Because of the hardness of your heart he wrote you this precept. ⁶ But from the beginning of the creation, God 'made them male and female.' ⁷ 'For this reason a man shall leave his father and mother and be joined to his wife, ⁸ and the two shall become one flesh'; so then they are no longer two, but one flesh. ⁹ Therefore what God has joined together, let not man separate." ¹⁰ In the house His disciples also asked Him again about the same matter. ¹¹ So He said to them, "Whoever divorces his wife and

marries another commits adultery against her. ¹² And if a woman divorces her husband and marries another, she commits adultery.”

Prayer – Boldly Ask Your God

The Word of God is Living and Powerful, and is ready, and will do a mighty work in our lives.

Hebrews 4:12 (NKJV) ¹² For the word of God is living and powerful, and sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing even to the division of soul and spirit, and of joints and marrow, and is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart.

In Every Study

- Who Is God? (How Great is He?)
- What Does He Think of Me? (How Wonderful Are His Thoughts Towards Me?)
- What Does He Want Me to Do?
- What Can I Boldly Request of Him?
- What Do I Need to Be on Guard of When I Leave Here Today?

Boldly come to the throne of grace, ask God to reveal Himself in a mighty way to you, and to do I might work in you, and through you.

Hebrews 4:16 (NKJV) ¹⁶ Let us therefore come boldly to the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy and find grace to help in time of need.

Prayer:

Lord we are coming here for this time that you have set apart for us to teach us, to equip us, to steel us like flint, for the things that matter most in our lives, such as our personal relationship with You, Lord show us Your heart towards us, and meet and minister to every need in this room. Lord take this passage on marriage and remind of the things that so easily can become common and we take for granted, and strengthen every marriage in this room, and use this specific to prepare every single in this room for their marriage to come. And Lord I teach us on how to teach our children, and weave and knit our hearts to Yours so that we can more than teach our children about You, we can show them Your very heart, and Your love and passion for them.

Outline Mark 10:1-16 (Marriage and Family):

- Marriage Matters (10:1-5)
 - Jesus Goes Out of His Way for Marriages (That Includes Yours Today)
- Marriage Defined (10:6)
 - He Created Marriages
- Marriage Bonded & Built (10:7-9)
 - How to Have a Great Marriage
- Marriage Meant to Last (10:10-12)
 - God’s Word of Marriage and Divorce
- Family Matters (10:13-16)
 - Seeing the Kingdom of God in Children

Marriage Matters (10:1-5)

- Jesus Goes Out of His Way for Marriages (that includes Yours Today)

Jesus Teaches on Marriage and Divorce (10:1-12)

Mark 10:1 Then He arose from there and came to the region of Judea by the other side of the Jordan. And multitudes gathered to Him again, and as He was accustomed, He taught them again.

Teaching Ministry

As we see, verse one, ministry priority for Jesus then, and still today, as he's the same yesterday, today, and forever, is a teaching ministry. And how important for us to study, to show ourselves approved, and as a ministry, that our primary goal as a church is to teach as we see Jesus, teaching was his priority. And out of that came the fellowship, and those things. Jesus never tired of teaching. When people came to Him or gathered around Him, He taught them. I hope we never tire of studying Scripture. It’s the bread that sustains us, the fuel for our faith.

Mark 10:2 The Pharisees came and asked Him, “Is it lawful for a man to divorce his wife?” testing Him.

Mark 10:3 And He answered and said to them, “What did Moses command you?”

Mark 10:4 They said, “Moses permitted a man to write a certificate of divorce, and to dismiss her.”

Mark 10:5 And Jesus answered and said to them, “Because of the hardness of your heart he wrote you this precept.

I am Exhausted

Right now I can tell you, I am physically, emotionally, and spiritually exhausted. My mind has been grinding through all the words in this passage, and all the words I am going to speak and say today. And you may say Ray haven't you taught on marriage and divorce before, to which I will say, yes, and often at that. But I would not go and look at my past studies, I would not read commentaries, I have studied the doctrine and theology of divorce and remarriage continually in my pastoral ministry. But I sat with pen and paper in hand and sought the Lord on what does He want specifically said to you today. I understand the weight and gravity of the passage before me. The sacred covenant of marriage. Marriage is God's Holy Covenant. And then the depth of the topic of divorce and remarriage, and how much confusion people have as you consider all the different scenarios that can come with divorce. I've asked the Lord, beseeched the Lord, to make every word spoken and taught today as skilled arrows that will hit their mark. And anything left unsaid, please come and let's discuss it more after service. I recognized all week the wiles of the Devil, to teach this based on the cultural position, rather than the biblical position, because we can never get back to the biblical position on marriage, so churches try to merge the biblical into the cultural hoping to get “the best we are going to get”, rather than teaching the biblical position and declaring the best, because God designed marriage, and do it His way, and you will have the best!

Heading South – But had to Cross the Jordan on the Way

Verse 1, Jesus is turning south. He's been on a straight shot since the momma transfiguration, all the way north there, probably up on Mount Hermon. And He's been heading south as He came through Galilee, Capernaum, and now here He is in Judea crossing the Jordan into what the area is known as Perea. We're weeks, maybe just a couple months away from the cross, and nothing will move Him, because anytime you talk of the cross, he's thinking of you.

Verse 1, I spent literally hours in my thought as I walked, as I did chores, as I did various things, why did Jesus cross the Jordan? It almost sounds like one of those jokes, but I keep thinking and thinking and thinking, and couldn't move on from it, I had to ask, why would he cross the Jordan into Perea? To which I come, the same reason..... Just as he had to go to Samaria, because there was someone there that he had to meet. There was someone there that needed to hear a personal word from him. And in Samaria in John 4, it was the woman at the well and it changed her life. And just as the first place they came into the Promised Land when they crossed the Jordan River was Jericho, because there was someone specific that needed to be met and touched and ministered to, and that was Rahab. And I believe today there's no coincidence, I believe today it's by design that God's doing the same here today, that he has to speak to someone specifically today 'cause there's probably somebody here today, listening today on the radio, who is ready to call it quits on their marriage. And you're ready to call it quits even on trivial matters which you think are some major matters. And Jesus comes to the woman at the well and to Rahab, and he comes to you today to speak a very specific word, don't quit. God is calling you directly today, don't quit, hear my heart on the matter the Lord would be saying to you, before you make a mistake you will regret the rest of your life, and your kids will too.

John 4:4 (NKJV) ⁴ But He needed to go through Samaria.

Joshua 2:1 (NKJV) ¹ Now Joshua the son of Nun sent out two men from Acacia Grove to spy secretly, saying, “Go, view the land, especially Jericho.” So they went, and came to the house of a harlot named Rahab, and lodged there.

Divorce Controversial Topic / 2 Schools of Thought

Divorce was a controversial topic in Jesus' day, with two main schools of thought centered around two of its most famous proponents. The first was the school of Rabbi Hillel (a lenient and popular view) and the school of Rabbi Shammai (a strict and unpopular view). When a man takes a wife and marries her, and it happens that she finds no favor in his eyes because he has found some uncleanness in her, and he writes her a certificate of divorce, puts

it in her hand, and sends her out of his house. The debate among the rabbis tried to answer the question "What constitutes uncleanness?"

- Rabbi Shammai understood that uncleanness meant sexual immorality and said that was the only valid reason for divorce. But Rabbi Hillel understood uncleanness to mean any sort of discretion, even to the point of burning the breakfast being valid grounds for divorce.
- William Barclay described the teaching of Rabbi Hillel on divorce and the term uncleanness in Deuteronomy 24:1, "They said that it could mean if the wife spoiled a dish of food, if she spun in the streets, if she talked to a strange man, if she spoke disrespectfully of her husband's relations in his hearing, if she was a brawling woman (who was defined as a woman whose voice could be heard in the next house). Rabbi Akiba even went the length of saying that it meant if a man found a woman who was fairer in his eyes than his wife was."

Deuteronomy 24:1-4 (NKJV) ¹ "When a man takes a wife and marries her, and it happens that she finds no favor in his eyes because he has found some uncleanness in her, and he writes her a certificate of divorce, puts it in her hand, and sends her out of his house, ² when she has departed from his house, and goes and becomes another man's wife, ³ if the latter husband detests her and writes her a certificate of divorce, puts it in her hand, and sends her out of his house, or if the latter husband dies who took her as his wife, ⁴ then her former husband who divorced her must not take her back to be his wife after she has been defiled; for that is an abomination before the LORD, and you shall not bring sin on the land which the LORD your God is giving you as an inheritance.

Of course, the liberal school most favored, because it was the most freeing to satisfy the flesh.

Looking to Polarize Jesus

For many, marriage was sacred there in Israel. But we can tell that for most it wasn't. So they wanna polarize Jesus on the topic so He comes across as judgmental, and a hater, and one who passes along hate speech. What was going on at this time in Israel, was divorce could be for anything. That was the predominant way it was being applied. There was two main school of thoughts on the matter, and the people of Israel were taking the liberal side. So here the Pharisees, they're setting up Jesus, so they think, to come across to say something that's gonna totally turn the people against them. And then, not to mention the region that they're in, and this confrontation is, which no doubt was purposely orchestrated to confront at this moment in this place, was it was the region that Herod Antipas was ruling, and he, if you recall, took his brother's wife and married here. John the Baptist says it's not lawful, so Herod and his wife, they have John the Baptist thrown in prison, and then eventually beheaded. So here these Pharisees, there's no doubt thinking, "Hey, maybe we can get Herod Antipas to do our dirty work, because Jesus is gonna come out and say the same thing John the Baptist" "What you're doing is unlawful according to the Word of God, regardless of the law of the land."

How Did They Know Jesus Would Choose Righteousness / Because They Knew the Difference

Verse 2, how did they know Jesus would choose righteousness? Well, they would have to know that Jesus was righteous. They knew his heart, they knew what he believed, and they would know that he would be completely against the opposite which was frivolous divorces that went against the word of God. And hence, of course, the trap for Jesus, but so to today, there are those who try to polarize you, try to polarize the church as hatemongers, closed minded, because they literally know the other option, which we call the righteous option, righteous meaning right standing before God. Therefore, based on the word of God. And they know what that option is, whether it was because they read it for themselves in the scriptures or whether they came to a church and heard it or whether they were raised in a home that honored and taught the word of God. They knew it, they knew the option and they rejected it. And they say you are closed minded, but the fact is they've closed their mind up a long time ago. And I don't say that in an attacking manner. But they've closed themselves out for this reasoning and hence the power of prayer and a heart that would come to them in love, that could break through the hardness of their heart. 'Cause that's what Jesus is saying, all this is, that these Pharisees are coming and the nation of Israel is living this way, is because of the hardness of their heart. It's no longer teachable, it's no longer moldable, it's no longer pliable. There's no place for water to penetrate and make it pliable that it can be shaped in a different way. And so what we have here is that it is a heart issue, not a head issue. And the heart issue is not the heart of God. And what I would plead to anyone today regarding the marriage is choose the heart of God and what his heart is for marriage and we'll talk more about that as we continue.

Marriage Defined (10:6)

- **He Created Marriages**

Mark 10:6 But from the beginning of the creation, God 'made them male and female.'

Clear Definition of Marriage

So verse 6, we see a clear definition of marriage given here in the scriptures between a man and a woman, ordained by God.

Jesus Explains God's Will for Marriage – To Truly Understand Divorce and Remarriage

When asked a question about divorce, Jesus refused to answer it until first he had explained God's will for marriage (Mark 10:1–12//Matt. 19:1–12). Indeed, he seems to say, it is quite impossible to understand God's mind on the issues of divorce and remarriage until you have come to terms with his mind on the question of marriage.

Jesus gives us a great example in that too in that when we are polarizing questions, these hot topics, teach people God's intent, share with the heart of God, and give them something to go back and think over..... the heart of God. Maybe they had come to their position based on the media, social media, YouTube, and the likes, but not the Word and the Heart of God.

Contract vs Covenant

So the certificate of divorce was literally a piece of paper. It was to be able to pull to say, "See, I've been given the certificate of divorce by the religious leaders, by the legal leaders of the land. So I'm free to be separated from this person for good, and I'm also free to remarry." But we're gonna talk more about that as we study more.

Marriage may be considered a contract here on this earth, but the fact of the matter is when we pass through the judgment seat of Christ anything that is flammable will burn away. There will be no contract to hold before God and say, "But I obeyed the law." What marriage is, is a covenant before God. It's a holy covenant and a sacred covenant, and it's meant to be honored that way, and that fire can't burn it, fire can't consume it. As we've made a covenant, Lord, before you. Maybe man witnessed, but my covenant was made before you. I'm gonna honor my marriage, and I'm gonna invest and pour everything that I am into my marriage. Over my career, over my hobbies, over my self-interest, my marriage and my family will be my covenant with you.

As I say, it's not about happiness, it's about holiness. But in holiness, when you truly find it, walk in it, live in it, you'll find a happiness. You'll find a peace that passes understanding. And happiness, unfortunately, wants to understand. But peace, it goes beyond an understanding and there you'll find true happiness.

God Knew – No Confusion

Verse 6 says that God created them male and female. You know, we live in a confusing time. The world may be confused, the world may be causing confusion, and maybe you find yourself confused about your gender. If you are, let me say there's a God in Heaven who is The God of the universe, the one and only God, who in Psalm 139 said He formed you in your mother's womb, and He is the one who knew exactly what you were to be. There was no confusion on it, and you are ultimately created to be his treasure. He knew what He was doing, He always knows what He's doing, and He had no confusion in what He was doing, and who you are. And He can help you to come into clarity of exactly how he created you and what you mean to Him, and how precious you are to him.

Psalm 139:13–16 (NKJV) ¹³ For You formed my inward parts; You covered me in my mother's womb. ¹⁴ I will praise You, for I am fearfully and wonderfully made; Marvelous are Your works, And that my soul knows very well. ¹⁵ My frame was not hidden from You, When I was made in secret, And skillfully wrought in the lowest parts of the earth. ¹⁶ Your eyes saw my substance, being yet unformed. And in Your book they all were written, The days fashioned for me, When as yet there were none of them.

Genesis 1 and Genesis 2, we read the story of God creating Adam, whose name in the Hebrew means man, mankind. And God, with the stroke of his hand, created Adam exactly of who Adam was to be. He knew every detail of how he was creating Adam. And when he created Eve, woman out of man, that's what it means, he took a bone from the side of Adam and formed Eve exactly how she was designed to be, exactly who she was to be and then presented her to Adam as a gift. And husbands, let me just add on to that, God gave you your wife as a gift, as

a treasure, and therefore honor that gift and honor that treasure as sacred, uncommon, and precious, exactly as God intended for you. And he made your wife exactly how she is.

Genesis 2:18–25 (NKJV) ¹⁸ And the LORD God said, "It is not good that man should be alone; I will make him a helper comparable to him." ¹⁹ Out of the ground the LORD God formed every beast of the field and every bird of the air, and brought them to Adam to see what he would call them. And whatever Adam called each living creature, that was its name. ²⁰ So Adam gave names to all cattle, to the birds of the air, and to every beast of the field. But for Adam there was not found a helper comparable to him. ²¹ And the LORD God caused a deep sleep to fall on Adam, and he slept; and He took one of his ribs, and closed up the flesh in its place. ²² Then the rib which the LORD God had taken from man He made into a woman, and He brought her to the man. ²³ And Adam said: "This is now bone of my bones And flesh of my flesh; She shall be called Woman, Because she was taken out of Man." ²⁴ Therefore a man shall leave his father and mother and be joined to his wife, and they shall become one flesh. ²⁵ And they were both naked, the man and his wife, and were not ashamed.

If We See Judgement Coming – Should Move us to Compassion

So those who believe in the Word of God, and see those living contrary and against the Word of God, knowing that there is a judgment to come, our response should not be judgment, but we should look and know that a coming judgment should move us to compassion as we look at what the result will be if change does not happen. It's not a time to rant, but it's a time to weep. That weeping should lead us to our knees, pleading before God as intercessors on their behalf, as we see Moses continually pleading for the people of the nation of Israel, that God wouldn't destroy them. He's pleading on their cause, and God would continually respond and do something about it.

I believe the same can be true for us. So not a place for us to sit around and talk about them, which most often leads to self-righteousness, but to take our righteousness and go talk to them before God and plead on their cause, knowing that the heart of God is that none should perish, but all should seek repentance. May we live as a people who judgment happens at the last breath. May we be a people who live in the time of breath, that there's still time for something to change, and we can influence that change through prayer and prayerfully a communication that would speak to the person with love and compassion, that they would know judgments not on our heart, but love and passion for them.

Jude 20–23 (NKJV) ²⁰ But you, beloved, building yourselves up on your most holy faith, praying in the Holy Spirit, ²¹ keep yourselves in the love of God, looking for the mercy of our Lord Jesus Christ unto eternal life. ²² And on some have compassion, making a distinction; ²³ but others save with fear, pulling them out of the fire, hating even the garment defiled by the flesh.

Marriage Bonded & Built (10:7-9)

- **How to Have a Great Marriage**

Mark 10:7 'For this reason a man shall leave his father and mother and be joined to his wife, Mark 10:8 and the two shall become one flesh'; so then they are no longer two, but one flesh. Mark 10:9 Therefore what God has joined together, let not man separate."

Genesis – Glued

Verse 8, the word there to be joined together, quoting Genesis 2, it was permanent glue. It wasn't a tape, it wasn't a rope, it wasn't twine, it was glue, permanent glue. And when you try to pull two things apart that are glued together, there is no way you can do that without pulling pieces from one to the other and vice versa. And divorce will cause you to lose a piece of yourself permanently. But it's a beautiful thing when the glue takes two and makes them one. They're twice as good, they're twice as great. One of the variants of that Hebrew word meant to "solder together" as when they were soldering metal to make a breastplate of armor. I like that, and I find it no coincidence that the passage on spiritual warfare in Ephesians comes after the passage on marriage and children.

Genesis 2:24–25 (NKJV) ²⁴ Therefore a man shall leave his father and mother and be joined to his wife, and they shall become one flesh. ²⁵ And they were both naked, the man and his wife, and were not ashamed.

Ephesians 5:31 (NKJV) ³¹ "For this reason a man shall leave his father and mother and be joined to his wife, and the two shall become one flesh."

Ephesians 6:10–11 (NKJV) ¹⁰ Finally, my brethren, be strong in the Lord and in the power of His might. ¹¹ Put on the whole armor of God, that you may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil.

Clear Definition of Marriage

So verse 6, we see a clear definition of marriage given here in the scriptures between a man and a woman, ordained by God.

Marriage is Picture of God's Love to His Bride / What is Our Marriage to Him Like?

Marriage is the picture given in Ephesians 5, and it's a picture of God's love for his bride, which is the church, and individually is you, as you are the bride of Christ. So what is that marriage, your marriage with Christ?

- It is love, with unconditional acceptance. It is joy. It is a gift. It is amazing. It is precious, endearing, exciting, a new adventure every day, a relationship that is secure, one that says, "Look at my bride. Isn't she beautiful?"

How precious our marriage is with the Lord.

Ephesians 5:25–33 (NKJV) ²⁵ Husbands, love your wives, just as Christ also loved the church and gave Himself for her, ²⁶ that He might sanctify and cleanse her with the washing of water by the word, ²⁷ that He might present her to Himself a glorious church, not having spot or wrinkle or any such thing, but that she should be holy and without blemish. ²⁸ So husbands ought to love their own wives as their own bodies; he who loves his wife loves himself. ²⁹ For no one ever hated his own flesh, but nourishes and cherishes it, just as the Lord does the church. ³⁰ For we are members of His body, of His flesh and of His bones. ³¹ "For this reason a man shall leave his father and mother and be joined to his wife, and the two shall become one flesh." ³² This is a great mystery, but I speak concerning Christ and the church. ³³ Nevertheless let each one of you in particular so love his own wife as himself, and let the wife see that she respects her husband.

Don't Confuse Marriages You See With God's Marriage with You

And maybe you don't see your marriage with God the way I described it. And maybe that is because your past marriage or your current marriage or watching your parents' marriage, and that's what you think marriage is. May I say, don't confuse those things with the marriage that God views with you personally, between you and him. He loves you exactly as I described, and you move his heart, and he sees you as a spotless, adorned, precious bride to him. He's not looking for your performance and he's not putting conditions on you. And when you can feel that and experience that, you'll find your love with Christ is free and simply enjoy your marriage and how precious you are.

But Based on God's Marriage to You is – How much Does Your Marriage Reflect the Same?

But based on the things that I just said of what our marriage is with Christ and how it is a reflection of how our marriage on earth should be, how well does your marriage reflect the things that I just said of love, joy, unconditional acceptance, gift, amazing, precious, endearing, exciting? Secure. How much, how well, does your marriage reflect those things? And if not, what within your means can you change to make your marriage as described? And what can you do about it today?

Don't let the things you witnessed rob you of your marriage with the Lord or your marriage today.

Your marriage is a gift, and salvation is a gift. Are you viewing your marriage as a gift, and how does that make you view your marriage?

Want a Great Marriage – Be the Greatest in Kingdom in Your Home

Verse 9, if you want a great marriage, you want a marriage that's the greatest in the kingdom of God, one that God holds up and says, "This is my intent of what marriage is to be," if you want a marriage that's the greatest in the kingdom of God, then apply the lessons we learned last week on how to be the greatest in the kingdom of God.

- Servant - Be an attendant, a servant, waiter for your spouse, seeking their well being above yours.
- Receive - Receive them, there's always a welcoming, there's a no judgment. They don't have to live by performance and conditions. If you do this, then you'll be received. Simply receive them and as we said, the word means to make your own. That your heart is so knit together with them, you make them our own.
- Unity - don't argue over every point thinking you have to win every argument, battle. Choose your battles wisely. I know many, they're afraid to give ground on one topic or issue because they believe that that is a loss, and the loss empowers the other for the next battle, and therefore they have to stand guard and win every battle. You'll find that's all you do, is battle over trivial things. Beautiful weapon of Satan. He uses it against the church and he'll use it against your marriage. Seek for unity. Agree on the most important things based on the Word of God. And be wise enough on the trivial things to just let them go. And then fourthly we saw the greatest in the kingdom protects.

- **Protect** - We have to protect our marriage, we have to protect our spouse, and we have to protect their innocence.
- **Purity** - You wanna be the greatest in the kingdom and you wanna be the greatest marriage in the kingdom. Purity is a must. You must maintain purity in every area of your life, from your eyes to your speech to what you take into your body. We must maintain purity.
- **Living Sacrifice** - Then the living sacrifice. There'll be times when you've instilled all this, you'll find yourself in a place, Lord, all I can do is make myself a living sacrifice before you and this marriage, and I will die to myself for the sake of my marriage, that it glorifies you.
- **Peace** - And then lastly, peace. Peace with one another. We need to keep a peace with one another. Yes, the argument over the trivial things will cause lack of peace, but it's all the other things too. The opposite of peace is war, and too many marriages are at war with one another rather than just laying their lives down and say what you have said, Lord. Though you have slain me, yet will I praise you. And we just live taking the low road.

You live as the greatest in the kingdom and you will find your marriage will be the greatest also.

And if we can bring our marriages to that same place, taking them away from performance and conditions, resentments and resistance, living as the greatest in the kingdom, then we'll find we're just free in our marriages, to love and enjoy marriage as God intended it to be.

Parents Don't Join to Your Child's Marriage

Just a couple various thoughts before moving on; In verse 7, mother and father shall not be joined to the children in marriage. Ha ha, just saying, but yeah I am saying. The man and the woman are the ones that are joined. The mother and father should not be joined.

Verse 7, parents if you can weaken the glue, you will be diminishing the strength of the bond of the marriage. Your job as a parent should always be to strengthen the marriage, the bond. For the influence of the parent is great, and it will be great into their marriage, because your blood is in their DNA. Your DNA will be in the grandchildren's. Yes, there is a link in there because of that relationship as a parent and a child, and so you do have great influence. But you should use your influence to bond the marriage, and strengthen the marriage, and make it the greatest in the Kingdom.

Let No Man Separate / Even the Really Kind-Hearted Person

Verse 9, God says, "Let no one put us under this marriage and anyone, parent, government, or somebody who shows an interest in another married person, you are dividing that marriage, and there is a God in heaven who says you're treading on sacred ground, and that is to ensure calling of me to rise up and enter and engage you."

May I say of to anyone who's married, and maybe someone is showing your interest, and maybe someone is what you consider nice and understanding, more understanding than your spouse, know this. That person isn't nice, and they don't have a kind heart. They are defying the word of God, and they obviously have a hard heart, and they have a heart problem. They have a selfish heart, because they have a heart that would be willing to destroy what God has united. They aren't caring. They aren't understanding. They have a heart issue, and they have to get right with God.

Marriage Meant to Last (10:10-12)

- **God's Word of Marriage and Divorce**

Mark 10:10 In the house His disciples also asked Him again about the same matter.

Mark 10:11 So He said to them, "Whoever divorces his wife and marries another commits adultery against her.

Mark 10:12 And if a woman divorces her husband and marries another, she commits adultery."

Jesus Investing in Disciples

Here as we have noticed, Jesus spending more time with the disciples investing in them His heart on various topics. Jesus doesn't want the distractions of all the crowds and critics, those going through the motions of religion. He is now teaching His disciples whom He has an intimate relationship with, so they can teach other as He hands them the keys to the Church.

Overview on Sexual Relationships in the Old Testament

So here is an overview of some of the commands of God in the Old and New Testament regarding sexual purity, and what we will see is purity was the call for all.

If Woman Not a Virgin on Wedding Night – Death to Woman

We see in Deuteronomy that there was the expectation that the woman was a virgin on the wedding night, and therefore we can see that sex before marriage, casual sex, was not permitted in ancient Israel.

Deuteronomy 22:13–21 (NKJV) ¹³ "If any man takes a wife, and goes in to her, and detests her, ¹⁴ and charges her with shameful conduct, and brings a bad name on her, and says, 'I took this woman, and when I came to her I found she was not a virgin,' ¹⁵ then the father and mother of the young woman shall take and bring out the evidence of the young woman's virginity to the elders of the city at the gate. ¹⁶ And the young woman's father shall say to the elders, 'I gave my daughter to this man as wife, and he detests her. ¹⁷ Now he has charged her with shameful conduct, saying, "I found your daughter was not a virgin," and yet these are the evidences of my daughter's virginity.' And they shall spread the cloth before the elders of the city. ¹⁸ Then the elders of that city shall take that man and punish him; ¹⁹ and they shall fine him one hundred shekels of silver and give them to the father of the young woman, because he has brought a bad name on a virgin of Israel. And she shall be his wife; he cannot divorce her all his days. ²⁰ "But if the thing is true, and evidences of virginity are not found for the young woman, ²¹ then they shall bring out the young woman to the door of her father's house, and the men of her city shall stone her to death with stones, because she has done a disgraceful thing in Israel, to play the harlot in her father's house. So you shall put away the evil from among you.

If man Lies with Virgin – She is His Wife

In fact, it was really simple, if you had sexual relationships, you were then married.

Deuteronomy 22:28–29 (NKJV) ²⁸ "If a man finds a young woman who is a virgin, who is not betrothed, and he seizes her and lies with her, and they are found out, ²⁹ then the man who lay with her shall give to the young woman's father fifty shekels of silver, and she shall be his wife because he has humbled her; he shall not be permitted to divorce her all his days.

Exodus 22:16–17 (NKJV) ¹⁶ "If a man entices a virgin who is not betrothed, and lies with her, he shall surely pay the bride-price for her to be his wife. ¹⁷ If her father utterly refuses to give her to him, he shall pay money according to the bride-price of virgins.

Adultery was Death Penalty / Divorce Certificate Prove Could Remarry

Leviticus 20, adultery was punishable by death. So if there was adultery in the marriage, there would be no one left to hand a marriage certificate to. The marriage certificate would be the proof that that person that you were once married to no longer lives. They were killed for the punishment of adultery.

Deuteronomy 22:22 (NKJV) ²² "If a man is found lying with a woman married to a husband, then both of them shall die—the man that lay with the woman, and the woman; so you shall put away the evil from Israel.

Leviticus 20:13 (NKJV) ¹³ If a man lies with a male as he lies with a woman, both of them have committed an abomination. They shall surely be put to death. Their blood shall be upon them.

Death of the Spouse – You Can Remarry

You can remarry after death, 1 Corinthians 7:39, Romans 7:1.

1 Corinthians 7:39 (NKJV) ³⁹ A wife is bound by law as long as her husband lives; but if her husband dies, she is at liberty to be married to whom she wishes, only in the Lord.

Romans 7:1–3 (NKJV) ¹ Or do you not know, brethren (for I speak to those who know the law), that the law has dominion over a man as long as he lives? ² For the woman who has a husband is bound by the law to her husband as long as he lives. But if the husband dies, she is released from the law of her husband. ³ So then if, while her husband lives, she marries another man, she will be called an adulteress; but if her husband dies, she is free from that law, so that she is no adulteress, though she has married another man.

No Differentiating between Sexual Immorality and Adultery

So, there is no trying to draw a line here and differentiate between sexual immorality and adultery. Purity was the call for all. In the Old Testament when you entered into the physical relationship, you were then therefore considered married, and you took on all the responsibilities of marriage, as if and you were married. If you were not a virgin on wedding night, then the woman was stoned.

Our Passage Today – Jesus Says Because Hard Hearts

So our point for our passage today. In the Old Testament, biblical times, predominantly with the discussion of Deuteronomy 24 is to the nation of Israel, and divorce was only by the husband's choosing. As we read in Deuteronomy chapter 24, if he chose to put her out ... and we see Jesus is going to bust that down, how hard their hearts were.

Protecting the Woman / Husband No Going Back – Are You Sure

But if the husband put her out, the woman could remarry, and then we see that the husband could not take her back even if he wanted to. Once she remarried, she was considered the other man's wife. So there was a point being put in there that, "Husband, you better be sure you no longer want her." God's protecting the woman because of the hardness of man's heart and the emotional abuse that that would be. Taking her back, sending her away. Taking her back, sending her away. We know that even that still today applies in relationships of taking back and the sending away, and the emotional turmoil it causes. The message that is being sent is the message of reconciliation, meaning, "Husband, you should be considering reconciliation because once she's gone, she's gone forever. You can never have her back."

Now in Roman Area – Woman Could Divorce

And Mark 10 expands on that, that the woman could file for divorce, which causes much confusion until we understand where we are. We're on the other side of the Jordan. We're in Perea, we're talking, yes to a Jewish crowd, but also to a Roman crowd, a Gentile crowd and Mark is written to the Gentile crowd. But this is also in Matthew and Luke's account. But in the Roman society, a woman could file for divorce. She had that right to do that legally.

Marriage for Life / If Divorce – Wait for Reconciliation

And so in this passage in both cases, whether it was the woman who filed or the man who had filed, the word is being said regardless of what the state, local, federal law permits. Jesus says in that, "Marriage is for life, and if you do divorce, it's adultery if you remarry." That's what is being said here. He is saying, "If you do divorce, remain single, and prayerfully there will be reconciliation as you sit and ponder what a life of singleness would be like. You'll come to the realization of how trivial and frivolous your divorce was." And that reconciliation is confirmed in the Epistle of Paul to the Corinthians in 1 Corinthians 7 verses 10 through 16.

[1 Corinthians 7:10–16 \(NKJV\)](#) ¹⁰ Now to the married I command, yet not I but the Lord: A wife is not to depart from *her* husband. ¹¹ But even if she does depart, let her remain unmarried or be reconciled to *her* husband. And a husband is not to divorce *his* wife. ¹² But to the rest I, not the Lord, say: If any brother has a wife who does not believe, and she is willing to live with him, let him not divorce her. ¹³ And a woman who has a husband who does not believe, if he is willing to live with her, let her not divorce him. ¹⁴ For the unbelieving husband is sanctified by the wife, and the unbelieving wife is sanctified by the husband; otherwise your children would be unclean, but now they are holy. ¹⁵ But if the unbeliever departs, let him depart; a brother or a sister is not under bondage in such *cases*. But God has called us to peace. ¹⁶ For how do you know, O wife, whether you will save *your* husband? Or how do you know, O husband, whether you will save *your* wife?

Billy And Rose

And it works. I know actual stories, and I think of my friend Billy who says about his wife Rose, "The best wife a man could marry," and then he puts a hyphen in the word twice, because he got divorced. They got divorced, and then as they split, and remained unwed, and pondered life apart, and reflected on what they did have, they realized what they were risking to lose forever. They remarried, and it was beautiful. They still have a beautiful marriage today. They have a beautiful family. They're serving the Lord. They're excited. They have joy in their marriage. They have joy in their life. They have joy in their ministry. They attended my marriage, and they sat there with a smile, because they could confirm and concur what joy and what a gift I was entering into. They had never met Renee until the wedding, but it was beautiful how they received her as my gift, because they knew the gift of marriage.

Adultery doesn't mean Have to Divorce

And though it says that adultery would be a grounds for divorce in the scriptures as Jesus would say, confirming the Old Testament and The Sermon on the Mount, Matthew chapter 5, that adultery is not mandatory to divorce. So, I just want to make that point. There's still grace. There's still forgiveness, and there's still reconciliation that

can be had and can be made. God doesn't therefore take a marriage and say, "It is over." God still will work in the marriage and still turn it in to all things beautiful. But, guard your marriage. I can't say it enough.

Matthew 5:31–32 (NKJV) ³¹ "Furthermore it has been said, 'Whoever divorces his wife, let him give her a certificate of divorce.' ³² But I say to you that whoever divorces his wife for any reason except sexual immorality causes her to commit adultery; and whoever marries a woman who is divorced commits adultery.

So Now You Have Remarried (and Not Divorced Based on Adultery)

So what if you're divorced, and not for adultery? You divorced for a reason that was contrary to the scriptures, and now you have remarried, and now you're sitting here and saying, "Oh my, I'm living in adultery," or maybe you're saying, "Do I divorce and go back and try to reconcile with the person I divorced?" Let me say a couple things here, and I know these are hard things. The father forgives, and the father only holds you accountable to what you knew at the time and understood.

Father Forgives

The father forgives. "Women, where are thy accusers? Nor do I go and sin no more."

John 8:10–11 (NKJV) ¹⁰ When Jesus had raised Himself up and saw no one but the woman, He said to her, "Woman, where are those accusers of yours? Has no one condemned you?" ¹¹ She said, "No one, Lord." And Jesus said to her, "Neither do I condemn you; go and sin no more."

Father Hates Divorce

Malachi 2 says, "God hates divorce," so if you're thinking of divorcing your current spouse, because you think you're now living in adultery, are you going to do something else and more that God hates, divorce? Marriage is people making a solemn vow before God and before him, and now to divorce would be then to go back and to break that solemn vow. God hates divorce.

Malachi 2:16 (NKJV) ¹⁶ "For the LORD God of Israel says That He hates divorce, For it covers one's garment with violence," Says the LORD of hosts. Therefore take heed to your spirit, That you do not deal treacherously."

Repent

Repent. Repent of that sin of the unbiblical divorce. Seek God's forgiveness, to which it will be given immediately.

"If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sin and cleanse us from all in righteousness. It will be washed away." It's what the bible says. It will be washed away, as with the sin of hatred, the sin of pride, the sin of stealing. All those things. Yeah, divorce brings more ramifications, but the point that's being made is God forgives, and God will forgive. And now make your marriage the greatest in the Kingdom.

1 John 1:9 (NKJV) ⁹ If we confess our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive us *our* sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.

Remain

Remain. I believe 1 Corinthians 7 verses 17 through 24 are exactly what they say they are. "Remain in the place that you are called." You now understand this. Remain in that place, and make this the greatest marriage.

1 Corinthians 7:17–24 (NKJV) ¹⁷ But as God has distributed to each one, as the Lord has called each one, so let him walk. And so I ordain in all the churches. ¹⁸ Was anyone called while circumcised? Let him not become uncircumcised. Was anyone called while uncircumcised? Let him not be circumcised. ¹⁹ Circumcision is nothing and uncircumcision is nothing, but keeping the commandments of God *is what matters*. ²⁰ Let each one remain in the same calling in which he was called. ²¹ Were you called *while* a slave? Do not be concerned about it; but if you can be made free, rather use it. ²² For he who is called in the Lord *while* a slave is the Lord's freedman. Likewise he who is called *while* free is Christ's slave. ²³ You were bought at a price; do not become slaves of men. ²⁴ Brethren, let each one remain with God in that *state* in which he was called.

Application

So some application on all of this:

- Fight - God calls for every marriage to fight for their marriage to be the greatest.
- Children Pray - If you're a child here today, one of the children of a marriage, pray for your parents' marriage. Understand your parents are two flawed people, and therefore there will be issues among two flawed people. It doesn't mean that God's not in the midst, and that he can't work this and bind this and grow this. So children, pray for your parents' marriage every day, because it is a serious attack. One of the reasons the devil wants to destroy your parents' marriage, is because they also have you in mind. They want to see you put into the mix of not understanding what marriage is, to have a low value and view of marriage. So children, pray for your parents' marriage.

- Singles - And singles, if you're considering on getting married, which I'm sure you are, most of you, I pray that you would consider the intent of what marriage is to be forever. I pray that you will prepare yourself to be that person forever. Can I give you a great piece of advice? Can I tell you what I did from early on in my salvation until the day I got married, is I prayed for my wife Renee. Which would have been, I had prayed for her for 11 years before our marriage and probably 8 or 9 years before I first met her. Pray for your potential who's going to be your mate, that God would make them into the greatest in the Kingdom as you are preparing yourself to be the greatest in the Kingdom, and your marriage will be the greatest in the Kingdom.

Can't Cover Every Scenario

It's impossible to cover all the scenarios, but unbiblical divorce is, you're to remain single and seek reconciliation. You're to seek that reconciliation until the other would fully dissolve any chance of reconciliation, by entering into a binding relationship with someone or to the extent of marriage. But even if they are in a relationship that has not gone into marriage, but it's gone to the physical side, the two become one. There could still be opportunity for reconciliation, so don't immediately jump to that it's time to move on and look for the ... praying for that next relationship.

Call It Grace

You may say, "Well if it's all grace, then I'll just do what I want to do. What's the big deal? Marry, divorce, remarry. I'll just claim God's grace, and all is well." But Romans tells us it's the kindness of God that leads to repentance. We're also told in Corinthians that, "Godly sorrow produces repentance." The whole reason we're in this conversation today, is because we're being told the hardness of heart is what started this whole thing. The hardness of heart will claim easy grace, but grace was never easy for the Lord. He gave his only begotten son, and that's the price of grace. So people who will live easy grace and say, "I'll do what I want, and I'm covered," it's quite questionable if they truly understand what the price was paid for this grace. Grace stands for "God's riches at Christ's expense." To go and live in any type of immorality would be to say, "This, fill in the blank, sin is covered by God's riches at Christ's expense." When you put it into that framework, you'll realize, "How could I? How can I?" Godly sorrow will lead you to repentance.

[2 Corinthians 7:10 \(NKJV\)](#)¹⁰ For godly sorrow produces repentance leading to salvation, not to be regretted; but the sorrow of the world produces death.

Family Matters (10:13-16)

- **Seeing the Kingdom of God in Children**

Jesus Says Let the Children Come Unto Me (10:13-16)

Mark 10:13 Then they brought little children to Him, that He might touch them; but the disciples rebuked those who brought them.

Mark 10:14 But when Jesus saw it, He was greatly displeased and said to them, "Let the little children come to Me, and do not forbid them; for of such is the kingdom of God.

Mark 10:15 Assuredly, I say to you, whoever does not receive the kingdom of God as a little child will by no means enter it."

Mark 10:16 And He took them up in His arms, laid His hands on them, and blessed them.

Disciples Decide Who is Worthy

Verse 13, the disciples are deciding who's worthy to come before Jesus. They're determining who should get his time and his investment in. A.k.a., they're now becoming God, determining who can approach God, and the church, Christians, can do that over and over as they look at this person and their lifestyle or look at them and their failures, and they decide who gets to come to God and who doesn't. Oh, let it not be so.

Disciples Forget the Greatest in Kingdom Sermon

Verse 13, the disciples forgot the Greatest in the Kingdom sermon back in chapter nine.

Entry into the Kingdom – Like a Child

The children come with nothing. They can't earn their way into heaven, they can't perform their way into heaven, all they can do is come and be received into heaven. The key is.....man comes..... Jesus receives. Man has to come, as a child, with nothing. And Jesus receives because of His love and His works (there upon the cross)

Tie-In With Today's Message on Marriage / Misrepresenting Jesus

Jesus it says was "greatly displeased" with His disciples for not allowing the children to come to him. It is the only place I find where Jesus is greatly displeased with His disciples, and it is here. Why? Because the disciples are misrepresenting Jesus, misrepresenting on who can come before Him, who is worthy to come, who Jesus will be willing to receive. They misrepresent Jesus and He was displeased with them.

And for marriages today, I take you back to Ephesians 5, that our marriages are to reflect and represent God's marriage to His people. We have a tremendous calling, responsibility, to represent the well before our children. They have to see marriage as it was and is intended, and when we teach them about marriage unto the Lord, they have a wonderful and beautiful example to see. We cannot misrepresent marriage before our kids, dare I say, God will be displeased if we do.

Value of Child – Determines Value of the Marriage

The value of the children, will greatly determine the value of the marriage.

Prayer – Boldly Ask Your God

The Word of God is Living and Powerful, and is ready, and will do a mighty work in our lives.

Hebrews 4:12 (NKJV) ¹² For the word of God is living and powerful, and sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing even to the division of soul and spirit, and of joints and marrow, and is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart.

In Every Study

- Who Is God? (How Great is He?)
- What Does He Think of Me? (How Wonderful Are His Thoughts Towards Me?)
- What Does He Want Me to Do?
- What Can I Boldly Request of Him?
- What Do I Need to Be on Guard of When I Leave Here Today?

Boldly come to the throne of grace, ask God to reveal Himself in a mighty way to you, and to do I might work in you, and through you.

Hebrews 4:16 (NKJV) ¹⁶ Let us therefore come boldly to the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy and find grace to help in time of need.

End of Study

Mark 10:13-31

Receiving the Kingdom as a Child

Recap/Intro

Jesus at this point in our study is only a few weeks from the cross. Based on the nearness of the cross, it makes me even more so say wow these are final words, how important they must be, therefore I should dig deep into what is being said.

Last week we looked at Marriage as intended by God, and our calling and responsibility to represent marriage as an example of God's love for His Bride, the church. We bridged into how have the high calling to especially represent marriage before our children. Well today we start with Jesus receiving the little children, we will see a direct tie-in with how all people are to receive the kingdom God, as little children Jesus will say, and that ties into one of the most known stories in the Gospels of the "Rich-Young-Ruler" coming to Jesus saying Good Teacher what must I do to inherit eternal life. As we study it, we will see Jesus stays the course all the way through, that you receive the Kingdom of God, you receive Eternal Life, simple as a child. If you have never "received" Jesus Christ as your Lord and Savior, God will give you that opportunity today. For those who have received the Kingdom and the King, the Lord is going to give a rich Word to His disciples, and thus to us, what is the reward for serving and following Him today. To which I will give you that answer right now, up front, because He is Worth It..... and hence today why it is worth investing this time to study His Word

Mark 10:13–22 (NKJV) ¹³ Then they brought little children to Him, that He might touch them; but the disciples rebuked those who brought *them*. ¹⁴ But when Jesus saw *it*, He was greatly displeased and said to them, "Let the little children come to Me, and do not forbid them; for of such is the kingdom of God. ¹⁵ Assuredly, I say to you, whoever does not receive the kingdom of God as a little child will by no means enter it." ¹⁶ And He took them up in His arms, laid *His* hands on them, and blessed them. ¹⁷ Now as He was going out on the road, one came running, knelt before Him, and asked Him, "Good Teacher, what shall I do that I may inherit eternal life?" ¹⁸ So Jesus said to him, "Why do you call Me good? No one *is* good but One, *that is*, God. ¹⁹ You know the commandments: '*Do not commit adultery, Do not murder, Do not steal, Do not bear false witness, Do not defraud, Honor your father and your mother.*' " ²⁰ And he answered and said to Him, "Teacher, all these things I have kept from my youth." ²¹ Then Jesus, looking at him, loved him, and said to him, "One thing you lack: Go your way, sell whatever you have and give to the poor, and you will have treasure in heaven; and come, take up the cross, and follow Me." ²² But he was sad at this word, and went away sorrowful, for he had great possessions.

Outline Mark 10:13-31:

- Receive the Kingdom of God as a Child (10:13-15)
 - It is that Simple
- Dad's Bring Your Children to Jesus (10:16)
 - The High Calling of Fatherhood
- There is None Good but God (10:17-18)
 - Will We Therefore Obey His Word?
- There is One Thing You Lack (10:19-22)
 - Breaking Free the Spiritual Floodgates
- How Hard it is for a Rich Man to Enter Heaven (10:23)
 - The Deception of Worldly Security
- Who Can be Saved? (10:24-27)
 - Thank God it is All God for Salvation
- The Reward for Following Jesus (10:28-31)
 - Jesus is Worth It

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The Word of God is Living and Powerful, and is ready, and will do a mighty work in our lives.

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- Who Is God? (How Great is He?)
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Hebrews 4:16 (NKJV) ¹⁶ Let us therefore come boldly to the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy and find grace to help in time of need.

Receive the Kingdom of God as a Child (10:13-15)

- It is that Simple

Jesus Says Let the Children Come Unto Me (10:13-16)

Mark 10:13 Then they brought little children to Him, that He might touch them; but the disciples rebuked those who brought them.

Mark 10:14 But when Jesus saw it, He was greatly displeased and said to them, “Let the little children come to Me, and do not forbid them; for of such is the kingdom of God.

Kids in Sanctuary

Many will use this verse to tell us we are wrong with our approach in ministry here, and that is fine, we know this ministry is not a fit for everyone. But we feel the leading of the Lord is the very model we see with Jesus, as yes He taught publicly to the mixed multitude of men, woman, and children such as the feeding of the 5,000, and 4,000 and other places. But we see Jesus taking His disciples (that included woman too I should note – see Luke 8:1-3) and investing in them privately, and personally, and then giving them the charge to go out and fulfill the great commission. So that is what we feel the Lord has called us to do, and we respect other ministries to do as the Lord calls them to do.

Luke 8:1–3 (NKJV) ¹ Now it came to pass, afterward, that He went through every city and village, preaching and bringing the glad tidings of the kingdom of God. And the twelve were with Him, ² and certain women who had been healed of evil spirits and infirmities—Mary called Magdalene, out of whom had come seven demons, ³ and Joanna the wife of Chuza, Herod’s steward, and Susanna, and many others who provided for Him from their substance.

I personally think if you wanted children to dread church, and not want them to come to Jesus, just make them sit and listen to me for 60 minutes. the surest way to keep your kids from Jesus is to bore them in church. An adult service is the last place Jesus wants your kids. I’m sure He prefers to communicate with them on their level - in ways they can understand. Jesus will meet your kids in Sunday School, not just in here

I remember when I was a child how great a prayer warrior, I was on Sunday mornings. I used to pray please let my parents sleep in. I would actually just lay in bed if I woke up before them and not move for fear my noise would wake them and we would then go to church and I would have to sit through that old man talking endlessly about things that made no sense to me, or were way above my head, or had no relevance to my life at that age. So I was a mighty prayer warrior every Sunday.

Jesus Meets Them at Their Level

Jesus meets the children on their level. If you notice, the children are sitting on his lap. If you notice, never once do we read of adult disciples sitting on Jesus’ lap. Jesus meets the children at their level, ministers to them at their level, and then he ministers and speaks to the disciples at their level.

Mark 10:15 Assuredly, I say to you, whoever does not receive the kingdom of God as a little child will by no means enter it."

Entry into the Kingdom – Like a Child

The children come with nothing. They can't earn their way into heaven, they can't perform their way into heaven, all they can do is come and be received into heaven. The key is.....man comes..... Jesus receives. Man has to come, as a child, with nothing. And Jesus receives because of His love and His works (there upon the cross)

Jesus Rebukes Disciples Because Misrepresent Him

Verse 14. Jesus rebukes the disciples because they misrepresent him. Just as Moses struck the rock twice, he couldn't enter the Promised Land because the Rock of Ages, he'll be struck once and it'll be done. There is no re-crucifying Jesus Christ. What he did on the cross, and when he said "It is done," it is done. All our sin, past, present, and future, covered and cleansed because of the one striking of Christ. So many people put Christ back on the cross every day and crucify him over and over, and they can feel somewhat pious about it and righteous, and see how repentant and sorrowful I am, and I understand that struggle, but there's also this great peace of just misrepresenting the work of Christ by saying that wasn't enough, and we put Christ on the cross again and again.

Numbers 20:11–12 (NKJV) ¹¹ Then Moses lifted his hand and struck the rock twice with his rod; and water came out abundantly, and the congregation and their animals drank. ¹² Then the LORD spoke to Moses and Aaron, "Because you did not believe Me, to hallow Me in the eyes of the children of Israel, therefore you shall not bring this assembly into the land which I have given them."

1 Corinthians 10:4 (NKJV) ⁴ and all drank the same spiritual drink. For they drank of that spiritual Rock that followed them, and that Rock was Christ.

Dad's Bring Your Children to Jesus (10:16)

- **The High Calling of Fatherhood**

Mark 10:16 And He took them up in His arms, laid His hands on them, and blessed them.

Back in verse 13, The word "they," being masculine in Greek, it was the fathers who brought their children to Jesus. Dad's there is a high calling in fatherhood, and that is to bring your children to Jesus.

Teach Them

Dad's teach them, take them, to Jesus.

- Who Is God? (How Great is He?)
- What Does He Think of Me? (How Wonderful Are His Thoughts Towards Me?)
- What Does He Want Me to Do?
- What Can I Boldly Request of Him?
- What Do I Need to Be on Guard of When I Leave Here Today?

Reason they Walk Away

I have found that when a child/person walks away from the faith, you can put your finger on one (or combination) of the following seven things. I see a pattern in those who walk away, and 99% seem to have always fallen into one (or combination) of the following. Dad's, Mom's, God bless you Children Church teachers for teaching them the Word.

1. Challenge of Scriptures
2. Challenge of Science
3. Challenge of Christians
4. Challenge of God of the Bible
5. Challenge of Hell
6. Challenge of Church
7. Challenge of the World

Our children, as they mature, will find a world that challenges that this Bible is inspired, Parents teach them and continually reinforce why you can trust the Bible is infallible Word of God. Teach them about creation versus evolution and how flawed the evolution theory is. Teach them continually that other Christians are flawed, and

Jesus didn't say follow My people, but follow Me! Parents teach them why hell exist, why there is evil in the world, explain to them what came with the fall, and the resultant of it. Teach them the answer to the challenge, how could a God of Love send someone to hell; teach them that He doesn't, it is a person's choice. At some point along the way, the church that is full of flawed people, will let them down, or they will see churches misrepresent Christ, and we need to teach our children what the purpose of the church is, and dispel what the church is not. And we have to teach them that there is a world that is calling them to temporal things, that may be fun for a season, but in the end will rob, steal, even kill. Dad's and Mom's we have a high calling as parents.

There is None Good but God (10:17-18)

- Will We Therefore Obey His Word?

Jesus Counsels the Rich Young Ruler (10:17-22)

Mark 10:17 Now as He was going out on the road, one came running, knelt before Him, and asked Him, "Good Teacher, what shall I do that I may inherit eternal life?"

Running – Urgency and/or Excitement

Verse 17, running brings the picture of urgency or excitement or both. So this man is coming with an urgency and/or an excitement. He sees Jesus, here's my opportunity to get to Jesus.

Rich – Young - Ruler

Verse 20, Matthew 19 says he was young. Luke 18 says he was a ruler. Mark 10 says he was rich. All of these the world esteems, but still there was something missing in this man. There was something wanting in this man. All that he had, there was still something that he wanted more of

Matthew 19:20 (NKJV) ²⁰ The young man said to Him, "All these things I have kept from my youth. What do I still lack?"

Luke 18:18 (NKJV) ¹⁸ Now a certain ruler asked Him, saying, "Good Teacher, what shall I do to inherit eternal life?"

Mark 10:22 (NKJV) ²² But he was sad at this word, and went away sorrowful, for he had great possessions.

What Good Thing Shall I do

In Matthew's gospel, 19:16, the man asks specifically, "What good thing shall I do? What great work," in essence he's saying, "so I may earn eternal life?"

Matthew 19:16 (NKJV) ¹⁶ Now behold, one came and said to Him, "Good Teacher, what good thing shall I do that I may have eternal life?"

Receive as a Child

Verse 17, back in verses 13 through 16, we're told how to receive the kingdom of God and that is as a child. And that is very relevant for our study today as we see confusion on this rich man and confusion on the disciples before we finish.

Mark 10:13–16 (NKJV) ¹³ Then they brought little children to Him, that He might touch them; but the disciples rebuked those who brought them. ¹⁴ But when Jesus saw it, He was greatly displeased and said to them, "Let the little children come to Me, and do not forbid them; for of such is the kingdom of God. ¹⁵ Assuredly, I say to you, whoever does not receive the kingdom of God as a little child will by no means enter it." ¹⁶ And He took them up in His arms, laid His hands on them, and blessed them.

Inherit?

Verse 17, he asks how do we inherit and that lends to we can see there's a confusion of him, this rich man, because inheriting is something you simply receive and Jesus has told us we receive it as a child.

- An inheritance is something you receive by relationship with someone,
- it's something given, not earned.
- It's something given upon the death of another.
- It's something you could reject if you so choose.
- It's something that you could miss receiving because of lack of knowledge or understanding that it was offered to you and it existed, this inheritance.

Mark 10:18 So Jesus said to him, “Why do you call Me good? No one is good but One, that is, God.

Jesus Claiming Himself to be God

So Jesus is clearly saying He is God by saying, there is only One that is good, and that is God. And as we have already read this in its context, for Jesus to say follow Me, and not be God, would then be having this man make Jesus an idol, which would be above the commandments to worship God and God alone. Pretty awesome wording here of the declaration that Jesus is God.

Exodus 20:2–3 (NKJV) ² “I am the LORD your God, who brought you out of the land of Egypt, out of the house of bondage.” ³ “You shall have no other gods before Me.

Jesus Establishes He is God – And if So, His Word Should be Obeyed / Lord or Lunatic

Verse 18, Jesus is establishing that he is God and that is a strong doctrinal and theological point being made here. But there's also another level underneath that for the understanding of our passage today, and an application for us who simply believe. Yes, Jesus is God. He is establishing that since Jesus is God, the Good Teacher, is this man willing to receive fully what the answer will be. Because God's teaching is perfect. It is a fact. If Jesus is the Good Teacher, because he is good and there's none good but God, the information that is given, the information that this man receives, isn't something to decide right or wrong about. Do I agree with this teaching? But this man will be given, this is perfect truth. And then he gets to make a decision to receive it or reject it for application to his life. But whether he receives it or rejects it does not change the fact that it is still truth and fact.

Of course, in our world, that is a reason that Jesus will be dismissed as not God. Because if he is acknowledged as God, then the natural response is what he says must be obeyed. And so I say to anyone in the world who says, "I don't believe that Jesus is God, but I believe that he was a great teacher and a good moralist," to which I would say, if he's not God, then he's not a great teacher, because he's saying things that only God could say, and he's saying things that if he is God, they must be obeyed.

If he is not God, if Jesus Christ is not God, then he's a crazy man. Sometimes it's said he's either a lunatic, a liar, or the Lord, to which I say, even the liar doesn't qualify, because only a crazy man would say that he is God if he's not God. And we would all agree with that.

But for us who agree he is God, then we can ask him and we can seek him in any manner of life, any matters of life, and he will speak to us not just the words of life but the words of eternal life based on the word of God that we hold in our hand today.

There is One Thing You Lack (10:19-22)

- **Breaking Free the Spiritual Floodgates**

Mark 10:19 You know the commandments: ‘Do not commit adultery,’ ‘Do not murder,’ ‘Do not steal,’ ‘Do not bear false witness,’ ‘Do not defraud,’ ‘Honor your father and your mother.’ ”

10 Commandments / Heart Issue

Verse 19, Jesus is quoting the Ten Commandments, also called the Decalogue, and he's specifically speaking of the last six laws of the Ten Commandments, which were given there on Mount Sinai that you can read in Exodus 20. Jesus speaks of these Ten Commandments that came down on Mount Sinai when he gave his expounding on the Sermon on the Mount. And he shows us as he says ... it's more than the physical. It goes into what's in the heart. As he said, "If you have hatred in your heart, you're guilty of murder." He says, "If you have lust in your heart, you're guilty of adultery." So Jesus is gonna put what is very specific. He's gonna put his finger on this man's heart of where he lacks.

Exodus 20:12–17 (NKJV) ¹² “Honor your father and your mother, that your days may be long upon the land which the LORD your God is giving you.” ¹³ “You shall not murder.” ¹⁴ “You shall not commit adultery.” ¹⁵ “You shall not steal.” ¹⁶ “You shall not bear false witness against your neighbor.” ¹⁷ “You shall not covet your neighbor's house; you shall not covet your neighbor's wife, nor his male servant, nor his female servant, nor his ox, nor his donkey, nor anything that is your neighbor's.”

Matthew 5:21–22 (NKJV) ²¹ “You have heard that it was said to those of old, ‘You shall not murder, and whoever murders will be in danger of the judgment.’” ²² But I say to you that whoever is angry with his brother without a cause shall be in danger of the judgment. And whoever says to his brother, ‘Raca!’ shall be in danger of the council. But whoever says, ‘You fool!’ shall be in danger of hell fire.

Matthew 5:27–28 (NKJV) ²⁷ “You have heard that it was said to those of old, ‘You shall not commit adultery.’ ²⁸ But I say to you that whoever looks at a woman to lust for her has already committed adultery with her in his heart.

The Word of God will Give You Life Today Here on Earth (as well as Eternity)

Matthew 19:17, but let's not miss that if we want to enter into life, as Jesus says, here on earth, an abundant life, a God life, the life that Jesus lived, the life that the apostles and the disciples lived, there is power in our lives to keep the commandments, because all the promises of God that comes with the commandments are to protect us and to provide for us and to keep us from harm and pain.

Matthew 19:17 (NKJV) ¹⁷ So He said to him, “Why do you call Me good? No one is good but One, that is, God. But if you want to enter into life, keep the commandments.”

Mark 10:20 And he answered and said to Him, “Teacher, all these things I have kept from my youth.”

The Man Asks – Which One’s

Matthew gospel in 19:18, the man asked, "Which ones?" When Jesus references the law. So here he's interacting with Jesus that Jesus doesn't necessarily mean all the laws, just some of the laws. Or he would have said, "Amen. I've kept them all." And thence again, that's where we can see today, where people like, "I like these five out of ten, but the other five I'm not really in agreement with.

Matthew 19:18 (NKJV) ¹⁸ He said to Him, “Which ones?” Jesus said, “ ‘You shall not murder,’ ‘You shall not commit adultery,’ ‘You shall not steal,’ ‘You shall not bear false witness,’

Now Not the Good Teacher – Just Teacher

Verse 20. When Jesus answers and the story goes a little south on what this man is expecting, because I can believe that this man was expecting Jesus to say, "You're awesome. You don't need to do anything else. You're perfect in all of your ways." But Jesus says something that I believe starts probing on this man's heart. And in verse 20, he doesn't respond by saying, "Good Teacher." Now Jesus is just a teacher. And we see that in our lives personally, in the lives of others. I love Jesus, I'm excited about church, until God starts putting his fingers on very specific words to start poking in places that makes us uncomfortable, and then I'll say he's not just the Good Teacher anymore, he's just the teacher. And his words are open for debate and discussion based on the environment and the situation.

Mark 10:21 Then Jesus, looking at him, loved him, and said to him, “One thing you lack: Go your way, sell whatever you have and give to the poor, and you will have treasure in heaven; and come, take up the cross, and follow Me.”

Be Perfect is Standard

Matthew's gospel account, 19:21 Jesus said if you want to be perfect.....go sell all you have and give to the poor. To be perfect as a standard, as Jesus is saying. Verse 27. The disciples are coming with Jesus still with the greatest in the kingdom mentality from the world's perspective, not the spiritual perspective, because they're asking, "So if we follow you, what do we get out of it?" And you'll never be the greatest in the kingdom if you're looking to get something out of those seven things that we discussed. All seven of them, if you look, they're all a giving, not a receiving.

Matthew 19:21 (NKJV) ²¹ Jesus said to him, “if you want to be perfect, go, sell what you have and give to the poor, and you will have treasure in heaven; and come, follow Me.”

Matthew 5:48 (NKJV) ⁴⁸ Therefore you shall be perfect, just as your Father in heaven is perfect.

Deny – Die - Follow

Verse 21 goes back to Mark 8:34-38, the calling is to deny self, die to self, and follow Jesus. Salvation is free, but discipleship will cost you your life.

Mark 8:34–38 (NKJV) ³⁴ When He had called the people to Himself, with His disciples also, He said to them, “Whoever desires to come after Me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross, and follow Me. ³⁵ For whoever desires to save his life will lose it, but whoever loses his life for My sake and the gospel's will save it. ³⁶ For what will it profit a man if he gains the whole world, and loses his own soul? ³⁷ Or what will a man give in exchange for his soul? ³⁸ For whoever is ashamed of Me and My words in this adulterous and sinful generation, of him the Son of Man also will be ashamed when He comes in the glory of His Father with the holy angels.”

Looked at Him with Love / Wishes None to Perish

Verse 21. Underline this, you underliners. It says, "Jesus loved him." Jesus loves him because he knew that this upsets the man. And Jesus wishes that none shall perish, and all seek repentance. Riches were this man's treasure. It is what had him bound. It's what had hold of him. His possessions possessed him, and he now has to make an eternal life decision between Jesus and following him or the comfort and ease that came with his riches.

2 Peter 3:9 (NKJV) ⁹ The Lord is not slack concerning His promise, as some count slackness, but is longsuffering toward us, not willing that any should perish but that all should come to repentance.

No Condition to be Received

I wonder what did that look like? Jesus looking upon this young man with love? The word for loved is the Greek word, agape, which means an unconditional love. Jesus loves this man, as He loves you. And as we see what it is to "receive" the kingdom of God like a child, there were and are no conditions for this man to come to Jesus, he did not have to perform something to be able to come before Jesus. Just as the child could come to Jesus with no conditions, not having to perform some great deed, but simply come, and so too could this man, so too can you. There are some of you here today or think you can't even come to talk about salvation with Jesus until you take care of a few things in your life that you know the Lord does not accept. You think after you take care of that, He will speak to you about how you can be saved, and that is a misconception on your behalf. A person simply comes, no conditions set, and the invitation is given to receive the free gift, and then the person decides will I receive the free gift. And as we say, salvation is free, but discipleship will cost you your life.

John 3:16–21 (NKJV) ¹⁶ For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have everlasting life. ¹⁷ For God did not send His Son into the world to condemn the world, but that the world through Him might be saved. ¹⁸ "He who believes in Him is not condemned; but he who does not believe is condemned already, because he has not believed in the name of the only begotten Son of God. ¹⁹ And this is the condemnation, that the light has come into the world, and men loved darkness rather than light, because their deeds were evil. ²⁰ For everyone practicing evil hates the light and does not come to the light, lest his deeds should be exposed. ²¹ But he who does the truth comes to the light, that his deeds may be clearly seen, that they have been done in God."

Now the selling of all his stuff is not a condition for salvation, Jesus is showing this man the condition of his heart, so let's take a look at that.

Mark 10:22 But he was sad at this word, and went away sorrowful, for he had great possessions.

Sad – Hate / What it Meant / Storm was Forming

The root word for this word said, is hate. And it's not directed towards Jesus, but it's directed towards what has been asked of him, he hated the thought of doing this. That word "sorrowful" in the Greek was used for the word grieved, and was often used regarding the weather, that it was grievous, because storm clouds were forming, and a storm is coming. And this man has quite a storm in his life as he has to make a life decision.

As it's been said, money is a marvelous servant; it's a terrible master.

1) His Possessions Possessed Him / Was His Idol

Verse 21, it's interesting that Jesus would say, "Sell what you have and give to the poor." What it would tell us is, the possessions that he does have, wouldn't be something that he would give and could give to the poor, that would bless them to meet their need. Simply, what we see is, he had many possessions that were possessions of comfort and ease in his life, but apparently not necessity. Jesus is not preaching against having possessions or the comfort and ease of things. What he is speaking to this man's heart is, things that then control the person, rather than the person controls them. *This man was putting his trust in his possessions to bring him comfort and peace.* Jesus is telling him to sell them, and to give the money to the poor.

In here we see, notice that Jesus isn't promoting, sell everything you got and give it to the church. Sell everything you got and give it to the apostle's ministry. Jesus is very much caring for the needs of people. There was already principles in place to sustain the ministry, which at this time was the temple and the Levitical priesthood, and then principles will be given for how to sustain the church once it is established. Here Jesus is telling this man to give to the poor, and this becomes even more of a poke in this man's enslavement to his riches. To give to the poor would

get him nothing. There would be no return. It would just be a give, and that would be it. Whereas he was helping people who could help him, or helping people who would then praise him, it might not have been that much harder to give, but of course what we see is, Jesus is poking him on what is binding him. That is his riches, and his love of them.

If you notice, Jesus touched on the last six of the 10 commandments, to which this man feels that he's done well in. What Jesus is really now hitting him with and revealing to him, is the first four of the commandments. That is that this man has an idol. It's his riches. This man has a god, above the one true living God. It's his riches. He's set them up to be the god of his life.

Understand, when we talk about idols, we think so often that it's just ignorant people bowing before pieces of metal or carved wood. We say, "How ignorant, or archaic it is." That's not the case. All of idol worship then and now has a belief system behind it. People would worship this idol Moloch, and it was a system of belief of a physical prosperity. They would worship Baal. There was a physical system of belief that they believed came with it, such as material blessings, whether that be in sexual relations, or grain from the harvest field. All of the idol worship came with a system of belief. That would still be true today. As for this rich man here, his idol was his money. In his system of belief, that money brought him security. That money would bring him happiness. That money would bring him respect, as money so often does in this world and why people strive. Money means something, the car that we drive, the house that we live in, the clothes that we wear, or the unable to wear, or you fill in the blank _____. The idol worship of this man was his riches.

Jesus is not asking for a vow of poverty. We don't see that consistent and systematic through the scriptures. What Jesus is doing, he's putting his finger on this thing of, "You've done everything else well. People can look and say, aren't you a wonderful person. They can look and go, boy he's even humble. Look, he runs and he kneels and he bows before God. He has zeal, zealous for the lord." Jesus saw through it. He knew what was in his heart. He knew what his god was.

I think if you're truly honest with yourself, for many of you here today, there's a god that you still haven't laid down before the lord. Everything else can look good on the outside and look religious and look like you're doing well. There's a god that you have that's greater than the Lord.

- It might be a relationship that you're in, that you're refusing to let go of, because that relationship brings you your worth or your security,
- that career that you may have, may be more important, because in that place is where you get the accolades, in serving in the ministry is kind of like giving to the poor. You don't hear any thanks. If anything, there was just an expectation to do more.
- Your idol might be isolation. It's in your four walls of isolation, where you don't let anyone in. It's where you find your security. It's where you find yourself protected. You refuse to hand it over to the lord and just say, "Lord, I'm gonna be a living sacrifice. Not thy will, but your will be done."
- I know this is a hard one, because it sounds so righteous, but I know so much, that children can be an idol, that the children and their wants and the children and needs and God bless you for your desire to provide and to love and to care. You need to evaluate yourself and say, "But, if this child getting more of my love and affection than the lord is?"

I know some of these things I just said rub some people hard, but here's real easy how you tell if it is an idol, if your (relationship, career, isolation, child, etc) takes preeminence over the Lord. That is, that there's the word of the Lord that you know is right and true, yet you won't apply that word to that thing (relationship, career, child, regardless of their age). Because you don't wanna upset them, lose your security be alone,. You're putting your that thing (relationship, career, child) above the word of the Lord, and therefore you've just made that thing into an idol.

Jesus Didn't Chase Him

And we don't know what he chose. And I think that's part of the message of the message. The truth gets put out and people make a decision. And as we see Jesus didn't follow after him. When he realized that the man was

upset, Jesus didn't change the gospel, didn't change the way to come unto him. He gave the word and let the man decide. And there's an application for us, is when we speak a word and people can be love and everything, we're saying until we get to the point of repentance or of sacrifice, they turn or follow, whatever it may be. And then we see them get sad or hate the word that was given. And many Christians in many churches then want to change it and soften it up so that the person isn't offended. But we see that Jesus just holds fast the word. 'Cause it's only the word, the truth, that's going to set someone free and to give them anything less is such a disservice to them, it's even an offense to God that we've now given them if we water it down or lighten it up. We've given them something that doesn't set them free but keeps them in their bondage. Jesus is offering this man freedom. This man's riches were his trust and his god, this man's riches possessed him, not he is possessing them. And this man was in bondage and Jesus is offering freedom. And that's the gospel continually, however it may be, Jesus offers freedom to the things that keep us in bondage. And it's a beautiful thing, but many times no one knows the freedom except those who have stepped into it and have experienced it. And as we have done and we look on to the people that are still enslaved to whatever that thing may be and we plead with them, freedom is being offered. And they look at us like we're asking something harsh or judgmental or unloving. But we know, because we've been there, we're offering love, we're offering freedom, and we're offering acceptance.

Salvation is a free gift, nothing we can do to earn it, least any man would boast. We simply come to the throne of grace, God's riches at Christ's expense and that is how we receive the kingdom. And the point that's being made here with this rich man and how important it is, for so many people think they can earn their way to heaven. And so many people think they can buy their way to heaven. There's a whole doctrine that has been prescribed to, that if you give money to the church, you can buy your way into heaven. Or if you give money to the church, you can buy someone out of purgatory. There is no purgatory. Man's decision on who Jesus Christ is a determination made before the last breath that's taken on earth. And then as we're told, to be absent from the body is to be present with the Lord and for many it will be a judgment, or it will be a reception. There's only two choices there. There is no in between.

Ephesians 2:8-9 (NKJV) ⁸ For by grace you have been saved through faith, and that not of yourselves; it is the gift of God, ⁹ not of works, lest anyone should boast.

So giving doesn't prepare the way or buy the way. And that's one of the reasons we handle our money the way we do here. Nobody in the leadership knows who gives what, they don't have access to that information and therefore that keeps leadership from being influenced by who gives what, but it also puts the giver in the place of they're only giving unto the Lord because no man knows what else they're doing and they can't receive any credit or glory for it. It's solely between them and the Lord. And that will right your motives real quick.

The area that you refuse to submit in becomes your god. That is the simple fact because it controls you, you don't control it or you receive it over receiving the word of God. The area you refuse to submit in will and is your god. This story takes place just a week or two before the story of Zacchaeus, the rich tax collector, and we're going to see him giving all of his money away. When he was given the opportunity to follow Jesus, his money couldn't hold him. His money meant nothing to him and he reached for Jesus and he followed Jesus and he made Jesus his God. And we will meet and see Zacchaeus in heaven. As for this rich young ruler, we do not know and hence the story, every man gets to make a decision, who is their true passion of their life. And that will show you who your god is. *Luke 19:1-10 (NKJV)* ¹ Then Jesus entered and passed through Jericho. ² Now behold, there was a man named Zacchaeus who was a chief tax collector, and he was rich. ³ And he sought to see who Jesus was, but could not because of the crowd, for he was of short stature. ⁴ So he ran ahead and climbed up into a sycamore tree to see Him, for He was going to pass that way. ⁵ And when Jesus came to the place, He looked up and saw him, and said to him, "Zacchaeus, make haste and come down, for today I must stay at your house." ⁶ So he made haste and came down, and received Him joyfully. ⁷ But when they saw it, they all complained, saying, "He has gone to be a guest with a man who is a sinner." ⁸ Then Zacchaeus stood and said to the Lord, "Look, Lord, I give half of my goods to the poor; and if I have taken anything from anyone by false accusation, I restore fourfold." ⁹ And Jesus said to him, "Today salvation has come to this house, because he also is a son of Abraham; ¹⁰ for the Son of Man has come to seek and to save that which was lost."

God will be a debtor to no man. And as we say, you'll never out give God.

2) He had a Skewed Perception of Himself / That "1" Thing Breaks the Other Things Free

I think we all have heard this study before from various teachings and devotions and it is pretty to the point of this man's one thing, his riches, his possessions were possessing him and Jesus puts his finger on it. But I'd like to introduce you to another layer of looking at this passage and that is this man had skewed view of himself. He truly thought himself higher and more righteous than he really was because when he says he has kept all the law and many times the commentators will say, and notice Jesus doesn't tell disagree him. I say Jesus wasn't disagreeing with him because Jesus was going after the biggest thing that was this man's problem and that was his possessions were possessing him. But we know from the scriptures that there is none good, no, not one. There's none that keep the commandments of God. We know from Jesus' Sermon on the Mount that the law was more than just what was outwardly done, but also what was going on in the heart. To which the point that I make is this man did not keep all the commandments since his youth, because if he had, he would have been perfect in the law, just as Jesus would have been perfect in the law. And he could have come to Jesus on his righteousness.

Romans 3:9–12 (NKJV) ⁹ *What then? Are we better than they? Not at all. For we have previously charged both Jews and Greeks that they are all under sin. ¹⁰ As it is written: "There is none righteous, no, not one; ¹¹ There is none who understands; There is none who seeks after God. ¹² They have all turned aside; They have together become unprofitable; There is none who does good, no, not one."*

Defrauding is a form of coveting because it's never enough, and I think there is a clue to this passage, that this man increased his riches by defrauding his brothers and sisters. But he doesn't recognize that and he doesn't see that. He says, "I've done it all." In Matthew's gospel we see that Jesus had also said, "Love your neighbors," and this man says that he's done it all. To which, when you're living for yourself, you'll never see how far away you are from loving your neighbor.

Matthew 19:18–19 (NKJV) ¹⁸ *He said to Him, "Which ones?" Jesus said, " 'You shall not murder,' 'You shall not commit adultery,' 'You shall not steal,' 'You shall not bear false witness,' ¹⁹ 'Honor your father and your mother,' and, 'You shall love your neighbor as yourself.' "*

And that just may be what's happening, he is coming to Jesus on his righteousness. He could have come to Jesus and was fully expecting to hear Jesus say, "There's nothing left for you to do, you are perfect, you are amazing." Because in this man's mind he still thinks that he is perfect and it is true, he knows something is lacking because God puts that void in every man's heart to know something is lacking so that man can look and seek to fill that void. And for this man it wouldn't be the things of the world, but the only thing that can truly fill a man's heart that's empty is Jesus Christ. So I propose for your consideration today that there was this one thing, but there also he was not as righteous as he thought he was. But Jesus puts his finger on the one thing that needed to be dealt with first and foremost. And what would happen afterwards when He does, is that this man would see how far off he was in the other areas too.

See, I was this man when I was younger. I might not have been rich, but I was doing pretty good compared to most, having a great job in the aerospace industry. I went to church every week, I really thought I was a good person, that I was righteous, that God favored me because I was religious. I actually thought that God owed me because I was such a religious man, and I gave to the church a whole 2% of my salary. I really had a skewed view of myself. And I noticed, that even after I gave myself to the Lord, I can have a skewed view of myself.

And what I have experiences in my life personally and watched in so many lives of other followers of Christ is when he puts his finger on the one thing, it's amazing how the other things break free also. When that one thing that is keeping a person from fully following Jesus and when he puts that holy finger on that thing and we yield to it, we submit to it, we repent of it, we separate from it. It's amazing how the other things in our lives that we didn't even realize come to realization and also start getting broken loose and free at the same time when we come to the realization our possessions possess us. I'm not fully following the Lord. Oh, Lord, change my heart in this manner. And then when we do, then all of a sudden, we seem high and lifted up, greater than we've ever seen him before. Then all of a sudden, I find myself loving my neighbor and maybe I never realized that I wasn't loving my neighbor. But now in this new revelation and wonder and experience with the Lord, my heart is overflowing with his love because I've connected to him, because the barrier that kept me from the intimacy with him has now been removed. And my heart is becoming more like his and I find myself loving my neighbors. I also find myself seeking to go to greater purity, putting guards and barriers around to protect purity. I see my parents in a different way, I give thanks for them for putting up with me and all of my failings. And I appreciate what they've done for me and I come into a holiness that I look and say taking the shortcut on my taxes or leaving this unsaid, that's stealing. You

fill in the blanks, but it's amazing when God puts his finger on the one thing, how it opens and breaks free all those other things that we may have never even realized before.

And it is a true fact of it's a continual life cycle, it's a process. When Jesus says, "Follow me," it's a continual action of following him. And as we do, we do become more conformed into his image. We become more like him and he does this continual working within us and we'll find ourselves continually this one thing. There will always be this one thing. And that one thing we'll find, where did that come from? How did this creep in? And it's beautiful, as you mature Christ, your one thing is so much different than when you started in your walk with the Lord.

If the Lord was to say to me and I came kneeling, he wouldn't say one thing, he would say, "Okay, well we better pull up some chairs here, we've got about 100 things to go over." And then he would start going over them and nine hours later we would get to the end of 100. But what God does, he puts his finger on that one thing and it's amazing how many other things get broken free.

How Hard it is for a Rich Man to Enter Heaven (10:23)

- The Deception of Worldly Security

Difficulties of Riches (10:23-27)

Mark 10:23 Then Jesus looked around and said to His disciples, "How hard it is for those who have riches to enter the kingdom of God!"

Would it had Been Easier if He Was Poor

Verse 22. What he had said what this man had been, as sad and sorrowful if he had nothing. If he was totally broke and had nothing in this world and Jesus said these words, the man no doubt would be elated because he would be like, "I'm going to heaven. I'll give away what I have and it's nothing, but in return I get heaven." Would he have been as sad and sorrowful if he had nothing? And that's what segways in verse 23 as Jesus says how hard it is for a rich man to enter into heaven because they put so much trust in the material things rather than the spiritual things.

As it's been said, money is a marvelous servant; it's a terrible master.

Who Can be Saved? (10:24-27)

- Thank God it is All God for Salvation

Mark 10:24 And the disciples were astonished at His words. But Jesus answered again and said to them, "Children, how hard it is for those who trust in riches to enter the kingdom of God!"

Mark 10:25 It is easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle than for a rich man to enter the kingdom of God."

Mark 10:26 And they were greatly astonished, saying among themselves, "Who then can be saved?"

Errant Teaching

Verse 25. One of the common teachings, and it's an errant teaching, is that there was a gate in Jerusalem. And when the gates would be closed, there was this one gate called the Camel's Gate, and in that Camel's Gate, that would be open throughout the night as people could come and go individually. And if you did have a camel, you would have to unpack your camel's load. The camel would have to get on its knees and crawl through the gate, and hence why they called it the Camel's Gate. It was closed so that invading armies just couldn't come sweeping through a large gate. There would be a massive bottleneck if they tried to come in. But archaeological diggings and historical writings confirm no such thing. It's more of a tradition that generated out of this passage. There was no gate. Because what's being said is it isn't possible for a camel to literally go through the eye of a sewing needle. And the word here for needle is actually the word that's used for sewing, sewing of a tent. So anyone who would truly mishear it would say, "That's impossible for a camel to go through a sewing needle." And hence the point that's being made using an illustration is, correct, it is absolutely impossible. And so there's nothing that a man can't do to inherit eternal life apart from the work of God.

Jewish Teaching – Riches were Favor of God

Verse 26. The Jewish teachings and the people's application of riches was that it came because of God's blessing, and through the Old Testament there are continual references that God makes to the nation. If you're obedient, you will prosper. When you disobey, you will find yourself in drought and famine and being led away, and people then took that to apply to themselves in a reverse way of, if I have riches then I must be righteous, and God is pleased with me and therefore he's bestowing his riches upon me. And we have that in our American mentality today. Western hemisphere mentality. That because of our goodness, that we're so wonderful, that's why we have these riches. And then people themselves become deceived. They think they're right with God because they prosper. They think God esteems them because in their workplace, man esteems them. Or because of their riches, they get the best seats in the house. Because of their material influence, people bow down to them because they're hoping to get something from them.

Then there's churches that have capitalized on that misconception, and they build off of it, that if you give or do something for the church, then you can inherit eternal life. Jesus is totally dispelling that and tearing that down. He's saying it's impossible to do anything to be saved within man's effort, that it takes the work of God for man to be saved. Apart from God, man would never, never know that he was in need of a Savior.

Mark 10:27 But Jesus looked at them and said, "With men it is impossible, but not with God; for with God all things are possible."

Praise God it is Impossible – So I Am Free that is it not Up to Me

Verse 27. That it's impossible and I praise him that there isn't something I could do, because then I would do it or not have the means to do it, and I would say I'm eternally damned, or I would do it, and I know myself all too well that then I would think, oh, aren't I something? And then I would never give the reverence and glory to the perfect and holy God that he is. But I thank God that it's impossible for me to do anything other than what a child does, simply come and be received. And even the coming to be received isn't my work; God has to call me and draw me, show me my need for a Savior. And maybe that's you today. God's calling out to you and you sense he's calling you to come to him. That's the Holy Spirit, because his love looks upon you. But I'm thankful that there's nothing I can do to be saved, cause then not only would it be up to me to get saved; it would be up to me to maintain my salvation. And I thank God for verse 15, all that I have to do is receive it. He's done the work there upon the cross.

The Gospel (A-B-C) & a D:

Admit

Romans 3:23 (NKJV) ²³ for all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God,

Romans 6:23 (NKJV) ²³ For the wages of sin is death, but the gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord.

Believe

John 3:16–17 (NKJV) ¹⁶ For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have everlasting life. ¹⁷ For God did not send His Son into the world to condemn the world, but that the world through Him might be saved.

Confess

Romans 10:9–10 (NKJV) ⁹ that if you confess with your mouth the Lord Jesus and believe in your heart that God has raised Him from the dead, you will be saved. ¹⁰ For with the heart one believes unto righteousness, and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation.

Disciple

Matthew 16:24–26 (NKJV) ²⁴ Then Jesus said to His disciples, "If anyone desires to come after Me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross, and follow Me. ²⁵ For whoever desires to save his life will lose it, but whoever loses his life for My sake will find it. ²⁶ For what profit is it to a man if he gains the whole world, and loses his own soul? Or what will a man give in exchange for his soul?"

The Reward for Following Jesus (10:28-31)

- **Jesus is Worth It**

Eternal Reward (10:28-31)

Mark 10:28 Then Peter began to say to Him, “See, we have left all and followed You.”

Peter Commercial View

Verse 28, Peter comes with the commercialized view of Christianity, like it's a business deal that you invest and get some type of return on your dividends.

Mark 10:29 So Jesus answered and said, “Assuredly, I say to you, there is no one who has left house or brothers or sisters or father or mother or wife or children or lands, for My sake and the gospel’s,

Mark 10:30 who shall not receive a hundredfold now in this time—houses and brothers and sisters and mothers and children and lands, with persecutions—and in the age to come, eternal life.

12 Thrones – Judas Still had Chance / Riches Consumed Him

In Matthew’s gospel account 19:28, It says "the 12 of you to sit on 12 thrones." Here we're seeing God's great love. Judas still has opportunity for greatness, but he is hearing all of these sermons, all of these teachings. He is loving money as we know from a story of Judas, and he's gonna choose the present and the temporal over the eternal.

Matthew 19:28–30 (NKJV) ²⁸ So Jesus said to them, “Assuredly I say to you, that in the regeneration, when the Son of Man sits on the throne of His glory, you who have followed Me will also sit on twelve thrones, judging the twelve tribes of Israel. ²⁹ And everyone who has left houses or brothers or sisters or father or mother or wife or children or lands, for My name’s sake, shall receive a hundredfold, and inherit eternal life. ³⁰ But many who are first will be last, and the last first.

With Persecution

Verse 30 says with persecution, and that's just a fact. All those that desire to live godly in Christ Jesus shall suffer persecution. And Jesus is making that point of it won't be all wealth and prosperity here on this side of heaven. So expect persecution.

2 Timothy 3:12 (NKJV) ¹² Yes, and all who desire to live godly in Christ Jesus will suffer persecution.

Mark 10:31 But many who are first will be last, and the last first.”

Greatest in the Kingdom

Verse 31. Cross reference Mark 9:35. The Greatest in the Kingdom is the servant of all.

Mark 9:35 (NKJV) ³⁵ And He sat down, called the twelve, and said to them, “If anyone desires to be first, he shall be last of all and servant of all.”

Jesus is Worth It

And as we like to say, to remind us all, he's worth it. And all that we do for him, is worth it.

Follow – Continually (Present Tense)

Verse 21, Follow me is in the continual present tense. God calls us to daily follow him. God calls us to a lifestyle of following him. It's beyond receiving him as Savior. The following part is the lordship of Christ, following him daily and his word.

Mark 10:21 (NKJV) ²¹ Then Jesus, looking at him, loved him, and said to him, “One thing you lack: Go your way, sell whatever you have and give to the poor, and you will have treasure in heaven; and come, take up the cross, and follow Me.”

Jesus is Worth It – Him is the Great Reward

Verse 29. Jesus is worth it. He deserves it. Regardless of any reward that we may ever get, to hear the story, a man who was falsely imprisoned for 30 years. 30 years an innocent man spent in jail, and yet he's written a book of why he can still praise God and why God is still good. That is amazing that someone can endure that. And I pray I never have to, nor you. But we may not be falsely imprisoned, but we may find ourselves faced with an illness. We may find ourselves faced with financial difficulties. We may find ourselves faced with persecution. We may find ourselves rejected in a relationship, even though we were the innocent party in it. But none of those things come to ... how could you allow that, God? Regardless of the reward, he deserves to be praised. To be the reward right

now is to give my all to him because he deserves it. He gave his all for me, his life. [Can I give him anything less than my whole life?](#)

Billy Borden

In 1904 William Borden graduated from a Chicago high school. As heir to the Borden Dairy estate, he was already a millionaire. For his high school graduation present, his parents gave 16-year-old Borden a trip around the world. As the young man traveled through Asia, the Middle East, and Europe, he felt a growing burden for the world's hurting people. Finally, Bill Borden wrote home to say, "I'm going to give my life to prepare for the mission field." One friend expressed surprise that he was "throwing himself away as a missionary." In response, Bill wrote two words in the back of his Bible: "No reserves." He went to Yale and Princeton to study, and while there started a morning prayer group that started with 3 people his freshman year and ended with 1,500 his senior year. After school he turned down many lucrative and prestigious job offers and left for China to preach the gospel. He wrote two more words in his Bible before he left, "No retreats." While there in China, he contracted spinal meningitis. Within a month, 25-year-old William Borden was dead. The world questioned if Borden's untimely death was a waste, if he had missed God's plan for his life. But prior to his death, Borden had written two more words in his Bible. Underneath the words "No reserves" and "No retreats," he had written: "No regrets."

No Reserves, No Retreats, No Regrets

Missionary Jim Elliot who died in the mission field - He is no fool who gives what he cannot keep, to gain that which he cannot lose. - good word for life for all of us – amen!

Prayer – Boldly Ask Your God

The Word of God is Living and Powerful, and is ready, and will do a mighty work in our lives.

Hebrews 4:12 (NKJV) ¹² For the word of God is living and powerful, and sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing even to the division of soul and spirit, and of joints and marrow, and is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart.

In Every Study

- Who Is God? (How Great is He?)
- What Does He Think of Me? (How Wonderful Are His Thoughts Towards Me?)
- What Does He Want Me to Do?
- What Can I Boldly Request of Him?
- What Do I Need to Be on Guard of When I Leave Here Today?

Boldly come to the throne of grace, ask God to reveal Himself in a mighty way to you, and to do I might work in you, and through you.

Hebrews 4:16 (NKJV) ¹⁶ Let us therefore come boldly to the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy and find grace to help in time of need.

There is a Prayer Team Available to Pray with and for You

End of Study

Mark 10:32-34

Jesus Shares the Burden of His Heart with His Disciples

Good to be Back

It is good to be back, glad to be done with airports and airplanes. When all is said and done, it is close to 30 hours straight of airplanes and airports, and another couple hours getting to and from the airport. It is quite exhausting to say the least. When it is time to come home, I have one singular goal..... touchdown on home soil. Every leg of the trip, I say Lord Jesus get us through this leg of the trip. We had a 3am takeoff Friday from Mumbai to Frankfurt Germany, 9hrs, then Germany to Montreal another 9 hours, and then after the Customs Agent finally released our brother John after questioning him about our check-in luggage, which he didn't even have one, we finally caught our flight from Montreal to Baltimore. But before all that we started with our three cars near midnight drive to the airport. All was going well until the car with me, Renee, Camden, and the pastor and his wife broke down in the middle of the intersection about 30 minutes from the airport. If you love the thrill rides of the amusement parks, then I encourage to come with us on our next trip so you can enjoy ordered chaos of their traffic. There are no traffic signals, just dozens and dozens of cars entering and exiting in an ordered chaos as I like to call it. Well I got a special bonus excitement, for as we entered into the intersection, our car broke down, and I had to push our car through the ordered chaos, around midnight, with very dim lights. We had to call and wait for a taxi, and we made the airport with time to spare; and although I don't understand Hindi, I think based on the speed the taxi driver was going, that the pastor said he would pay him double if he made sure we got to the airport in time for my flight. Then after some more ordered chaos getting through one of the world's largest and busiest airports, I finally got to my seat on the airplane, and next to me was a man from Germany, and he chose to sleep and snore with his face turned towards me for most of the trip to Germany, so at 3 in the morning, after being up for close to 24 hours already, and a large German man's face 6 inches from mine, it was a pretty long 9 hours. But as I told Renee, I don't complain about those types of things on the mission trip, else when I get to heaven, one of the first things that will happen is someone is going to smack me upside the head, and I am going to turn and it will be the Apostle Paul saying are you serious, really, you considered that hardship? I got shipwrecked 3 times, and once I spent the whole 24 hours floating in the sea waiting to be rescued. I had trips that took weeks get to some places, and you travelled 8,000 miles in 24 hours, and you got feed breakfast, lunch, and dinner, to boot..... and was that a Twix bar you were eating in the airport? Well it is wonderful to be able to be missionaries in the day we live. God bless all of you for your love and support of this trip, God was good, and God did glorious things.

2 Corinthians 11:23–29 (NKJV) ²³ Are they ministers of Christ?—I speak as a fool—I am more: in labors more abundant, in stripes above measure, in prisons more frequently, in deaths often. ²⁴ From the Jews five times I received forty stripes minus one. ²⁵ Three times I was beaten with rods; once I was stoned; three times I was shipwrecked; a night and a day I have been in the deep; ²⁶ in journeys often, in perils of waters, in perils of robbers, in perils of my own countrymen, in perils of the Gentiles, in perils in the city, in perils in the wilderness, in perils in the sea, in perils among false brethren; ²⁷ in weariness and toil, in sleeplessness often, in hunger and thirst, in fastings often, in cold and nakedness—²⁸ besides the other things, what comes upon me daily: my deep concern for all the churches. ²⁹ Who is weak, and I am not weak? Who is made to stumble, and I do not burn with indignation?

Jesus for Third Time Predicts His Death and Resurrection (10:32-34)

Mark 10:32–34 (NKJV) ³² Now they were on the road, going up to Jerusalem, and Jesus was going before them; and they were amazed. And as they followed they were afraid. Then He took the twelve aside again and began to tell them the things that would happen to Him: ³³ “Behold, we are going up to Jerusalem, and the Son of Man will be betrayed to the chief priests and to the scribes; and they will condemn Him to death and deliver Him to the Gentiles; ³⁴ and they will mock Him, and scourge Him, and spit on Him, and kill Him. And the third day He will rise again.”

Recap/Intro

We have come to verse 32 of chapter 10, and it says, “they were on the road, going up to Jerusalem”. They are heading up to Jerusalem for the Passover celebration. In verse 1 of chapter 11, it is the triumphal entry into Jerusalem, that would make it Sunday. Then 5 days later would be the crucifixion. So our passage today puts us around a week or so before the cross. The estimate is somewhere around 2-3 million people are making their way to Jerusalem for the Passover celebration, and what we read is that Jesus is leading the processional. Jesus is leading the procession, for most it is to a celebration, but for Jesus it is for a crucifixion, and that is where you and I come in. Today Jesus is inviting us on the procession to the cross again, and we will see.....

Outline Mark 10:32-34:

- His Face was Like Steel (10:32)
- His Heart was Like Wax (10:33-34)

And very interestingly, we are going to see Jesus sharing His heart, His burden, His sorrow with His disciples; and He will do that again today with you and me. We will close our time together with communion, and worship.

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The Word of God is Living and Powerful, and is ready, and will do a mighty work in our lives.

Hebrews 4:12 (NKJV) ¹² For the word of God is living and powerful, and sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing even to the division of soul and spirit, and of joints and marrow, and is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart.

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Hebrews 4:16 (NKJV) ¹⁶ Let us therefore come boldly to the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy and find grace to help in time of need.

His Face was Like Steel (10:32)

Mark 10:32 Now they were on the road, going up to Jerusalem, and Jesus was going before them; and they were amazed. And as they followed they were afraid. Then He took the twelve aside again and began to tell them the things that would happen to Him:

Greek Word Structure

So the Greek wording of this is as such;

- going up to Jerusalem – you always went up to Jerusalem because it was of higher elevation when traveling to the city, and also you went up because you go up when going to encounter God, and Jerusalem was the city God ordained where the people would come meet Him, and make sacrifice at the Temple.
- and Jesus was going before them – Jesus was walking in front of the crowd, by Himself.
- and they were amazed – the “they” refers to the 12 disciples.
- And as they followed they were afraid – and the “they” in this part of the sentence refers to another group of people following Jesus (that were not the 12 disciples).

Amazed & Afraid

The disciples are “amazed” and the people are “afraid”.

- The disciples are amazed (astonished) in that Jesus is heading to Jerusalem even knowing all the hatred and hostility and threats the religious leaders have for them. They have seen plenty of hostility towards Jesus by these religious leaders, and the buzz is they want Him dead, and Jesus confirms this to be so in our passage here. They are amazed because Jesus is not only walking ahead of them, but He is walking ahead into what they know is pure danger, and they are amazed because Jesus continues ahead as His face was like steel, set for Jerusalem.
- The crowd following Jesus are afraid (filled with fear), because they too know the hatred and hostility the religious leaders have towards Jesus, and they know Jerusalem and Jesus could very well equal a showdown, and they are afraid because Jesus continues ahead as His face was like steel, set for Jerusalem, even knowing the dangers before Him.

I am Amazed

I am amazed by the Lord every time I stop to really look at Him, and think on Him, I am moved with amazement. This morning I said Lord I am amazed by You, really, that you would press on to Jerusalem for me, look at me; to which the Lord said yes look at you, and I am not done yet, just wait until you see the end of my work in you. I am totally amazed that He would love, and that He loves me, and is desperate for me. But He is, and so too you.

Isaiah 50

The prophetic word of Isaiah 50. Nothing was going to stop Jesus from Jerusalem

Isaiah 50:7 (NKJV) ⁷ "For the Lord God will help Me; Therefore I will not be disgraced; Therefore I have set My face like a flint, And I know that I will not be ashamed.

Simon

I have read many books on amazing stories of faith, men and woman risking it all, paying greatly for their risk, but India was my first time of meeting not just one, but several people who risk it all, and pay for it greatly. Let me tell you about a man I met and fellowshiped with named Simon. Now as a precursor to the story, I have already told you how crazy the traffic is in India, now let me add that mopeds are one of the major means of transportation, and it is not rare to see a moped with 3 or 4 people on it. When the recommendation would come up of riding on a moped, my answer would be two-fold, one is that I am not going to risk life and limb driving a moped in the craziness of that traffic, and secondly I am not going to get on the back of a moped driven by a man, it is just not happening haha. Well Sunday night after the Bible study, everyone was going out for some late-night food and fellowship, but I was done for the night and all I wanted to do was go to the hotel and go to sleep. So everyone is hanging out front of the house, and after some chit-chat I said good night, and started to walk to the hotel. This man named Simon, from Africa, he says Pastor don't walk, hop on and I will ride you to your hotel, to which I said no thank you. He said no come on jump on let me ride you, to which I said no thank you. So I start to walk and he starts his bike, and he is riding next to me as I walk saying pastor please let me ride you, I said no it aint happening! But he would not stop, he literally pleaded with me to do him the honor (amazing to be regarded as such) to ride me to the hotel. So I relent, and held on for dear life all the way to the hotel, hoping no one would see me, but pictures can be provided haha.

But truly, what an honor for me, for a few days later I find out this man's testimony. He went to Egypt to preach the Gospel. The Egyptian government arrests him and throws him in jail..... for life! He said when he got in jail he saw some men being released after 20 years, and says ok there is hope that in 20 years I will get out, so might as well make the best of it. And so he starts preaching in the prison, and he pays the price for doing so. They would beat him mercilessly, and after he would recovery, he would preach some more. They told him that he would never be released, he would die there, yet he kept preaching. They would take his legs and put them in a tub of ice water for hours, to the point he could not feel his legs or feet, and then they would take wooden clubs and beat his legs, and because of the icing of his bones, the bones would become brittle, and the beating would turn the bones to a dust as it was described. It would take 6 months to walk again.

Somehow, after 7 years, what can only be described as a miracle, through a clerical error, Simon was released from prison. So, truly for me, what an honor to just be in his presence, let alone to be considered so honorable to him

I was blessed to get to share the Word with a group of pastors, and have breakfast, and chai (tea) with them. And I would sit and talk with them, and say to myself, these men are a minority in this land, some of them may face prison or death for their commitment to preach the word yet they just keep going and going. Now Christianity is legal in the nation, it is protected by their constitution; but Christians are a minority, and the majority is Hindu, and the current Prime Ministers wants a national Hindu nation, so with his rhetoric, being a minority can be a dangerous place. One pastor told me he has been threatened that if he doesn't stop they were going to kidnap his children, and he says yes the thought of that is hard to bear, but yet he keeps on preaching and declaring the glory of God. I asked him what word you stand on, what word would you share with us today, to which he said:

Romans 10:15 (NKJV) ¹⁵ *And how shall they preach unless they are sent? As it is written: "How beautiful are the feet of those who preach the gospel of peace, Who bring glad tidings of good things!"*

Jesus' DNA is in these men, and like Jesus, they are set like steel for the sake of the Gospel.

Jesus on A Mission

So Jesus' face is like steel, nothing will stop nor deter Him from Jerusalem where rather than a royal crown, which He is entitled to, there is a crown of thorns awaiting Him, but He continues on, for as we say, every time Jesus thinks of the cross, He was thinking of me and you

Hebrews 12:2 (NKJV)² looking unto Jesus, the author and finisher of our faith, who for the joy that was set before Him endured the cross, despising the shame, and has sat down at the right hand of the throne of God.

His Heart was Like Wax (10:33-34)

Mark 10:33 "Behold, we are going up to Jerusalem, and the Son of Man will be betrayed to the chief priests and to the scribes; and they will condemn Him to death and deliver Him to the Gentiles;

Mark 10:34 and they will mock Him, and scourge Him, and spit on Him, and kill Him. And the third day He will rise again."

Steel and Wax

Although His face was like steel, set on Jerusalem and the cross, His heart was like wax, knowing what awaited Him.

Imagine What He is Thinking on this Long Walk - Alone

Jericho is about 15 miles from Jerusalem. To which they still haven't reached Jericho yet, so there is at least 15 plus miles to go.

For some background, and to get a feel of what the setting is at this time in the passage before us, during the First Jewish–Roman War (66–73 CE), the population of Jerusalem was estimated at 600,000 persons by Roman historian Tacitus. Josephus, the Jewish historian, tells us that one year a census was taken of the number of lambs slain for Passover and that the figure was 256,500. It was prescribed for one Passover lamb for every family. The Jewish historian Josephus thus estimated that there was close to 2.5 million people in Jerusalem at the time of the Passover, because he estimated 1 lamb for an average household of 10 (Husband, wife, children, and elderly parents). So if close to a half a million lived in Jerusalem, and city population for the Passover was 2.5 million, that means about 2 million make the pilgrimage to the city.

Jerusalem is starting to fill slowly at this point, but come chapter 11 everyone will be there for the start of Passover. Right now, the roads are beginning to fill with people making their pilgrimage to Jerusalem.

With every passing mile the roads would be more and more dense with people, with every passing hour the noise would become louder and louder. And at this mile-marker somewhere before Jericho (v46 is when they make it to Jericho, which is about 15 miles from Jerusalem), Jesus is walking alone.

Jesus is walking the road alone. The disciples are with Him, but they are trailing behind Him. Others are heading along the way with Him on the way to Jerusalem, but they are trailing behind also.

Jesus is before them all..... Jesus is alone. What do you do when you walk alone? You think. Jesus is thinking of all that is before Him.

Imagine what he is thinking, the thoughts, the pondering. Then He calls to the disciples to Himself, and speaks of His soon moment:

- He will be betrayed – by a friend he fully gave himself to.
- He will be condemned – the perfect spotless man, pure and holy will be condemned (declared guilty of crimes He did not commit).
- He will be mocked – means to be made sport of, ridiculed, humiliated (not just before the world, but His Father in Heaven)
- He will be scourged – a vicious whip that shred the back like hamburger meat.

- He will be spit upon – utterly disrespected, the Son of God, spit upon.
- He will be killed – not by firing squad, not by lethal injection, but by a slow, grinding, death. The cross wasn't meant to be quick, it was meant to be a long drawn out pain. The surest death, but the slowest way to it. Feel the pain, every last drop of it.

Jesus is Prophecy

We know Jesus is prophecy here, He is telling His disciples this before it happens, so they know that He was in control, not the religious leaders, nor the Romans, but that He and the Father were in control. He tells them this in advance so that when it happens they can take security that He allowed it, He yielded to it, that it was not out of His control, but He willingly allowed it to happen.

3rd Time Speaking of Death

This is the third time in this Gospel that Jesus has told His disciples of His coming death. First was when they were up in Caesarea Philippi, then when He was coming down from the Mount of Transfiguration (most like located up on Mount Hermon), and now this third time outside of Jericho.

Mark 8:27–31 (NKJV) ²⁷ Now Jesus and His disciples went out to the towns of Caesarea Philippi; and on the road He asked His disciples, saying to them, "Who do men say that I am?" ²⁸ So they answered, "John the Baptist; but some say, Elijah; and others, one of the prophets." ²⁹ He said to them, "But who do you say that I am?" Peter answered and said to Him, "You are the Christ." ³⁰ Then He strictly warned them that they should tell no one about Him. ³¹ And He began to teach them that the Son of Man must suffer many things, and be rejected by the elders and chief priests and scribes, and be killed, and after three days rise again.

Mark 9:30–32 (NKJV) ³⁰ Then they departed from there and passed through Galilee, and He did not want anyone to know it. ³¹ For He taught His disciples and said to them, "The Son of Man is being betrayed into the hands of men, and they will kill Him. And after He is killed, He will rise the third day." ³² But they did not understand this saying, and were afraid to ask Him.

Mark 10:32–34 (NKJV) ³² Now they were on the road, going up to Jerusalem, and Jesus was going before them; and they were amazed. And as they followed they were afraid. Then He took the twelve aside again and began to tell them the things that would happen to Him: ³³ "Behold, we are going up to Jerusalem, and the Son of Man will be betrayed to the chief priests and to the scribes; and they will condemn Him to death and deliver Him to the Gentiles; ³⁴ and they will mock Him, and scourge Him, and spit on Him, and kill Him. And the third day He will rise again."

3 Times Jesus Prays in the Garden

It is also interesting to me that three times in the Garden of Gethsemane Jesus will pray.

Matthew 26:36–41 (NKJV) ³⁶ Then Jesus came with them to a place called Gethsemane, and said to the disciples, "Sit here while I go and pray over there." ³⁷ And He took with Him Peter and the two sons of Zebedee, and He began to be sorrowful and deeply distressed. ³⁸ Then He said to them, "My soul is exceedingly sorrowful, even to death. Stay here and watch with Me." ³⁹ He went a little farther and fell on His face, and prayed, saying, "O My Father, if it is possible, let this cup pass from Me; nevertheless, not as I will, but as You will." ⁴⁰ Then He came to the disciples and found them sleeping, and said to Peter, "What! Could you not watch with Me one hour? ⁴¹ Watch and pray, lest you enter into temptation. The spirit indeed is willing, but the flesh is weak."

Matthew 26:42–43 (NKJV) ⁴² Again, a second time, He went away and prayed, saying, "O My Father, if this cup cannot pass away from Me unless I drink it, Your will be done." ⁴³ And He came and found them asleep again, for their eyes were heavy.

Matthew 26:44–46 (NKJV) ⁴⁴ So He left them, went away again, and prayed the third time, saying the same words. ⁴⁵ Then He came to His disciples and said to them, "Are you still sleeping and resting? Behold, the hour is at hand, and the Son of Man is being betrayed into the hands of sinners. ⁴⁶ Rise, let us be going. See, My betrayer is at hand."

Before the Garden was the Walk

We always go to the Garden as that heavy moment on Jesus' heart, the agonizing prayer, but I believe the Garden was the culmination of what had started on these walks, as Jesus is walking these long lonely roads, surrounded by a crowd, yet all alone, all alone in His thoughts, all alone with His Father.

We can read Hebrews 12, and we can read the man of steel, but miss the heart of wax. Oh my what it took for Him to go to the cross for you and for me.

Hebrews 12:2 (NKJV) ² looking unto Jesus, the author and finisher of our faith, who for the joy that was set before Him endured the cross, despising the shame, and has sat down at the right hand of the throne of God.

Jesus Shares His Heart with His Disciples

Verse 32 Jesus takes the 12 aside.....His face is like steel, but His heart is like wax. In the Garden Jesus tells the disciples “My soul is exceedingly sorrowful, even to death, stay here and watch with Me”. Did you catch that? Jesus is sharing His heart with His disciples. He is being real, He is being transparent, He is showing His heart to them, and saying this cross, what is to come, is heavy upon me, my heart feels like it is ready to just quit on Me this is so heavy upon my heart. Then He says stay here with me guys, help carry my burden with Me. Jesus is sharing and bearing His heart with these men.

See when you are sharing, what are you doing, but giving something away to another, Jesus is sharing His heart, giving His heart away to these disciples.

John 15:15 (NKJV) ¹⁵ No longer do I call you servants, for a servant does not know what his master is doing; but I have called you friends, for all things that I heard from My Father I have made known to you.

Renee Share about India

Renee will share about her experience in India, and you will see a heart that was greatly moved. God shared His heart about and for the people of India with Renee, and us as a church. And before we enter into communion, I also want you to see and know, the heart of God you saw in Renee for the people of India, is the very heart that is for you. He loves you, we should be amazed, but we should also be secured and rejoicing, our God loves us.

Rise Again on 3rd Day

Verse 34 – And rise again on the third day: The word “and” is in the original language. It is not the word “but”, like a refuting to all the shame, as to say yes all this bad things will happen to Me, “but” in the end I rise again. No, it is “and” and the Lord is giving a continual procession of what is to happen. I will be betrayed, condemned, delivered, mocked, scourged, spit on, and killed, and “rise from the dead”. Jesus was in control from the beginning to the end, and so too is He today. Regardless of what is going on in your life today, there is the “and”, that Jesus rules and reign, and no can stop the Lord Almighty. Communion is not a remembrance of defeat, but a celebration of victory!

Communion

1 Corinthians 11:23–26 (NKJV) ²³ For I received from the Lord that which I also delivered to you: that the Lord Jesus on the same night in which He was betrayed took bread; ²⁴ and when He had given thanks, He broke it and said, “Take, eat; this is My body which is broken for you; do this in remembrance of Me.” ²⁵ In the same manner He also took the cup after supper, saying, “This cup is the new covenant in My blood. This do, as often as you drink it, in remembrance of Me.” ²⁶ For as often as you eat this bread and drink this cup, you proclaim the Lord’s death till He comes.

Prayer – Boldly Ask Your God

The Word of God is Living and Powerful, and is ready, and will do a mighty work in our lives.

Hebrews 4:12 (NKJV) ¹² For the word of God is living and powerful, and sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing even to the division of soul and spirit, and of joints and marrow, and is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart.

In Every Study

- Who Is God? (How Great is He?)
- What Does He Think of Me? (How Wonderful Are His Thoughts Towards Me?)
- What Does He Want Me to Do?
- What Can I Boldly Request of Him?
- What Do I Need to Be on Guard of When I Leave Here Today?

Boldly come to the throne of grace, ask God to reveal Himself in a mighty way to you, and to do I might work in you, and through you.

Hebrews 4:16 (NKJV) ¹⁶ Let us therefore come boldly to the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy and find grace to help in time of need.

There is a Prayer Team Available to Pray with and for You

End of Study

Mark 10:35-52

Recap

We have come as far as verse 32 of chapter 10. Jesus, along with possibly upwards of 2+ million people are making the journey from all over the land of Israel to Jerusalem for the Passover Feast. How fitting for us as we enter into the Easter season. Next week in chapter 11 is the Triumphal entry into Jerusalem, and thus Jesus will be 5 days away from the cross. Our passage today, Jesus is probably (in my estimate) just a week, maybe 10 days, from the cross.

Mark 10:32–45 (NKJV) ³² Now they were on the road, going up to Jerusalem, and Jesus was going before them; and they were amazed. And as they followed they were afraid. Then He took the twelve aside again and began to tell them the things that would happen to Him: ³³ “Behold, we are going up to Jerusalem, and the Son of Man will be betrayed to the chief priests and to the scribes; and they will condemn Him to death and deliver Him to the Gentiles; ³⁴ and they will mock Him, and scourge Him, and spit on Him, and kill Him. And the third day He will rise again.” ³⁵ Then James and John, the sons of Zebedee, came to Him, saying, “Teacher, we want You to do for us whatever we ask.” ³⁶ And He said to them, “What do you want Me to do for you?” ³⁷ They said to Him, “Grant us that we may sit, one on Your right hand and the other on Your left, in Your glory.” ³⁸ But Jesus said to them, “You do not know what you ask. Are you able to drink the cup that I drink, and be baptized with the baptism that I am baptized with?” ³⁹ They said to Him, “We are able.” So Jesus said to them, “You will indeed drink the cup that I drink, and with the baptism I am baptized with you will be baptized; ⁴⁰ but to sit on My right hand and on My left is not Mine to give, but *it is for those* for whom it is prepared.” ⁴¹ And when the ten heard *it*, they began to be greatly displeased with James and John. ⁴² But Jesus called them to *Himself* and said to them, “You know that those who are considered rulers over the Gentiles lord it over them, and their great ones exercise authority over them. ⁴³ Yet it shall not be so among you; but whoever desires to become great among you shall be your servant. ⁴⁴ And whoever of you desires to be first shall be slave of all. ⁴⁵ For even the Son of Man did not come to be served, but to serve, and to give His life a ransom for many.”

Context / Intro

So the context of our passage is Jesus' third declaration that he was going to die and rise again on the third day; yet in the midst of such a declaration to His disciples, as His face was like steel (nothing would keep Him from the cross to save you and me), His heart was like wax as He gravity of the situation is weighing heavy on His heart, as we studied last week that the Garden prayer was the culmination of the pain upon His heart, but the heaviness of what was to happen in Jerusalem was heavy upon His heart as He makes this walk, at times lonely walk, to Jerusalem. And yet, even in the midst of such declaration, the disciples fight over who will be the greatest in the kingdom, seeking and jockeying for position. How sad, yet still how present for each of us to be on guard of today, as this world's system is so opposite of God's ways, it is easy for us in our flesh to do what these disciples did and seek selfish ambition.

Isaiah 50:7 (NKJV) ⁷ “For the Lord God will help Me; Therefore I will not be disgraced; Therefore I have set My face like a flint, And I know that I will not be ashamed.

Definition: Ambition means a strong desire to do or achieve something typically requiring determination and hard work

And Jesus takes the opportunity to once again teach them, and us, how to have true greatness in the Kingdom of God. And He will use an unlikely example (Blind Bartimaeus) a castoff and nobody according to the world standard, but a great trophy by God's standard.

Mark 10:43–44 (NKJV) ⁴³ Yet it shall not be so among you; but whoever desires to become great among you shall be your servant. ⁴⁴ And whoever of you desires to be first shall be slave of all.

So who wants to be great in the Kingdom of God, who wants to finish well and hear those glorious words, well done thy good and faithful servant, enter into the joy of the Lord:

Matthew 25:23 (NKJV) ²³ His lord said to him, ‘Well done, good and faithful servant; you have been faithful over a few things, I will make you ruler over many things. Enter into the joy of your lord.’

Prayer – Boldly Ask Your God

The Word of God is Living and Powerful, and is ready, and will do a mighty work in our lives.

*Hebrews 4:12 (NKJV)*¹² *For the word of God is living and powerful, and sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing even to the division of soul and spirit, and of joints and marrow, and is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart.*

In Every Study

- Who Is God? (How Great is He?)
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Outline Mark 10:32-52:

- His Face was Like Steel (10:32)
- His Heart was Like Wax (10:33-34)
- Selfish Ambition (10:35-45)
 - Selfish Ambition – Seeks a Title/Position/Recognition (10:35-37)
 - Selfish Ambition – Overestimates One’s Abilities (10:38-39)
 - Selfish Ambition – Doesn’t Understand God’s Overall Mission Objective (10:39-40)
 - Selfish Ambition – Causes Division Among the Body (10:41)
 - Selfish Ambition – Is Blinded to the Calling to be The Greatest in the Kingdom (10:42-45)
- Selfless Ambition (10:46-52)
 - Selfless Ambition – Throws Off the Restraints that Keeps Them from Getting to Jesus (10:46-50)
 - Selfless Ambition – Simply Wants to See Jesus (10:51-52)

His Face was Like Steel (10:32)

Mark 10:32 Now they were on the road, going up to Jerusalem, and Jesus was going before them; and they were amazed. And as they followed they were afraid. Then He took the twelve aside again and began to tell them the things that would happen to Him:

Jesus the Shepherd – Not Herder

Verse 32, Jesus is leading them up to Jerusalem. I'm thankful that he's a shepherd, not a cattle herder. He leads his people, and so when God lays something on your heart, and you begin to follow him, then you can take rest in beloved that he is leading you and going before you, and he'll prepare the place for you and prepare the situation for you. We can simply rest in that and trust that, that he's doing something wonderful, so don't be afraid to step out and follow where he's going and what he's doing and where he's calling you. You'll never regret it, for great is his faithfulness and therefore we can be great in our faith, believing in his faithfulness.

Future – yet Compulsion Must Take Place

Verse 32 – things that would (Greek: mello) happen: mellō ‘about to be (or, happen)’, ‘coming,’ ‘future’: the verb denotes something in the future which is about to take place; often, however (as here), more than mere time is implied: there is the quality of “compulsion, necessity or certainty” (Abbott-Smith), so that the participial form to mellon does not mean simply the thing that will happen (in the future)’ but ‘something that must take place,’ ‘something that is bound to happen.’ Cf. Arndt & Gingrich 1.c.d: “an action that necessarily follows a divine decree, is destined, must, will certainly.”

**Bratcher, R. G., & Nida, E. A. (1993). A handbook on the Gospel of Mark (p. 328). New York: United Bible Societies.*

His Heart was Like Wax (10:33-34)

Mark 10:33 “Behold, we are going up to Jerusalem, and the Son of Man will be betrayed to the chief priests and to the scribes; and they will condemn Him to death and deliver Him to the Gentiles;

Mark 10:34 and they will mock Him, and scourge Him, and spit on Him, and kill Him. And the third day He will rise again.”

Context of Today’s Study on Ambition

So the context of our passage is Jesus' third declaration that he was going to die and rise again on the third day.

3rd Time Speaking of Death

This is the third time in this Gospel that Jesus has told His disciples of His coming death. First was when they were up in Caesarea Philippi, then when He was coming down from the Mount of Transfiguration (most likely located up on Mount Hermon), and now this third time outside of Jericho.

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A New Command

March 9 – John Courson Devotion

John 13:31–35 (NKJV) ³¹ So, when he had gone out, Jesus said, “Now the Son of Man is glorified, and God is glorified in Him. ³² If God is glorified in Him, God will also glorify Him in Himself, and glorify Him immediately. ³³ Little children, I shall be with you a little while longer. You will seek Me; and as I said to the Jews, ‘Where I am going, you cannot come,’ so now I say to you. ³⁴ A new commandment I give to you, that you love one another; as I have loved you, that you also love one another. ³⁵ By this all will know that you are My disciples, if you have love for one another.”

As Judas goes out, and it is dark, Jesus turns to His boys and says, ‘This is the hour of glory. It’s all coming down. I’m going to be going, and where I’m going, you can’t come now. So in the meantime, I’m giving you a new commandment: Love one another.’

A new commandment? Doesn’t it say way back in Leviticus that we are to love God and that we are to love our neighbor? Isn’t that the message, really, of the Scriptures in their entirety? Hadn’t Jesus Himself said that upon these two commandments—to love God and to love people—hang all the Law and the Prophets? What does He mean a new commandment?

Matthew 22:35–40 (NKJV) ³⁵ Then one of them, a lawyer, asked Him a question, testing Him, and saying, ³⁶ “Teacher, which is the great commandment in the law?” ³⁷ Jesus said to him, “ ‘You shall love the LORD your God with all your heart, with all your soul, and with all your mind.’ ³⁸ This is the first and great commandment. ³⁹ And the second is like it: ‘You shall love your neighbor as yourself.’ ⁴⁰ On these two commandments hang all the Law and the Prophets.”

Look carefully at what Jesus is saying because it’s radical. Yes, the Old Testament is filled with commandments and exhortations to love. But Jesus here makes everything new when He says, ‘Love one another as I have loved you.’ How did Jesus love them? How does Jesus love us? That’s what’s new. Paul tells us how He loves us when he writes, ‘Husbands, love your wives, even as Christ loved the church, and gave Himself for it’ (see Ephesians 5:25).

The newness, the unfolding, the fullness of this new commandment is that you are to love in a way that costs you your life—not just loving generally, but loving sacrificially to the place of death.

You see, Biblically there is never true reconciliation apart from someone or something dying. In the Old Testament, reconciliation was impossible without the sacrifice of an animal. In the New Testament, we see Old Testament typology become reality with the death of the innocent Lamb of God, Jesus Christ.

Gang, there will never be true reconciliation between you and the person who's mad at you or estranged from you until you die, until you say, 'I'm not going to grind my ax any longer. I'm not going to press my point any further. I'm not going to prove I'm right anymore. I'm just going to die.'

The question is, will you?

'But I'm innocent,' you say.
So was Jesus.

'But I'm right.'
Wasn't He?

A new commandment He gave us: to die—to our pride, our complaints, our position, our proof.

'What if I die?' you ask. 'Does laying down my life and giving up my rights guarantee reconciliation?'

Was everyone reconciled to Jesus? No.

Not everyone is born again. Not everyone says, 'Thank You, Lord, for laying down Your life for me.' When you love like Jesus, some will respond and there will be reconciliation.

Others, however, will continue to spit and curse and mock, even as they did to Jesus as He was in the very act of dying for their sins. But if we are to love as Jesus loved, like Him, we'll pray, 'Father, forgive them. They just don't know what they're doing.'

'By this kind of love shall all men know you are My disciples,' said Jesus, 'when you love like I do—when you love to the point of death.'

COURSON, J. (2003). A Day's Journey: 365 Daily Meditations from the Word. Santa Ana, CA: Calvary Chapel Publishing.

Greatness is Serving (10:35-45)

Selfish Ambition – Seeks a Title/Position/Recognition (10:35-37)

Mark 10:35 Then James and John, the sons of Zebedee, came to Him, saying, "Teacher, we want You to do for us whatever we ask."

Mark 10:36 And He said to them, "What do you want Me to do for you?"

Mark 10:37 They said to Him, "Grant us that we may sit, one on Your right hand and the other on Your left, in Your glory."

Verb – Sit on Chairs Next to King

kathizō 'sit': in this context the verb refers to sitting in chairs, or thrones, next to the king on his throne.

Matthew 20 – Their Mother with Them

Verse 35, Matthew's account tells us that James and John's mother was with them, and so you have to imagine this. There were family discussions leading up to this moment. There would not have been this moment impulse, but there had been discussions and ponderings about this, about them sitting at Jesus' left hand and right hand.

Matthew 20:20-21 (NKJV) ²⁰ Then the mother of Zebedee's sons came to Him with her sons, kneeling down and asking something from Him. ²¹ And He said to her, "What do you wish?" She said to Him, "Grant that these two sons of mine may sit, one on Your right hand and the other on the left, in Your kingdom."

Presumptions & Arrogant

Verse 35, their request of "we want" is very presumptuous on their part and quite arrogant. And hence, that's what selfish ambition does.

Selfish Ambition Seeks a Title

But what we see right from the start of this study is that selfish ambition seeks a title, a position, or recognition. Selfish ambition is not content with their current state and place. And, as we continue on, we will see it causes problem among the body.

Sadly, there is nothing new under the sun, and men and woman seeking titles and positions and recognition continue on, and are one of the greatest hinderances, and many times, destroyers of the work of God in a church.

Look at Jesus' Gentleness

Verse 36, Jesus is so gentle and kind with them. Look at his soft answer rather than a beat-down and a lecture. He is just so gentle and kind with his disciples, even in their arrogance and pride. You know, talking softly, beloved, it will diffuse many problems, and they will open up much heartfelt communications. Apply that to your marriages of even when there is pride and something that could cause an immediate contention, that you would just come with a soft and gentle answer. Apply that into your relationships and you'll be so much like Jesus.

Jesus knows the cross is before him, maybe a week away at this point, and yet still here he is, being so gentle and kind, knowing their selfish ambition of their question, yet he still so gently says, "Go ahead, I'm listening. What would you like to discuss with me?" And again, just imagine that application in your marriage. And we're told in the Proverbs, "A soft answer turns away wrath." It diffuses contention.

Proverbs 15:1-2 (NKJV) ¹ A soft answer turns away wrath, But a harsh word stirs up anger. ² The tongue of the wise uses knowledge rightly, But the mouth of fools pours forth foolishness.

Selfish Ambition – Overestimates One's Abilities (10:38-39)

Mark 10:38 But Jesus said to them, "You do not know what you ask. Are you able to drink the cup that I drink, and be baptized with the baptism that I am baptized with?"

Mark 10:39 They said to Him, "We are able." So Jesus said to them, "You will indeed drink the cup that I drink, and with the baptism I am baptized with you will be baptized;

Baptism (Greek) – Speak of Overwhelming Danger/Disaster

"In popular Greek usage the vocabulary of baptism was used to speak of being overwhelmed by disaster or danger, and a similar metaphorical use of submersion is present in Scripture." (Lane) Passages like Psalm 42:7, Psalm 93:3, and Psalm 69:2 reflect this idea.

Psalm 93:3 (NKJV) ³ The floods have lifted up, O LORD, The floods have lifted up their voice; The floods lift up their waves.

Psalm 42:7 (NKJV) ⁷ Deep calls unto deep at the noise of Your waterfalls; All Your waves and billows have gone over me.

Psalm 69:2 (NKJV) ² I sink in deep mire, Where there is no standing; I have come into deep waters, Where the floods overflow me.

Selfish Ambition Overestimates One's Abilities

Selfish ambition always overestimates one's ability. These men have no idea what they are asking, they have no idea what the price that is required and to be paid is at this point. They will..... once their hearts are changed to "selfless ambition", but right now and here, they have no idea what the requirement is, and they totally overestimate their abilities.

James will Be First Disciple Martyred

Verse 39. So as Jesus says, "You will indeed drink of this cup," as James will be the first martyred apostle and John will suffer brutal pain and suffering for his faith there on the island of Patmos, and it's still not clear if he died an old man's death or died just because of the brokenness of his body because of the harsh conditions of his exile to Patmos.

Acts 12:1–2 (NKJV) ¹ Now about that time Herod the king stretched out his hand to harass some from the church. ² Then he killed James the brother of John with the sword.

Be Thankful God Says no to Prayers

So they will drink of the baptism, but not this baptism that is before Jesus, just several days away. And we can be thankful that God doesn't answer all of our foolish prayer requests that we think we know what is the right thing, whereas God says no, because if Jesus would have said yes, that would have been James and John on the left hand and right hand of the cross, because the cross was when Jesus entered into his glory. The greatest peace you'll ever have in prayer is, "Lord, let thy will be done. Lord, I don't know all the details. I recognize that you do, and so I'm just gonna rest in that you do, and I fully am at peace if you say no."

Matthew 6:10 (NKJV) ¹⁰ Your kingdom come. Your will be done On earth as it is in heaven.

They Will Suffer – Look at Great Work Jesus did in Them / Lord Mold Me

Verse 39. So as we said, Jesus said, "You will indeed drink of it," and recognize what a great work Jesus will do in these men who right now we see are selfish with selfish ambition, are prideful, are arrogant, are divisive, yet Jesus doesn't cast them away because Jesus knows what he can do with the piece of clay in his hands that are moldable and teachable. Philippians 1:6 says, "He who began a good work will be faithful to complete it." And he started a good work in these men, and he's gonna mold these men, because they are moldable, and he's gonna mold these men to be the greatest in the kingdom, and they will willingly follow him at all costs and in Christ, and he'll do the same for you when you just simply say, "Lord, teach me. Mold me. Let your will be done. I give myself to you. Please shape me into the greatest in the kingdom, because that is truly my heart's desire."

Philippians 1:6 (NKJV) ⁶ being confident of this very thing, that He who has begun a good work in you will complete it until the day of Jesus Christ;

They Remember These Words – Still Go

Verse 39. They will remember these words yet still go forth in the ministry even knowing what would be in store for them.

Selfish Ambition – Doesn't Understand God's Overall Mission Objective (10:39-40)

Mark 10:40 but to sit on My right hand and on My left is not Mine to give, but it is for those for whom it is prepared."

They Misunderstand Overall Objective / They Misunderstand What Glory Is

Back in verse 37, they misunderstand what glory is. They totally don't get the three times that Jesus were telling of Jesus' death, because Jesus' death is his glory as he buys back and redeems man from their sin. So they totally misunderstand what glory is. And selfish ambition will always do that. It misunderstands what the big picture is. It misunderstands what the ultimate goal that Jesus is trying to do in a ministry, in a person's life.

Jesus Speaking Prophetically

Jesus is speaking that prophecy must be fulfilled, and that John and James do not meet the requirement to fulfill the prophecy. Verse 40, Jesus says it's not for him to give what is prepared for these, and he's talking prophetically. He's talking about the two thieves on the cross, and it had to be them on that cross, because prophecy had to be fulfilled that Jesus would be crucified and numbered among the transgressors, as Isaiah 53 says.

Isaiah 53:12 (NKJV) ¹² Therefore I will divide Him a portion with the great, And He shall divide the spoil with the strong, Because He poured out His soul unto death, And He was numbered with the transgressors, And He bore the sin of many, And made intercession for the transgressors.

Mark 15:25–28 (NKJV) ²⁵ Now it was the third hour, and they crucified Him. ²⁶ And the inscription of His accusation was written above: THE KING OF THE JEWS ²⁷ With Him they also crucified two robbers, one on His right and the other on His left. ²⁸ So the Scripture was fulfilled which says, "And He was numbered with the transgressors."

So Too Today

See if James and John don't understand the big picture God is doing, and to be granted their request would have stopped the work God had planned. And so it is true today when a person comes with self-ambition, they think they know the will of God, and they seek the title or position or recognition or their way, and when they don't get

it, they cause problems..... All the while thinking they know the big picture, all that God is doing, when in reality they don't, and they actually then are coming against and diminishing what God is doing. It is not a place any Christian should want to be in. Selfish ambition doesn't understand what God's glory is.

Selfish Ambition – Causes Division Among the Body (10:41)

Mark 10:41 And when the ten heard it, they began to be greatly displeased with James and John.

Great Anger

Exegesis aganaktein (cf. 10:14) 'to be indignant,' 'to be angry': the preposition peri 'about' indicates the object of the indignation—'to be angry at'.

Selfish Ambition – Always Causes Division

Verse 41, selfish ambition always causes division

They Will Eventually Fight Over who Gets Right and Left

Back in verse 37, left hand, right hand was the request. The right hand would be the second most powerful in the government style of room, the left hand would be the third. So it is kinda funny. James and John may not be fighting right now about who's number two and three. They just wanna make sure they're above the other ten apostles at this point. But if Jesus did grant them their request, the next battle would immediately seem to be for who gets to be one and who gets to be two, because selfish ambition never stops. It always just keeps growing, and it can never be satisfied.

Mark 10:35–37 (NKJV) ³⁵ Then James and John, the sons of Zebedee, came to Him, saying, "Teacher, we want You to do for us whatever we ask." ³⁶ And He said to them, "What do you want Me to do for you?" ³⁷ They said to Him, "Grant us that we may sit, one on Your right hand and the other on Your left, in Your glory."

Selfish Ambition – Is Blinded to the Calling to be The Greatest in the Kingdom (10:42-45)

Mark 10:42 But Jesus called them to Himself and said to them, "You know that those who are considered rulers over the Gentiles lord it over them, and their great ones exercise authority over them.

Lord Over – Run Errands

Lord it over may be rendered as referring to exorbitant demands 'make them run back and forth' in the sense of constantly running errands (Zoque) or to self-exaltation, e.g. 'raise themselves up' (Tzeltal).

World Power Structure – A Pyramid / Now imagine Flipping That

Verse 42, the power structure of the world is like a pyramid, and the more people you have underneath of you, and the layers of people you have underneath you determine and declares how great you are. Now, imagine that as a servant of the Lord, where you're called to flip it. You're at the bottom of the pyramid. The greatest serving is the one who has the widest reach of servitude.

Blinded to - The Greatest in Kingdom

These disciples are totally blinded to the teaching Jesus has given on the greatest in the kingdom.

Mark 9:33–37 (NKJV) ³³ Then He came to Capernaum. And when He was in the house He asked them, "What was it you disputed among yourselves on the road?" ³⁴ But they kept silent, for on the road they had disputed among themselves who *would be the greatest*. ³⁵ And He sat down, called the twelve, and said to them, "If anyone desires to be first, he shall be last of all and servant of all." ³⁶ Then He took a little child and set him in the midst of them. And when He had taken him in His arms, He said to them, ³⁷ "Whoever receives one of these little children in My name receives Me; and whoever receives Me, receives not Me but Him who sent Me."

Business Model not for the Church

Verse 43, Jesus is making it clear that the way the world operates is not the way his kingdom, nor his church operates. Sadly, people bring in the business model into the church, and that business model does nothing but cause problems because every business model, every government model is based on headship, even some turn it into lordship, and the people below are required to serve upwards to the top, whereas Jesus says, "The greatest leader is the one who serves all."

Mark 10:43 Yet it shall not be so among you; but whoever desires to become great among you shall be your servant.

Greatest in Kingdom Reiterated Again

Verse 42 through 45, this is the second time Jesus directly gives the greatest in the kingdom speech. He's given it several other times in a general way. But the key to learning is repetition, and Jesus is repeating and repeating so that he and they get it, and that we get it. So who can recount the seven points of our greatest in the kingdom study from Mark 9?

When I was in India, teaching at a local church, and then that was the Sunday morning message, and then we met again for Sunday evening, and even as I would see them over the following days, we had such a great time, I would say to them, "Okay, the greatest in the kingdom is," and I would hold my hand up with the number one, then they would say it. And I would say number two and they would say it, and I would just say "Take it from there," and they would go through all seven. It was just glorious. It was a great time. It was a beautiful church. They were just like sponges, wanting to absorb any type of godly knowledge. It was truly a great time to be part of something like that.

The Greatest in the Kingdom (Mark 9:30-50):

1. The Greatest in the Kingdom is the Attendant/Servant of All (9:33-36)
2. The Greatest in the Kingdom Receives and Makes Others Their Own (9:37)
3. The Greatest in the Kingdom Unites the Family, not Divides It (9:38-41)
4. The Greatest in the Kingdom Protects the Children and the Innocence of the Children (9:42)
5. The Greatest in the Kingdom Lives in Purity before God (9:43-48)
6. The Greatest in the Kingdom is a Living Sacrifice unto God (9:49)
7. The Greatest in the Kingdom Lives in Peace with the Body of Christ (9:50)

Apply this to Your Marriage - Relationships

If you want some beautiful power in your marriage, take these seven points and turn them into your marriage application, and you watch how quickly your marriage will turn for the better, but unfortunately in many marriages, people are looking to be served rather than to serve.

Servants don't Choose Who Serve

Verse 43. Jesus says, shall be your servant. Imagine that statement as they fight with each other, who is the greatest, back in chapter 9 verse 33. imagine this statement. Whoa. Wait a minute. To be great, I have to serve Peter. Wash Peter's feet. Bring James a cup of coffee. To them, this would hit them smack in the face. You mean you're telling me the servant isn't sitting at the right hand and left hand, but now to be great, I serve one of these guys, one of these 12 others. Disciples. Do you have any idea how arrogant they are? How prideful they are? You know how humbling that would be to serve them, to allow them to be above me. This is asking a lot. Oh, this statement, it would be shocking to these men who are fighting over who's going to be the greatest.

And here's the key to being a servant. You don't get to choose who you serve. You serve whoever God puts before you.

Yes. Let me serve the people in India at the slums. Yes. Let me serve the humble person. But whoa. Wait a minute. You want me to serve that arrogant person, that loud person, that person who treats me like a servant. I don't know about this. This isn't my idea of serving.

As a servant, you don't get to choose. True servants don't choose. They simply choose to serve.

As it's been said, you will know how great of a servant you are when someone treats you like one.

Mark 10:44 And whoever of you desires to be first shall be slave of all.

Mark 10:45 For even the Son of Man did not come to be served, but to serve, and to give His life a ransom for many."

We Are Bondslaves

Verse 44 gives the word slave. It's where we get the word bondservant. Paul would expound on what a bondservant meant. What a bondservant was simply one who bonded themselves as a servant to their master, saying, "I love my master. I love being in his house. And I wanna do anything that he wants me to do." And we're bondservants to Jesus Christ. And as it's been said, our debt is to God, but our payment is to man, and that's what we do as bondservants.

Jesus is the Ransom – Not Us

Verse 45, Jesus gave himself as the ransom. And the good news is, he's already paid the price. A ransom was to pay someone out of their debt who had not the ability to do so, and that's what he's done upon the cross for us. And as servants, we're simply called to be servants. Jesus gave the example of serving, but Jesus did something that he doesn't call us to do because we don't have the ability, and that is to pay the ransom for man. Psalm 49 says, "None can redeem his brother, nor give a ransom for him." So don't put that burden on you, that you're the ultimate responsibility to win someone to Christ, because if you do and you think so, then when you are serving and you don't serve perfectly, because none of us ever will, but when you don't, you won't sit there and put it upon yourself that it was your blown witness or your lack of great serving that made that person walk away and say ...

Psalm 49:7 (NKJV) ⁷ None of them can by any means redeem his brother, Nor give to God a ransom for him—

See, all Christians are hypocrites for them to walk away and say, "I won't come to Christ because I watched you and you're a lousy witness." And church, that's just not true. Every man gives a witness themselves of what they did with Jesus Christ. We can point and we can be like salt to make them hunger and thirst, but still yet at the end, it's between them and God. And Holy Spirit convicts them of their sin, shows them their unrighteousness, and reveals to them a judgment is to come. And they respond to that, and that's the determination, not you and not your ransom paying price.

The Gift Offered to All – No Limited Atonement

Verse 45. Not all but many. The gift was offered to all, the gift of salvation. There is no limited atonement, but the ransom paid can only be applied to those who will receive it.

John 3:16 (NKJV) ¹⁶ For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have everlasting life.

Jesus Heals Blind Bartimaeus (10:46-52)

Selfless Ambition – Throws Off the Restraints that Keeps Them from Getting to Jesus (10:46-50)

Mark 10:46 Now they came to Jericho. As He went out of Jericho with His disciples and a great multitude, blind Bartimaeus, the son of Timaeus, sat by the road begging.

Jericho

Verse 46. Jericho is 15 miles away, so we're closing in on Jerusalem. Which is a very prosperous area, and it was a trade route area and so this is definitely a major population area on the pilgrimage to Jerusalem for the feast. So it's a great place to beg, but it's also a great place to show one in the last miracles of God. It's Passover, the pilgrimage is on. It's a big time celebration and it's a big time wondrous, family time and people were way more generous and compassionate during the feast. So Bartimaeus has picked himself a great spot.

Spiritual Lesson Behind Every Miracle

And behind every miracle was a spiritual statement being made and Jesus is going to make a very loud and clear spiritual statement in this healing of blind Bartimaeus. Verse 46. Say, son of Timaeus. I think what we're being told

here at then is that Bartimaeus's father has passed away. Everybody in town knew him and knew who he was and who his father was. He was the town beggar that many people would pass and know, but obviously dad can't provide for him if he is still alive, most likely he's dead. And this is all that Bartimaeus has as a means for protection and provision is begging.

Mark 10:47 And when he heard that it was Jesus of Nazareth, he began to cry out and say, "Jesus, Son of David, have mercy on me!"

Mark 10:48 Then many warned him to be quiet; but he cried out all the more, "Son of David, have mercy on me!"

Son of David

Verse 47. How did he know Jesus was the son of David? That title was a Messianic title, but somehow he knew and he believed it, and he's not just calling out to Jesus the healer. He's calling him son of David. That means he's calling him out the Messiah too.

Mercy – Not Getting what Deserve

Verse 48. have mercy. Mercy means not getting what you deserve. Grace's getting what you don't deserve. God gives us wonderful gifts we don't deserve. Mercy's not getting what we deserve. We deserve judgment and punishment for our sins and yet God gives us forgiveness and freedom from our sin. He's calling out based on the mercy of Jesus saying, I know I don't deserve anything because I'm a sinner, but I'm crying out based on mercy and that you're merciful, Messiah, to touch me.

World Says Be Quiet / World wants Keep us From Jesus

Verse 48, how often the world can keep people from Jesus, with all their presuppositions, with all their so-called wisdom and knowledge, all their thinking they know what God accepts or rejects. The world loves us to remain, to be quiet. They come with all their man's wisdom and ways, and how often the poor, the beggar, the needy, are prevented from making it to Jesus. May we not be such a people. May we not allow such a people to keep us from getting to Jesus.

Mark 10:49 So Jesus stood still and commanded him to be called. Then they called the blind man, saying to him, "Be of good cheer. Rise, He is calling you."

Jesus Always Drawn to the Neediest

Verse 49. Jesus always draws to the neediest. Just be real and just be honest with him and he will come to you

Like the man at the pool of Bethesda here, at blind Bartimaeus, no one to help them. They're alone. They're overlooked, they're troubled in their pain, yet it's who Jesus has drawn to and comes to. The world says, be quiet. Stay out of sight. Jesus says, come. Jesus said, speak. His heart is drawn to the person in the greatest need and he has drawn to you today and your need open your need to him.

Mark 10:50 And throwing aside his garment, he rose and came to Jesus.

Rose – Jumped Up

The word "rose" - anapēdēsas (only here in the N.T.) 'jumping to his feet,' 'springing up.' Exegesis apobalōn (only here in Mark) 'throwing off,' 'taking off': so as to run faster (Lagrange; cf. Rawlinson).

Only Guide is Voice of Jesus

But we read of no one helping him, no one guiding him, it appears that he is jumping up, running fast, all by himself. To which consider, he is blind, he can't see where he is going, thus the only guide he has for running to Jesus, is the voice of Jesus. His eyes were blind, but his ears were sharply in tune to the voice of Jesus.

Casts it all Off

Verse 50. He casts off his robe, his coat. He's casting off his security. He's blind. He won't know where he left it. He would've had his money that he received from begging. He leaves it there and he takes off for Jesus. He's thrown off his beggar's cup, too. He's thrown off his security. This garment is his bed. It's his blanket. It may even as home if he is homeless.

Nothing will Stop him

Verse 47, 48, and 50. we see nothing is going to restrain Bartimaeus from reaching Jesus and sometimes Christians, I think we're just way too reserved, restrained. Too prim and proper, if you would. We see a man, like Bartimaeus, ain't nothing going to stop him and we're going to see and Jesus will respond.

Verse 50. We can be so restrained, everything is so calculated and measured, missing freedom of getting to to Jesus and seeing Jesus.

To which the continual pressure upon us, the fear of man is a snare. Why did we care so much? What people think of us? Selfish ambition cares what people thinks of us, but caring what people think of us can also keep us from a selfless ambition.

I can't get to Jesus right now. My family, my fellow students, my coworkers, my friends will think I am some fanatic if I scream out that I want and need Jesus. If I say I can't join you for that or no, that's not my thing to participate in or no, that is my time with Jesus for church, ministry, missions, morning devotions.

And would remain quiet. Worried what people will think. Still not wanting to seem radical. We don't throw off restraint and just go for it because we're worried about our securing our security. Whether that is our financial means or possessions or we're worried about securing respect and we don't want people to think we're a fanatic and hence we miss out on getting to Jesus because we won't stand up and shout and yell out. We're so busy securing and you fill in the blank and it keeps us from getting to Jesus.

Son of Defiled

Verse 49, Bartimaeus's name means son of the defiled. But what we see is, that doesn't keep him from getting to Jesus. He doesn't listen to his past. He doesn't listen to the name that's tagged to him. He sees Jesus and he believes in his heart that Jesus is who he says that he is, and that he will be received, and he cries out and calls out to Jesus.

And there are many of you here today. You can't live in selfless ambition because your past, you keep thinking your past keeps you from making it and coming to Jesus. And you never enter into that freedom and that fullness that he offers to you to come. Selfless ambition does not consider whether Jesus will receive or not, because Jesus has already told us that he will receive us, fully accepted in the beloved.

Bartimaeus was son of the defiled, but Jesus stops the whole march, the whole processional to Jerusalem to stop for one man, this blind man, this defiled man.

God Delights in Mercy

The Bible says that God delights in mercy. He loves to show mercy. And as soon as this man cried out for mercy, that was enough to put Jesus stopped in his tracks. And that's all a prayer needs to be lifted up before the Lord, from a sincere heart is Lord have mercy on me and he will stop, and he will come, and he will meet with you.

Micah 7:18-19 (NKJV) ¹⁸ Who is a God like You, Pardoning iniquity And passing over the transgression of the remnant of His heritage? He does not retain His anger forever, Because He delights in mercy. ¹⁹ He will again have compassion on us, And will subdue our iniquities. You will cast all our sins Into the depths of the sea.

He doesn't let his sin keep him from reaching Jesus, and so should you not, for the Lord delights in mercy.

Let our Lives be Interrupted

And oh, how I need this example in my life. Jesus is on his way to the cross and yet he can stop and be interrupted. We just studied all that was on his mind, and his thoughts, and the pondering of these things, and heavy upon him. And yet here he is, he can stop and be interrupted, and respond to that in love and kindness. So many times when I'm interrupted or I'm deep in thought, and on my way to somewhere or something that seems so important that I can just totally miss that God wants to interrupt my day, and interject something glorious. We see the power of the miracle, the man being healed of blindness, and yet so easy we miss that God stopped and allowed himself to be interrupted. Even with all the importance before him. And what an example, just what a tremendous example for us to apply to our lives today. Are we flexible enough to allow to be interrupted? Because if you are, you'll see something glorious. Always.

Selfless Ambition – Simply Wants to See Jesus (10:51-52)

Mark 10:51 So Jesus answered and said to him, “What do you want Me to do for you?” The blind man said to Him, “Rabboni, that I may receive my sight.”

Be Specific in Prayers

Why does Jesus, ask the man, "What is it that you want?" Surely we would go ... Obviously he wants to be made whole. He wants to see again. I think, too often we just take the sovereignty of God and no longer become specific with God. I think there's a place the Lord wants us to speak our heart very specifically to him, because there's a power in being specific. There's a power that there was no misunderstanding or we didn't ask the right way, where we simply be very specific, "Lord, heal my eyes. Lord, my marriage needs you to touch it, because right now," and you fill in the blank. We're separated. We don't talk. There is hostility. The specificness of, "Lord, my son, my daughter, they're away from you. I'm asking you to draw them near."

I have found in my life personally, that my specific prayers are burden releasing as I've talked to the Lord about it. As he shares his heart, very specifically, this is what the Son of Man is going to face, as we just read, when his heart was like wax, and ministering angels will come to him in the garden to strengthen him. When I'm very specific with the Lord, sharing my heart and my burden, and my pain, I'm sharing and becoming one with him, and ministering angels, Lord himself, is going to come and minister to me, and lift my burden.

Teacher/Master

Rabboni - Exegesis rabbouni (only here in Mark; cf. rabbi 9:5) 'my teacher,' 'my master': the Aramaic raboni

Compare Bartimaeus to James and John

Verse 51. look at Bartimaeus's selfless ambition compared to James and John's selfish ambition.

Mark 10:52 Then Jesus said to him, “Go your way; your faith has made you well.” And immediately he received his sight and followed Jesus on the road.

Jesus Show Crowd Through Bartimaeus – Be Received as Child

Verse 49. Jesus stops the crowd. Jesus commands this at a distance away. He doesn't call Bartimaeus directly. He tells the crowd to tell Bartimaeus to come. And all eyes are upon Bartimaeus. Jesus is on the march to Jerusalem, but he sent in a great spiritual picture of how to be received by him.

Verse 52. What great faith did he exercise? That is the faith of a child. He called to Jesus and he believed Jesus would receive him. He ran to Jesus when he said to come. Again, believing without doubting that Jesus would receive him. Simply put, he came to Jesus as a child.

Do you have a need to get to Jesus? Bring it to him. Be specific. Believe he will receive you and let him work in your life.

The great key. Follow him after he leads you and makes you well.

Verse 52. His faith made him well.

True Salvation Turns and Follows

Jesus says to this man, go your way, and what we see is that this man's way, was to follow Jesus. We know this man received true salvation because he followed Jesus. The indicator of true salvation is the person turns and follows Jesus.

It has been said, Jesus will save no man, that He cannot command.

What Bartimaeus Saw with his New Eyes

For this man, his selfless ambition was to follow Jesus, at all cost, even to the cross.

Imagine he gets new sight, and shortly thereafter these new eyes will see the crucifixion

This man doesn't take his new eyes to go see material and sensual pleasure, he uses them to see Jesus.

Conclusion

So as we started, so we end, how great do you want to be Beloved. Let's go before the Lord in "specific" prayer asking Him to mold and shape us, into greatness, the greatest in the Kingdom.

Outline Mark 10:32-52:

- His Face was Like Steel (10:32)
- His Heart was Like Wax (10:33-34)
- Selfish Ambition (10:35-45)
 - Selfish Ambition – Seeks a Title/Position/Recognition (10:35-37)
 - Selfish Ambition – Overestimates One's Abilities (10:38-39)
 - Selfish Ambition – Doesn't Understand God's Overall Mission Objective (10:39-40)
 - Selfish Ambition – Causes Division Among the Body (10:41)
 - Selfish Ambition – Is Blinded to the Calling to be The Greatest in the Kingdom (10:42-45)
- Selfless Ambition (10:46-52)
 - Selfless Ambition – Throws Off the Restraints that Keeps Them from Getting to Jesus (10:46-50)
 - Selfless Ambition – Simply Wants to See Jesus (10:51-52)

Prayer – Boldly Ask Your God

The Word of God is Living and Powerful, and is ready, and will do a mighty work in our lives.

Hebrews 4:12 (NKJV) ¹² For the word of God is living and powerful, and sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing even to the division of soul and spirit, and of joints and marrow, and is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart.

In Every Study

- Who Is God? (How Great is He?)
- What Does He Think of Me? (How Wonderful Are His Thoughts Towards Me?)
- What Does He Want Me to Do?
- What Can I Boldly Request of Him?
- What Do I Need to Be on Guard of When I Leave Here Today?

Boldly come to the throne of grace, ask God to reveal Himself in a mighty way to you, and to do I might work in you, and through you.

Hebrews 4:16 (NKJV) ¹⁶ Let us therefore come boldly to the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy and find grace to help in time of need.

There is a Prayer Team Available to Pray with and for You

End of Study

Mark 11
Mark 11:1-11

It's a New Calendar / It's a New Beginning

Introduction: Today is the 10th of Nisan in the Jewish calendar. It has been changed from the original month that it was because back in the bondage of Egypt when the children of Israel were 400 years in Egypt. On that night of Passover, where the blood would be put over the door, the Lord tells Moses to change the calendar, that this is the beginning of a new calendar. This is the beginning of a new day. From this day forward, this is the first month, the first day of your new calendar and so it is.

Exodus 12:1-3 (NKJV) ¹ Now the LORD spoke to Moses and Aaron in the land of Egypt, saying, ² "This month shall be your beginning of months; it shall be the first month of the year to you. ³ Speak to all the congregation of Israel, saying: 'On the tenth of this month every man shall take for himself a lamb, according to the house of his father, a lamb for a household.

For everyone, the new day and the new beginning of life comes when the blood of the Lamb is put upon their heart as Jesus takes away the sins of the world. Everyone can have a new beginning. Everyone can have a fresh start, so fresh that you can set a new calendar to it and it's all based on Jesus Christ and what He will do five days later in our study here in the book of Mark.

2 Corinthians 5:17 (NKJV) ¹⁷ Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation; old things have passed away; behold, all things have become new.

There are many in this room that will testify we had a new beginning. I may testify and I can tell you with all my heart, New Year's Day pales in comparison to that day in my heart in February, 1991, when God changed my heart and He gave me a new beginning as I cried out to Him to take the burden of my sin and to cleanse it from me, as I saw the necessity for a Savior and saw Jesus Christ as that Savior. And so too, can anyone here today, you can have a new start, a new beginning, a new calendar that you'll mark your life to and march your life to, as you'll remember the day that God gave you a new start.

The Pilgrimage and the Ascent to Jerusalem

According to Josephus, the population of Jerusalem during the Passover would swell many times its ordinary size, with incredible numbers like 2,700,200 (B.J. 6.425) and 3 million (B.J. 2.280). Some believed that these numbers are exaggerated, but that it is clear Jerusalem's population would double, triple, or even quadruple during the feasts

Virtually the entire extent of the Jerusalem-Jericho road lies on the leeward side of the central mountains. Moisture coming from the Mediterranean is blocked by the Mount of Olives ridge, creating a rain shadow effect to the east. Thus, most of the road's length resides in an arid environment: There are no trees beyond the east slopes of the Mount of Olives, and desert conditions prevail. The road from Jericho to Jerusalem generally runs northeast-southwest. From the palaces of Herod the Great in Jericho, where the W. Qelt discharges from the Judean mountains, to the northeast corner of Jerusalem's city wall, the entire Roman road measures approximately 14.5 miles (23.3 km).⁹ The route is uphill most of the way, for over its course the traveler must overcome a vertical displacement of some 3,370 feet (1025 m). The Temple Mount in Jerusalem sits at an elevation of about 2,450 feet (745 m) above sea level, whereas the summits of the Mount of Olives are between 2,640 and 2,710 feet in elevation (805–825 m). Jericho, on the other hand, lies about 720 feet below sea level (-220 m) in the Jordan Rift Valley. Various travelers have reported that the trip from Jericho to Jerusalem takes between eight and nine hours, and thus could have been completed in a single day.

Riddle, A. D. (2016). The Passover Pilgrimage from Jericho to Jerusalem. In B. J. Beitzel & K. A. Lyle (Eds.), Lexham Geographic Commentary on the Gospels (Mt 21:1–Lk 19:40). Bellingham, WA: Lexham Press.

Mark 11:1–11 (NKJV) ¹ Now when they drew near Jerusalem, to Bethphage and Bethany, at the Mount of Olives, He sent two of His disciples; ² and He said to them, "Go into the village opposite you; and as soon as you have entered it you will find a colt tied, on which no one has sat. Loose it and bring it. ³ And if anyone says to you, 'Why are you doing this?' say, 'The Lord has need of it,' and immediately he will send it here." ⁴ So they went their way, and found the colt tied by the door outside on the street, and they loosed it. ⁵ But some of those who stood there said to them, "What are you doing, loosing the colt?" ⁶ And they spoke to them just as Jesus had commanded. So

they let them go. ⁷ Then they brought the colt to Jesus and threw their clothes on it, and He sat on it. ⁸ And many spread their clothes on the road, and others cut down leafy branches from the trees and spread *them* on the road. ⁹ Then those who went before and those who followed cried out, saying: "Hosanna! 'Blessed is *He who comes in the name of the LORD!*' ¹⁰ Blessed is the kingdom of our father David That comes in the name of the Lord! Hosanna in the highest!" ¹¹ And Jesus went into Jerusalem and into the temple. So when He had looked around at all things, as the hour was already late, He went out to Bethany with the twelve.

Outline Mark 11:1-11:

- The Triumphal Entry – The Preparation (11:1-6)
- The Triumphal Entry – The Proclamation (11:7-10)
- The Triumphal Entry – The Prophecy (11:10)
- The Triumphal Entry – The Peripheral (11:11)

Prayer – Boldly Ask Your God

The Word of God is Living and Powerful, and is ready, and will do a mighty work in our lives.

Hebrews 4:12 (NKJV) ¹² For the word of God is living and powerful, and sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing even to the division of soul and spirit, and of joints and marrow, and is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart.

In Every Study

- Who Is God? (How Great is He?)
- What Does He Think of Me? (How Wonderful Are His Thoughts Towards Me?)
- What Does He Want Me to Do?
- What Can I Boldly Request of Him?
- What Do I Need to Be on Guard of When I Leave Here Today?

Boldly come to the throne of grace, ask God to reveal Himself in a mighty way to you, and to do I might work in you, and through you.

Hebrews 4:16 (NKJV) ¹⁶ Let us therefore come boldly to the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy and find grace to help in time of need.

There is a Prayer Team Available to Pray with and for You

The Triumphal Entry (11:1-11)

The Triumphal Entry – The Preparation (11:1-6)

Mark 11:1 Now when they drew near Jerusalem, to Bethphage and Bethany, at the Mount of Olives, He sent two of His disciples;

Face Like Flint

Verse 1, see the map before us. Mount Hermon to Jerusalem is about 275 miles and that's as a straight arrow. Probably double at least, if you were to walk the roads. Jesus has been focused on that 275 miles since the Mount of Transfiguration where He could have walked into heaven on His perfection, but He stood down. Because if He walked in, that meant He was walking out on us and for the joy that was set before Him, He was willing to take this journey, 275 miles, to face the shame and the brutality of the cross, so that He might win you back.

Isaiah 50:7 (NKJV) ⁷ "For the Lord GOD will help Me; Therefore I will not be disgraced; Therefore I have set My face like a flint, And I know that I will not be ashamed.

He would not stop, turn back, even knowing what was in front of Him, the cross and the brutality and the shame, but like steel He would not be deterred, for you and me were on His mind. Love led Him 275 miles, after the glorious transfiguration, now He marches to the great disfiguration, out of love for you, and for me. How does that make you feel today, how does that change your heart, how will that change your today? Is there any doubt about His love for you? It is easy to forget in the midst of the fallen, but hence the power of returning to cross and walking the road that He walked to get there, for you and for me.

Isaiah 50:5-7 (NKJV) ⁵ The Lord GOD has opened My ear; And I was not rebellious, Nor did I turn away. ⁶ I gave My back to those who struck Me, And My cheeks to those who plucked out the beard; I did not hide My face from shame and spitting. ⁷ "For the Lord GOD will help Me; Therefore I will not be disgraced; Therefore I have set My face like a flint, And I know that I will not be ashamed.

All Males Required 3 Times a year

Now when they drew near to Jerusalem: If all we had was the Gospel of Mark, we might think this was Jesus' first journey to Jerusalem. But the Gospel of John tells us of many previous trips. Jesus, like any devout Jewish man, went to Jerusalem for as many of the major feasts as He possibly could.

Deuteronomy 16:16–17 (NKJV) ¹⁶ "Three times a year all your males shall appear before the LORD your God in the place which He chooses: at the Feast of Unleavened Bread, at the Feast of Weeks, and at the Feast of Tabernacles; and they shall not appear before the LORD empty-handed. ¹⁷ Every man *shall give* as he is able, according to the blessing of the LORD your God which He has given you.

These Villages - About 2.5 Miles Outside Jerusalem

"Bethphage" means "House of Figs." "Bethany" means "House of Dates." Bethany is located two and a half miles outside of Jerusalem; Jesus passed through these two small towns on His way there.

Mark 11:2 and He said to them, "Go into the village opposite you; and as soon as you have entered it you will find a colt tied, on which no one has sat. Loose it and bring it.

Off the Beaten Path

Verse 2, village opposite would lead us to a city, a village that's off the main road, off the beaten path. It's amazing what treasures you can find off the beaten path when you will actually go off the beaten path and see what God may have there. So often, we can be focused and enamored on the big city or the big thing happening, then God's calling us, "No, I want you to go off the beaten path. I want you to go where there isn't, so-called, a lot of action because I want to start something, stir something up and I want you to be part of it."

- Here you find enclosed a picture I have from the highway while there in India, overlooking a city of 3,000 people living in what they call the slums; no electricity, dirt floors, making it day by day. But it was amazing when we went off the beaten path and went into this village, if you would. Oh, my. The amazing thing we found as we walk into this tin shack covered in tarp and 30, 40 kids in there worshipping and praising the Lord. In the midst of the mud and the darkness and the despair, there was joy unspeakable.
- We see the same thing when we go to Carroll Park, off the beaten path, but God is surely there off the beaten path and has prepared a way and is preparing great works to be done that we can be part of.

Can I encourage you in that and remind you of that? And so often, I need it and I'm sure you do, the reminder. Just show up and see what God will do. I always say you can't make ministry happen, but you do have to put yourself in a place where ministry can happen. When we seek the Lord and the prompting of His heart and He leads us someplace and we don't understand it, but we show up, we can see history. We'll no less see his story of love, compassion and grace.

Jesus Comes in Lowly on Donkey – Not a Stallion

You will find a colt tied, on which no one has sat: With this, Jesus established that He would enter Jerusalem riding on a colt. He deliberately chose a young horse, not a stallion, not a donkey, and not coming on foot. This is because in that day, to come riding a colt—as opposed to a mighty war-horse—was to come as a man of peace. Jesus didn't come to Jerusalem as a conquering general, but as a suffering (though triumphant) servant.

i. The Rabbis of Jesus' day had several different theories regarding how the Messiah would come to Jerusalem. Based on Daniel 7:13, some thought the Messiah would come as a majestic conqueror. Based on Zechariah 9:9, some thought that the Messiah would come in a lowly and humble way, riding on a colt.

Daniel 7:13–14 (NKJV) ¹³ "I was watching in the night visions, And behold, One like the Son of Man, Coming with the clouds of heaven! He came to the Ancient of Days, And they brought Him near before Him. ¹⁴ Then to Him was given dominion and glory and a kingdom, That all peoples, nations, and languages should serve Him. His dominion is an everlasting dominion, Which shall not pass away, And His kingdom the one Which shall not be destroyed.

Zechariah 9:9 (NKJV) ⁹ "Rejoice greatly, O daughter of Zion! Shout, O daughter of Jerusalem! Behold, your King is coming to you; He is just and having salvation, Lowly and riding on a donkey, A colt, the foal of a donkey.

ii. In the days of Jesus, some Rabbis reconciled these by saying that the Messiah would come humbly to an unworthy Israel but mightily to a worthy Israel. Since Israel considered itself worthy, they only looked for a triumphant, conquering Messiah.

iii. On which no one had sat: "To Jesus it made no difference that this was an unbroken colt. He was the Creator come into this scene as a Man, and as such all the lower creatures were subject to Him." (Ironsides)

Guzik, D. (2013). Mark (Mk 11:1–6). Santa Barbara, CA: David Guzik.

Mark 11:3 And if anyone says to you, 'Why are you doing this?' say, 'The Lord has need of it,' and immediately he will send it here."

Mark 11:4 So they went their way, and found the colt tied by the door outside on the street, and they loosed it.

Prearranged

They spoke to them just as Jesus had commanded. So they let them go: Apparently, Jesus had pre-arranged this with the colt owner, and the disciples were just instructed to say, "It's for Jesus," if they were questioned. They did as Jesus said, and it was fine.

Lord is in Need of It / Has the Lord Asked something of You?

Verse 6, "You tell them," he says, "the Lord is in need of it." I think there's a place again, for us to ask ourself, "Lord, is there something in my life You want? Amazingly, for me to even say that you need." Sometimes, I think we know He is saying, "Yeah, there is. This is what I want and this is what I need of you." But then, we reason it away because we can say, "No, God would never use me," which is literally an insult to His might because He can take anything and use it for His greatness. But, sometimes, we say, "No, He didn't say that," because we know it would be inconvenient or costly. But as we see, God gives it back. Whatever He asks of us, He gives it back to us with interest and this donkey, the wording here in the verb tense is that He gave it back. So, if he rode the donkey, history was unveiled and then the donkey was taken back and I would wonder what the owner would do with this donkey. I doubt it was ever ridden or a beast of burden again. It was a trophy. They would say, "That's the donkey that the Lord rode on His triumphal entry to save my sin and your sin." Let me tell you about that day and that donkey God used with interest on top of the day's wage.

He will Send Him Back

As the margin of your Bible may render it, this phrase is more properly translated, "He will send him back." That's always the way of the Lord. Anything we give Him—be it our energy or money, our time or abilities—He returns it to us with interest.

Did Owner Know – Used to Carry King? / Just Another Day – Never Realizing

For this man would never know fully what his colt was going to be used for. Did he really know it was going to carry the King of Kings and the Lord of Lords? But he simply gave, not wondering what the outcome would be, simply that the Lord commanded it and that was enough for him. To this man, it was just a day, not fully knowing that it was a prophetic day written several hundred years prior and that he was part of fulfilling prophecy of the greatness of the Lord.

Two Unnamed Disciples / Greatest in the Kingdom

And back to verse 1, let it be seen here. Two unnamed disciples were sent to go get the colt. They had just been arguing over who's the greatest in the kingdom. Now, they get to be part of the greatest in the kingdom, the greatest work that would ever be done, Jesus Christ coming into Jerusalem to become the Lamb of God, Who would take away the sins of the world. Little did they know that they would be part of such a thing. They may have even been walking together going, "Are you believing this? We're sent to go fetch stinking, stinky colts and fowls. Don't they know, doesn't He understand we're the great apostles?" I wonder if it was James and John, as we study, sit on my left hand and right hand. And Jesus told them, "It's not for you to ask of, but hey, go get that donkey tied up at the post."

May No Task be Two Small

May we never look at any task as too small. May we always just look at every task as of equal importance because the Lord had asked us. Whether it's to teach a Bible study, to sing and worship or to usher the door or clean up the building, we say they're all of equal importance because the Lord has asked of it. Whatever He asks is equal in greatness, if we faithfully answer to what He asks.

Give credit to these two. On the heels of the dispute of greatest in the kingdom, they still went and they willingly did the small thing. So, I give them credit for their obedience. As we say, don't despise the day of small things and how many Christians I know, they still have done nothing because they continue to want the big thing and won't wait and do the small things in the meantime. I still have several friends I know, 20 years later, they keep doing the same thing over and over. They graduated Bible College, were equipped for the ministry and they go from church to church, waiting for some church to give them a pulpit. And, they do nothing while they wait except wonder why the church hasn't recognized their greatness and they'll leave that church and go to another and 20 years later, they still have done nothing because they won't just do the small things that the Lord would ask before them.

[Zechariah 4:10 \(NKJV\)](#) ¹⁰ For who has despised the day of small things? For these seven rejoice to see The plumb line in the hand of Zerubbabel. They are the eyes of the LORD, Which scan to and fro throughout the whole earth."

[Matthew 25:22–23 \(NKJV\)](#) ²² He also who had received two talents came and said, 'Lord, you delivered to me two talents; look, I have gained two more talents besides them.' ²³ His lord said to him, 'Well done, good and faithful servant; you have been faithful over a few things, I will make you ruler over many things. Enter into the joy of your lord.'

Some of My Greatest Moments – Have been In Small Things

Some of my greatest moments in ministry have been doing the small things that others felt were beneath them and they wouldn't allow themselves to do it, to which I, "Okay, if that's what You want me to do, Lord, I'll do it." And how many times those small things turn into something big, as God sees the faithfulness of the small things and He makes you ruler over the many things.

Small Things Keep Me out of Trouble

One of the things I also found in my life, small things kept me out of trouble because it gave me something to do, rather than sitting around with idle hands. I remember the church calling me after I got out of Bible College saying, "Ray, we're having a Christmas dinner. Can you go to the kitchen equipment outlet? We need 200 sets of silverware. But the challenge will be, you have to pick them out of the used bin of several thousand because we can't afford to pay for a brand new set." Small thing, but it was a great thing to watch the Christmas dinner and people enjoying the meal and to be part of that. Small thing, but I had great fellowship because I was able to take a couple of friends and we just had great fellowship picking through silverware.

Greg Laurie

I'm reminded that Greg Laurie preaches to tens of thousands now in crusades and he would just hang around the church at Costa Mesa and do what no one else wanted to do because they were too busy or whatever the matter. And he talks about God sending him to go pick out, I think it was something as simple as a new door handle for the doors, when he said, "I begged the Lord and sought the Lord. What door handles do You want?" And we see the picture. He was faithful. God honored that. He tells the story that when the church Jesus Movement was exploding, he was asked if he would go up to a small church that needed a pastor, an hour and 90 minutes away. The other pastors were just too busy to do it and it was only a small group, to which he did. Now, here it is 30 years later, it's known as Harvest Christian Fellowship and I believe the weekly attendance is somewhere around 15,000 a week. May we be faithful in the little things.

Isaiah 6

Verse 6, there's a way to find the will of the Lord on where to go and when to go. You'll find that in Isaiah, chapter 6, where Isaiah, he's before the Lord and there's your key one. You come before the Lord and secondly, he's just still before the Lord and he hears the Lord speak. He's overhearing a conversation and you can say, "How in the world can I overhear God's conversation?" You simply pick up the Word, then you start reading it. It's the voice of God and you'll hear His heart in the passage and at some point, through that time, the Lord will speak to you, and now this applies to you. This is what I want for you.

Isaiah 6:1–9 (NKJV) ¹ In the year that King Uzziah died, I saw the Lord sitting on a throne, high and lifted up, and the train of His robe filled the temple. ² Above it stood seraphim; each one had six wings: with two he covered his face, with two he covered his feet, and with two he flew. ³ And one cried to another and said: "Holy, holy, holy is the LORD of hosts; The whole earth is full of His glory!" ⁴ And the posts of the door were shaken by the voice of him who cried out, and the house was filled with smoke. ⁵ So I said: "Woe is me, for I am undone! Because I am a man of unclean lips, And I dwell in the midst of a people of unclean lips; For my eyes have seen the King, The LORD of hosts." ⁶ Then one of the seraphim flew to me, having in his hand a live coal which he had taken with the tongs from the altar. ⁷ And he touched my mouth with it, and said: "Behold, this has touched your lips; Your iniquity is taken away, And your sin purged." ⁸ Also I heard the voice of the Lord, saying: "Whom shall I send, And who will go for Us?" Then I said, "Here am I! Send me." ⁹ And He said, "Go, and tell this people: "Keep on hearing, but do not understand; Keep on seeing, but do not perceive."

Isaiah, he overheard what the Lord's need was and he responds, "Here I am. Send me." So, when you're drawn into the presence of the Lord and spend time there, you'll hear His heart and He'll prod you that you'll be willing to say, "Here I am. Send me."

It is quite interesting, though, in that passage of Isaiah, that Isaiah said, "When I saw King Uzziah died, that's when I saw the Lord lifted up." Sometimes, there's just kings that are before us that our eyes are fixed upon. That could be kings of the world, all the politics that we get involved in. It could be the king of sports greatness and all the time we spend looking at the kings of the gridiron and ball fields, kings of the workplace and all these type of things. But when we say they're empty, they need to die or we just put them to death by saying, "Enough. You get too much of my attention and time." That's when we can see the Lord lifted up.

Don't Miss – God Engaged this Man in His Divine Plan

Verse 6, don't miss how God chose to engage the use of this man and his possession in His divine plan. If you will recognize that, it will change how you make yourself available and how you pray before Him, when you believe you can be part of His divine plan.

Mark 11:5 But some of those who stood there said to them, "What are you doing, loosing the colt?"

Mark 11:6 And they spoke to them just as Jesus had commanded. So they let them go.

The Lord Commanded

Verse 6 says, "They spoke as Jesus commanded them to." So, he told them before, "If asked, you answer based on what I said." Then we come to, they were actually asked, "Why do you do what you do?" And they answered exactly as Jesus told them to, "Because Jesus commanded me to come do this." You know, when people question you, challenge you, why do you do what you do? Maybe you feel you're in a hard situation, just with boldness, just say, "Because I do what I do because Jesus commanded me to." When they say, "Why don't you do what the rest of the world's doing? Why are you such a stick in the mud?" You can say, "Because I do what Jesus commands me to." When they say, "Why do you go to India and spend your money and your time?" You say, "Because the Lord asked me and for me not to go, would be disobedient to God." Don't try to shy away. Don't be intimidated by the world. Just tell them, "I do this because this is what the Lord's asks of me or commands me or requires of me." And that'll be one of the greatest witnesses that you'll ever have because people have to walk away and say, "Why would someone be willing? What is it about them, what is it about Jesus that would have them do this?" And it'll be one of your greatest witnesses.

Oh, we can say all the time, "I received Christ. He forgave my sin." And people go, "Hmm. Okay, I think I just heard you cuss five times in the conversation five minutes ago or aren't you the one that's living with your girlfriend? Aren't you the one who gets drunk? Aren't you the one who shortchanges the company with your time charging or whatever it may be?" You can speak all you want, but God, when we live it out, people see it inside and out and they know there's something different and real about that.

The Triumphant Entry – The Proclamation (11:7-10)

Mark 11:7 Then they brought the colt to Jesus and threw their clothes on it, and He sat on it.

Never Sat on Before / Yielded to Creator

Verse 7, sitting on an unbroken colt is a miracle in itself because those things would buck and scream and cry and try to throw the rider off. But, we see Jesus, Creator of the universe and Creator of this colt and when the Creator touches the creation, the creation yields, all except man, who's been given the free will choice if ye will yield. The Creator touches His creation, but many men try to buck him off, throw him off. You will not control me and You will not lead my life. I will not yield to You. But here, we see a colt, knows its Creator and yields. Let me tell you, if you yield to Jesus Christ, you will know the Creator's touch and you will never be sorry and you will never look back and you will never regret the decision because you're in the hands of He Who created you. No one knows how you were made to be and the things that make you work than the One Who created you. But many times men, they refuse that and they try to figure it out themselves.

But the problem is, they weren't the Creator and they have limited wisdom and knowledge on how things were meant and designed to be. They continually live in the life of frustration, whether that be in relationship failures or drugs and alcohol or bitterness and wrath or crying for respect. You fill in the blank. Continually living in anguish because they haven't yielded themselves to the Creator Who will tell them how they ought to live and the best way. He's a good Creator. He created you for fellowship. He created you for love. He created you to be loved and He's calling to you today to come, let Him touch you. Let the Creator touch His creation and let Him use you and fellowship with you. Then, you will enter in to that life that He called the abundant life, the zoe life.

John 10:7–10 (NKJV) ⁷ Then Jesus said to them again, "Most assuredly, I say to you, I am the door of the sheep. ⁸ All who ever came before Me are thieves and robbers, but the sheep did not hear them. ⁹ I am the door. If anyone enters by Me, he will be saved, and will go in and out and find pasture. ¹⁰ The thief does not come except to steal, and to kill, and to destroy. I have come that they may have life, and that they may have it more abundantly.

Mark 11:8 And many spread their clothes on the road, and others cut down leafy branches from the trees and spread them on the road.

Mark 11:9 Then those who went before and those who followed cried out, saying: "Hosanna! 'Blessed is He who comes in the name of the LORD!'

Hosanna – Save Now

Verse 10, hosanna means to save now. They're confused. They think Jesus is coming to save them from the Roman government and that would have been great to them for maybe the 50, 60 years they had left to live, but what they needed was Jesus to save now from their sin, so that they can live eternity with Him.

Palm Branches

Verse 8, palm branches were the national symbol of Israel.

Now Publicly Receives Acknowledgement

For Matthew and Mark, the Triumphal Entry marked the moment when Jesus began publicly to reveal himself as the Jewish messiah. Prior to this, he had instructed people to keep it secret (e.g., Matt 8:4; Mark 7:36), but now he was about to show himself to be king, not the conquering hero that many expected, but a humble and suffering servant

Mark 1:40–45 (NKJV) ⁴⁰ Now a leper came to Him, imploring Him, kneeling down to Him and saying to Him, "If You are willing, You can make me clean." ⁴¹ Then Jesus, moved with compassion, stretched out His hand and touched him, and said to him, "I am willing; be cleansed." ⁴² As soon as He had spoken, immediately the leprosy left him, and he was cleansed. ⁴³ And He strictly warned him and sent him away at once, ⁴⁴ and said to him, "See that you say nothing to anyone; but go your way, show yourself to the priest, and offer for your cleansing those things which Moses commanded, as a testimony to them." ⁴⁵ However, he went out and began to proclaim it freely, and to spread the matter, so that Jesus could no longer openly enter the city, but was outside in deserted places; and they came to Him from every direction.

Mark 7:32–37 (NKJV) ³² Then they brought to Him one who was deaf and had an impediment in his speech, and they begged Him to put His hand on him. ³³ And He took him aside from the multitude, and put His fingers in his ears, and He spat and touched his tongue. ³⁴ Then, looking up to heaven, He sighed, and said to him, "Ephphatha," that is, "Be opened." ³⁵ Immediately his ears were opened, and the impediment of his tongue was loosed, and he spoke plainly. ³⁶ Then He commanded them that they should tell no one; but the more He commanded them, the more widely they proclaimed it. ³⁷ And they were astonished beyond measure, saying, "He has done all things well. He makes both the deaf to hear and the mute to speak."

These Rocks Would Cry Out

Then those who went before and those who followed cried out, saying: "Hosanna! 'Blessed is He who comes in the name of the LORD!' " For most of His ministry, Jesus did everything He could to discourage people from publicly celebrating Him as the Messiah. Here Jesus went out of His way to invite public praise and adoration as the Messiah.

In fact, when the religious leaders of His day objected, He told them "I tell you that if these should keep silent, the stones would immediately cry out." (Luke 19:40)

Luke 19:37–40 (NKJV) ³⁷ Then, as He was now drawing near the descent of the Mount of Olives, the whole multitude of the disciples began to rejoice and praise God with a loud voice for all the mighty works they had seen, ³⁸ saying: " 'Blessed is *the King who comes in the name of the LORD!* ' Peace in heaven and glory in the highest!" ³⁹ And some of the Pharisees called to Him from the crowd, "Teacher, rebuke Your disciples." ⁴⁰ But He answered and said to them, "I tell you that if these should keep silent, the stones would immediately cry out."

The Triumphal Entry – The Prophecy (11:10)

Mark 11:10 Blessed is the kingdom of our father David That comes in the name of the Lord! Hosanna in the highest!"

Exactly

Exactly as prophesied

Psalm 118:25–26 (NKJV) ²⁵ Save now, I pray, O LORD; O LORD, I pray, send now prosperity. ²⁶ Blessed is he who comes in the name of the LORD! We have blessed you from the house of the LORD.

Zechariah 9:9 (NKJV) ⁹ "Rejoice greatly, O daughter of Zion! Shout, O daughter of Jerusalem! Behold, your King is coming to you; He is just and having salvation, Lowly and riding on a donkey, A colt, the foal of a donkey.

Hooray – to Crucify

Today we come to what is called the "Triumphal Entry" of Jesus into Jerusalem. On this day the people will herald Him as the King, but it will be short-lived as in just five days this same crowd will yell "crucify Him", and so He will.

The Day is Sunday / 10th of Nissan

The day of the week is Sunday, and the day on the Jewish calendar is the 10th of Nissan. The 10th of Nissan was the day prescribed by the Law handed down to Moses that the Passover lamb was to be brought into the home and kept there until the 14th of Nissan when all the Passover lambs were to be slain.

OT Prophecies

Today we will see for the first time allowing and receiving from the people Him being deemed the Messiah. All the other times they tried to herald Him the Messiah, He slipped away, or said "the time is not now", but today Jesus allows and receives the people declaring Him the Messiah. During the times of Jesus, Kings would ride into town on a donkey (In the ancient Middle Eastern world, leaders rode horses if they rode to war, but donkeys if they came in peace. First Kings 1:33 mentions Solomon riding a donkey on the day he was recognized as the new king of Israel. Other instances of leaders riding donkeys are Judges 5:10; 10:4; 12:14; and 2 Samuel 16:2.). When people were quoting the OT scriptures regarding the Messiah, the other accounts state that the rabbis were saying to Jesus to tell them to shout up, because they rabbis knew these passages were references to the Messiah.

Luke 19:39–40 (NKJV) ³⁹ And some of the Pharisees called to Him from the crowd, "Teacher, rebuke Your disciples." ⁴⁰ But He answered and said to them, "I tell you that if these should keep silent, the stones would immediately cry out."

Psalm 118:25–26 (NKJV) ²⁵ Save now, I pray, O LORD; O LORD, I pray, send now prosperity. ²⁶ Blessed is he who comes in the name of the LORD! We have blessed you from the house of the LORD.

Zechariah 9:9 (NKJV) ⁹ "Rejoice greatly, O daughter of Zion! Shout, O daughter of Jerusalem! Behold, your King is coming to you; He is just and having salvation, Lowly and riding on a donkey, A colt, the foal of a donkey.

Jesus fulfills Prophecy Perfectly

Here in our study today will study and rejoice in the amazing fulfillment of prophecy that Jesus fulfilled. We will see that only one person in the history of mankind could be the Messiah, and we will see it in our amazing study of scripture today.

Some Scriptures to shape our Study

So let's review some scriptures that shape our study today, and let's start in the book of Exodus.

Exodus 12:1–6 (NKJV) ¹ Now the LORD spoke to Moses and Aaron in the land of Egypt, saying, ² "This month *shall be* your beginning of months; it *shall be* the first month of the year to you. ³ Speak to all the congregation of Israel, saying: 'On the tenth of this month every man shall take for himself a lamb, according to the house of *his* father, a lamb for a household. ⁴ And if the household is too small for the lamb, let him and his neighbor next to his house take *it* according to the number of the persons; according to each man's need you shall make your count for the lamb. ⁵ Your lamb shall be without blemish, a male of the first year. You may take *it* from the sheep or from the goats. ⁶ Now you shall keep it until the fourteenth day of the same month. Then the whole assembly of the congregation of Israel shall kill it at twilight.

(Exodus 12:2 NKJV) "This month shall be your beginning of months; it shall be the first month of the year to you.

Jewish Calendar

They made their months according to the lunar calendar. And so, the Passover is related to the third new moon after, or the third full moon after the winter equinox, and thus, differs from ours from year to year. That's why the Jewish Passover isn't always related to our Easter. Sometimes, they come about the same time, but they are calculated on a different basis than we calculate Easter Sunday.

So Important – New Calendar / 1445 Years Later – Divides Time / God set the Clock

The Lord says this is so important, that you are to make a new calendar based off of it. This event (the Passover) will be the beginning, first month of the new calendar. 1445 years later, the same thing will happen, when the Final Passover Lamb is birthed, all of mankind will live to a new calendar. Jesus Christ divided time, BC – AD. Whether man realizes it or not, every hour, every day, every month, every year they live, they live in light of Jesus Christ. No matter how much they refuse to recognize and accept Him, each day they live on this earth is calculated from His birth. God set the clock for all of mankind, so they know where they should be investing their time, from which point is the starting point for all man. Man needs to be checking the clock; it's been 2014 years, 18 days, 10 hours, and 30 minutes (1/18/15 730am) since He left the throne and became the God-man so that He might show us the way, and that He still is the way – a person only need look at the calendar. All of man is living on God's Time.

(Exodus 12:3 NKJV) "Speak to all the congregation of Israel, saying: 'On the tenth day of this month every man shall take for himself a lamb, according to the house of his father, a lamb for a household.

Very Specific / Deviate brought Death / Can't deviate Day or Sacrifice / No Debate

The instructions for this sacrifice were very specific. Very detailed, and very direct and failure to follow them exactly of to deviate from them resulted in death. Just as then, so too now, there is only one way for death to pass over man, and that way is God's way, and that way is only through the Lamb. These people could not choose a cow, a bull, a chicken, only the lamb/goat. They couldn't do it on the 13th, or the 15th, but the 14th only. There would be no council of men to decide if this was acceptable, or if these really were the words of God, or is that really what God meant when He said it, there would be no debate what to call it – Passover or Feel good Feast.

1 Way Only / Yes Narrow – Thankful there is a Way

There was this 1 way only, exactly as God said to do it. Some people say Christianity is too narrow, I say I am glad that there is "even a way"; that a Holy and Awesome God would allow a sinner like me to come before Him, blows me away. Forget how narrow; rejoice that there is a way at all.

(Exodus 12:4 NKJV) 'And if the household is too small for the lamb, let him and his neighbor next to his house take it according to the number of the persons; according to each man's need you shall make your count for the lamb.

(Exodus 12:5 NKJV) 'Your lamb shall be without blemish, a male of the first year. You may take it from the sheep or from the goats.

Spotless – Picture of Jesus

The lamb must have been spotless, without blemish, a type a picture that the Lamb of God who would take away the sins of the world and allow death to Passover all who were covered by His blood, He too would be spotless, without sin.

(Luke 23:3 NKJV) Then Pilate asked Him, saying, "Are You the King of the Jews?" He answered him and said, "It is as you say."

(Luke 23:4 NKJV) So Pilate said to the chief priests and the crowd, "I find no fault in this Man."

(Exodus 12:6 NKJV) 'Now you shall keep it until the fourteenth day of the same month. Then the whole assembly of the congregation of Israel shall kill it at twilight.

Jewish Calendar – Night to Night / Blue & Black Thread

The lamb was slain at twilight on the 14th day of that month. In the Jewish calendar the day begins at sundown (when you cannot tell the difference between a blue thread and black thread). So the lamb must have been slain between sundown to sundown.

2 Specific Purposes – Protection & Prophecy / 10th Nissan – 14th Nissan / Jesus fulfills Passover

This Passover was given for 2 very specific purposes (just to name a few), for Protection, and for Prophecy. Protection, to provide the way for death to Passover all who would apply the blood to their homes. And secondly, for prophecy for these dates (the 10th and the 14th) would be the exact dates that Jesus would ride into Jerusalem (10th of Nissan) and allow for the first time to be heralded publicly that He was the Messiah (the fulfillment of Genesis 3:15). And then, the 14th of Nissan, He would be crucified there upon the cross. Jesus would fulfill the Passover completely and perfectly.

To Get there – Look at Daniel 9

To get there, to know that Jesus rode into Jerusalem on the 10th of Nissan, and was crucified on the 14th of Nissan, we must go to Daniel chapter 9. "Daniel's prophecy of the seventy 'sevens' (weeks) (vv.24 -27) provides the chronological frame for Messianic prediction from Daniel to the establishment of the kingdom on earth and also a key to its interpretation."

(Daniel 9:20 NKJV) Now while I was speaking, praying, and confessing my sin and the sin of my people Israel, and presenting my supplication before the LORD my God for the holy mountain of my God,

(Daniel 9:21 NKJV) yes, while I was speaking in prayer, the man Gabriel, whom I had seen in the vision at the beginning, being caused to fly swiftly, reached me about the time of the evening offering.

(Daniel 9:22 NKJV) And he informed me, and talked with me, and said, "O Daniel, I have now come forth to give you skill to understand.

(Daniel 9:23 NKJV) "At the beginning of your supplications the command went out, and I have come to tell you, for you are greatly beloved; therefore consider the matter, and understand the vision:

(Daniel 9:24 NKJV) "Seventy weeks are determined For your people and for your holy city, To finish the transgression, To make an end of sins, To make reconciliation for iniquity, To bring in everlasting righteousness, To seal up vision and prophecy, And to anoint the Most Holy.

(Daniel 9:25 NKJV) "Know therefore and understand, That from the going forth of the command To restore and build Jerusalem Until Messiah the Prince, There shall be seven weeks and sixty-two weeks; The street shall be built again, and the wall, Even in troublesome times.

(Daniel 9:26 NKJV) "And after the sixty-two weeks Messiah shall be cut off, but not for Himself; And the people of the prince who is to come Shall destroy the city and the sanctuary. The end of it shall be with a flood, And till the end of the war desolations are determined.

(Daniel 9:27 NKJV) Then he shall confirm a covenant with many for one week; But in the middle of the week He shall bring an end to sacrifice and offering. And on the wing of abominations shall be one who makes desolate, Even until the consummation, which is determined, Is poured out on the desolate."

Written 530 BC / Septuagint 300 BC

Because much of Daniel's prophecies have already been fulfilled, his book confounds the critics. Around the year A.D. 300, a theory was introduced that the reason Daniel was so accurate was because, although he declares he wrote his book in 600 B.C., it wasn't actually written until A.D. 50. In other words, it's a fake. This heresy is often repeated by "higher" critics still today. Thus, in his own day, Daniel was placed in the lion's den—but today he's in the liar's den. Either these men are incredibly ignorant or downright fraudulent, for all one has to do is look at the Septuagint. The Septuagint, written in 285 B.C. was the Greek translation of the Old Testament. What book is right there in the Septuagint? Daniel. So how could it have been written in A.D. 50 when it was in the Septuagint in 285 B.C.?

Weeks – Shabua – Unit Measure / Daniel reading Jeremiah / 490 years

Now, back to Daniel 9. The Hebrew word for “weeks” used here is shabua meaning “a unit of measure.” “So here, Seventy Weeks means seventy sevens. It could be seventy sevens of anything. It could be units of days or months or years. In the context of this verse it is plain that Daniel had been reading in Jeremiah about years, seventy years. Jeremiah had been preaching and writing that the captivity would be for seventy years’. So then seventy sevens would be 70 times 7, equaling 490 years. But we have the blessings of all the Scriptures and all the history books that we know this is talking about years.

24a / Holy City is Jerusalem

Verse 24a – Seventy weeks are determined upon thy people and upon thy holy city: *We know that Daniel was a Jew, and we know the holy city is a reference to Jerusalem. So this prophecy deals with the nation Israel and God’s prophetic timetable.*

24b / All Verses deal with Jesus / To Finish the Transgression / It is Finished

Verse 24b – *To finish the transgression:* All the verses in verse 24 deal specifically with Jesus Christ. For as we will see only Jesus Christ could fulfill them. *To finish the transgression:* John 19:30 *When Jesus therefore had received the vinegar, he said, It is finished: and he bowed his head, and gave up the ghost.* “As Jesus hung on the cross He took the wrath of God for our sins. After He completely paid the price for our transgression, He dismissed His Spirit.”

(John 19:30 NKJV) So when Jesus had received the sour wine, He said, “It is finished!” And bowing His head, He gave up His spirit.

24c / Make end of Sin / Only Jesus Could and Did / Reconciled to God

Verse 24c – And to make an end of sins... *Jesus made an end of sin for all those who believe. God says in Hebrews 8:12 For I will be merciful to their unrighteousness, and their sins and their iniquities will I remember no more. Jesus put an end to sin once and for all, no one else could have done this. The verse goes on to say, and to make reconciliation for iniquity: Reconciliation means to be made right. Isaiah 59:1-2 Behold, the LORD’S hand is not shortened, that it cannot save; neither his ear heavy, that it cannot hear: But your iniquities have separated between you and your God, and your sins have hid his face from you, that he will not hear. It is because of man’s sin that man is separated from God. And to be separated from God is to be not right with God, but God has provided a way for every man to be right with Him through the sacrifice of Jesus Christ.*

24d / Everlasting Righteousness / End of 490 – Kingdom Established

Verse 24d – and to bring in everlasting righteousness: *“Everlasting righteousness refers to the return of Christ at the end of the 490 years to establish the kingdom.” It is obvious that we do not have everlasting righteousness right now because evil is still in the world. But the day is coming when God’s grace is over, and God will put an end to all evil. After the millennial kingdom, when God sends Satan and all unbelievers to the Lake of Fire, then will the everlasting Kingdom be established.*

24e / Seal up Prophecy / All will be Fulfilled – including this One

Verse 24e – And to seal up the vision and prophecy: *“This means that all that is said here will be fulfilled, as well as all other prophecies in Scripture.” We must remember that at the time Daniel wrote all this it was several hundred years before the prophecy was fulfilled. This prophecy indeed was fulfilled, which is encouraging to me for I know that all will be fulfilled. I am especially encouraged to know that means that Jesus will be coming back to establish His kingdom.*

24f / Jesus the Anointed One

Verse 24f – and to anoint the most Holy. – *This is a reference to Jesus Christ Himself because in verse 26 there is a reference to the Messiah (called anointed) which is clearly Jesus Christ.*

Dan 9:25 / Decree to Rebuild Jerusalem

The 70 “sevens” would begin Gabriel said, with the issuing of the decree to restore and to rebuild Jerusalem.

(Daniel 9:25 NKJV) “Know therefore and understand, That from the going forth of the command To restore and build Jerusalem Until Messiah the Prince, There shall be seven weeks and sixty-two weeks; The street shall be built again, and the wall, Even in troublesome times.

The Years Calculated / Babylonian Calendar – 360 days / Julian 365.25 = 476 yrs

Here in verse 25 we see a total of 69 seven year periods ($7 + 62 = 69$) ($69 \times 7 = 483$ years) (173,880 days) before the Messiah would come. The first 7 (49 yrs) is believed to be the end of the prophets, the end of the OT which does line up with the 400 years between the OT and the NT. The last 7-year period will be talked about in verse 27, which deals with the antichrist making a 7 year peace pact with the nation of Israel in what we call the Tribulation period (Rev 6-19). Now these years are based on the Babylonian calendar, which is 360 days in a year. Using the Julian calendar, 365.25/yr, that equals 476 years (also note that 1BC to 1 AD is one year, not 2). Note the Julian calendar was the calendar at the time of Jesus implemented in 45 BC by Julius Caesar – today we use the Gregorian calendar which is a modification of the Julian calendar).

4 Decrees – Persian Rulers / Artaxerxes – March 14, 445BC

This decree was the fourth of four decrees made by Persian rulers in reference to the Jews:

- The first was Cyrus' decree in 538 B.C. (2 Chron 36:22–23, Ezra 1:1–4, 5:13).
- The second was the decree of Darius 1 (522–486) in 520 B.C. (Ezra 6:1,6–12). This decree actually was a confirmation of the first decree.
- The third was a decree of Artaxerxes Longimanus (465-424) in 458 B.C. (Ezra 7:11–26). The first two decrees pertain to the rebuilding of the temple in Jerusalem and the third relates to the finances for animal sacrifices at the temple. They say nothing about the rebuilding of the city itself. Since an un-walled city was no threat to a military power, a religious temple could be rebuilt without jeopardizing the military authority of those granting permission to rebuild it."
- "The fourth decree was also by Artaxerxes Longimanus, issued on **March 14, 445 B.C.** (Neh 2:1-8). On that occasion Artaxerxes granted the Jews permission to rebuild Jerusalem's city walls. This decree is the one referred to in Daniel 9:25."

Notes on 14 March 445BC

We can derive the year 445 because history supports that he began his reign in 465BC, and Neh 2.1 says in the 20th year – so 445BC (Nisan being March).

(Nehemiah 2:1 NKJV) And it came to pass in the month of Nisan, in the twentieth year of King Artaxerxes, when wine was before him, that I took the wine and gave it to the king. Now I had never been sad in his presence before.

Nehemiah 2:1–10 (NKJV) ¹ And it came to pass in the month of Nisan, in the twentieth year of King Artaxerxes, when wine was before him, that I took the wine and gave it to the king. Now I had never been sad in his presence before. ² Therefore the king said to me, "Why is your face sad, since you are not sick? This is nothing but sorrow of heart." So I became dreadfully afraid, ³ and said to the king, "May the king live forever! Why should my face not be sad, when the city, the place of my fathers' tombs, lies waste, and its gates are burned with fire?" ⁴ Then the king said to me, "What do you request?" So I prayed to the God of heaven. ⁵ And I said to the king, "If it pleases the king, and if your servant has found favor in your sight, I ask that you send me to Judah, to the city of my fathers' tombs, that I may rebuild it." ⁶ Then the king said to me (the queen also sitting beside him), "How long will your journey be? And when will you return?" So it pleased the king to send me; and I set him a time. ⁷ Furthermore I said to the king, "If it pleases the king, let letters be given to me for the governors of the region beyond the River, that they must permit me to pass through till I come to Judah, ⁸ and a letter to Asaph the keeper of the king's forest, that he must give me timber to make beams for the gates of the citadel which pertains to the temple, for the city wall, and for the house that I will occupy." And the king granted them to me according to the good hand of my God upon me. ⁹ Then I went to the governors in the region beyond the River, and gave them the king's letters. Now the king had sent captains of the army and horsemen with me. ¹⁰ When Sanballat the Horonite and Tobiah the Ammonite official heard of it, they were deeply disturbed that a man had come to seek the well-being of the children of Israel.

Here is an excerpt from the 1911 Encyclopedia Britannica:

ARTAXERXES I., surnamed Macrocheir, Longimanus, Longad, because his right hand was longer than his left (Plut. ~ax.i.). He was the younger son of Xerxes, and was raised to throne in 465 by the vizier Artabanus

Artaxerxes Longimanus ascended to the throne of the Medo-Persian empire in July 465 B.C. (Encyclopedia Britannica, 1990 ed.). The twentieth year of his reign would have begun in July 446 B.C. The decree occurred approximately nine months later in the month of Nisan (March/April on our calendar). By Hebrew tradition when the day of the month is not specifically stated (as in Artaxerxes decree), it is given to be the first day of that month. Consequently, the very day of Artaxerxes' decree was the first day of the Hebrew month Nisan in 445 B.C. The first day of Nisan in 445 B.C. corresponds to the 14th day of March. These dates were confirmed through astronomical

calculations at the British Royal Observatory and reported by Sir Robert Anderson ([Robert Anderson, "The Coming Prince", Kregel. Reprinted in 1984.](#)).

Now, the March 14th is not actually recorded, in all cases in my research it just records March 445 BC. March 445 BC in the Julian calendar was the month Nissan in the Jewish. So simply take the 1st day of the month of Nisan, do the mathematical calculation (Jewish calendar to Julian), and it comes out on the Julian calendar to March 14, 445 BC. If I was to attack this prophecy, this is where I would attack; however the best you are going to be off is 14 days, and 14 days divided by 173,880 days is so minute, that in probability and statistics you would consider the variance – a non factor. However prophecy must be exact, but I would hate to miss the Messiah by 14 days. 1% error would be 1,700 days, ½ % 850 days, ¼ % is 425 days, a 1/10 of 1 percent is 17 days. So that is quite a gamble to cast off this prophecy.

History Tells Date / Countdown Begins – 483/476

“So history tells us the order was given on 14 March 445 BC in our calendar we use today. So the countdown began, and 483 Babylonian years / 476 years using our current calendar, from that day the Messiah would come.

Golden Nugget / Tiberius Caesar – Luke 3 / 15 there for Us / Written by God

Now here is a golden nugget in the Scriptures, which at first reading means little to us, but when we place it in the big picture, it becomes golden, The Baptism of Jesus. The baptism of Jesus Christ happened in the 15 year of the reign of Tiberius Caesar. The Lord intentionally placed the “15” there for our sake – this book is so amazing, if one would just study it, they could only come to one conclusion, written by God, all about God, the God who loves us so deeply that He would trade places with us. I’ll become sin, so you can become a son.

(Luke 3:1 NKJV) Now in the fifteenth year of the reign of Tiberius Caesar, Pontius Pilate being governor of Judea, Herod being tetrarch of Galilee, his brother Philip tetrarch of Iturea and the region of Trachonitis, and Lysanias tetrarch of Abilene,

(Luke 3:21 NKJV) When all the people were baptized, it came to pass that Jesus also was baptized; and while He prayed, the heaven was opened.

Romans Impeccable Account / 19 August 14AD

Tiberius Caesar was a Roman Emperor and the Romans kept impeccable historical accounts of their empire. We use their secular history writings to tell us that Tiberius began his reign 19 August 14AD. So Jesus began His public ministry (baptism) between 19 August 28AD and 18 August 29AD, and we need this nugget to unlock this prophecy. I believe it was sometime after April 29AD, because the timeline fits more properly when we see Scriptures relating to the Passovers that Jesus celebrated. The fact that Jesus’ public ministry was 3 and half years, does line up with a 29 AD assumption. Here would be a place of challenge for the skeptic, but if Jesus wasn’t the Messiah, then someone who was crucified a year earlier would have to be the Messiah, and.....not a bone would be broken, born a virgin birth, born in Bethlehem, from the lineage of Abraham, Isaac, Jacob and King David, betrayed for 30 pieces of silver, along with the other 300 prophecies the Jesus fulfilled.

Tiberius (/ˈtɪbəriəs/; Latin: Tiberius Caesar Divi Augusti Filius Augustus;^{[1][2]} 16 November 42 BC – 16 March 37 AD) was Roman Emperor from 14 AD to 37 AD. Born Tiberius Claudius Nero, a Claudian, Tiberius was the son of Tiberius Claudius Nero and Livia Drusilla. His mother divorced Nero and married Augustus in 39 BC, making him a step-son of Octavian. (Exert from Wikipedia)

14th of Month – The Passovers

The Jewish Passover was always celebrated on the 14th day of the first month, that month is called Nissan which falls in our March/April calendar.

(Exodus 12:6 NKJV) ‘Now you shall keep it until the fourteenth day of the same month. Then the whole assembly of the congregation of Israel shall kill it at twilight.

(Leviticus 23:5 NKJV) ‘On the fourteenth day of the first month at twilight is the Lord’s Passover.

Jesus Celebrated 3 Passovers / Based on Baptism 29AD / First 30AD

Jesus celebrated 3 Passovers: John 2:23, John 6:4, John 11:55. Based on His baptism in 29AD (15th year of Tiberius Caesar), Jesus first Passover would have been in 30AD, second in 31AD, and His final Passover would have been 32AD.

32AD – Jesus rides Donkey into Jerusalem

In that year 32 AD Jesus went up to Jerusalem for the Passover, He rode into Jerusalem on a donkey on the first day of the week, that day was the 10th of Nisan, for our Julian calendar that comes out to April 6, 32 AD. And on that very day Jesus rode into Jerusalem and was heralded the Messiah.” Thus also fulfilling:

(Psalms 118:24 NKJV) This is the day the LORD has made; We will rejoice and be glad in it.

(Psalms 118:25 NKJV) Save now, I pray, O LORD; O LORD, I pray, send now prosperity.

(Psalms 118:26 NKJV) Blessed is he who comes in the name of the LORD! We have blessed you from the house of the LORD.

Jesus never Received Public Worship / Luke 19:39-40 / Lamb brought into the Home

“Prior to this day Jesus had never allowed public worship of Himself. Every time they tried to make Him King He would slip away from them, but the day He rode into Jerusalem on the donkey He actually promoted it.” The Lamb is being brought into the home, on the 10th of Nisan, just as required.

(Luke 19:39 NKJV) And some of the Pharisees called to Him from the crowd, “Teacher, rebuke Your disciples.”

(Luke 19:40 NKJV) But He answered and said to them, “I tell you that if these should keep silent, the stones would immediately cry out.”

Exactly 173,880 Days

How many days was it from March 14, 445 BC, to April 6, 32AD – **173,880**.

476 years X 365 days..... = 173,740 days
14 March to 06 April (both inclusive).....= 24 days
Add for Leap Years.....= 116 days
173, 880 days

*Note on Leap years: if one were to divide 476 by 4 they would get 119 days. That would throw this calculation of 3 days. However, calculating leap years is much deeper than a divided by 4. The following is an extract from Wikipedia Encyclopedia on the Julian calendar in respect to leap years – The [Revised Julian calendar](#) adds an extra day to February in years divisible by 4, except for years divisible by 100 that do not leave a remainder of 200 or 600 when divided by 900. In easier to understand, 3 days must be subtracted from 119 because centennial years are not leap years, though every 4000th year is a leap year. So 116 is what the mathematicians have calculated would have been the number of leap years over this period.

Messiah Cutoff

“For seventy years Daniel had longed for the restoration of the city and temple of God. Now that it was about to take place his attention was directed to a more distant and loftier peak in the history of redemption. Even a new temple in a rebuilt city made by human hands could be destroyed; Daniel’s eyes were therefore to be fixed on a temple (John 2:19), on one that could not be destroyed (Rev 21:22-27) Daniel was receiving the prophecy of the coming Messiah. But verse 26 starts off with that He would be cut off. “Jesus was crucified that week and rejected by man. Jesus did not receive the kingdom at that time.

(Daniel 9:26 NKJV) “And after the sixty-two weeks Messiah shall be cut off, but not for Himself; And the people of the prince who is to come Shall destroy the city and the sanctuary. The end of it shall be with a flood, And till the end of the war desolations are determined.

Prince to Come – Destroys Temple 70AD

The prophecy continues with a description of the judgment that would come on the generation that rejected the Messiah. “The prince to come refers to 70 AD when Titus and the Roman army destroyed the city of Jerusalem and the temple. Just as Jesus prophesied in Luke 19:43-44.

Jews Dispersed – But Kept Nationality / May 14th 1948

“The Jewish people were then dispersed throughout the world. But Israel is the only nation who kept a nationality without a homeland, for almost 2,000 years they had no place to call home. But May 14, 1948 the Jews were gathered back together into their homeland.” This is a miracle, and God has a reason for it; and that is for final prophetic events leading up to the Second Coming of Jesus Christ.

To the Day / As Sure Came First Time – Will Come Second Time

It would be a mistake to read the Bible as dry history and miss all that God has for us. Reading this prophecy gives me a deep desire to share the gospel with the lost. As I study prophecy it becomes clearer and clearer that the return of Christ is soon. To the day, to the day He came, and what does that mean to you? As sure as the Prince of Peace came the first time, He will come again the second time.

3 Days in Grave

Now, to see this all the way through; Jesus had to spend three days in the grave:

(Matthew 12:40 NKJV) "For as Jonah was three days and three nights in the belly of the great fish, so will the Son of Man be three days and three nights in the heart of the earth."

He Rose on the 17th

So Jesus would have rose again on the 17th.

Timeline – Jewish Calendar

10th (Nissan) – Sunday – First Day of Week

- Jesus Rides into Jerusalem

11th – Monday

12th – Tuesday

13th – Wednesday

14th – Thursday – Passover Sacrifice – Jesus on the Cross

- 14th/after sunset – Jesus eats with the disciples
- 14th/ after sunset – Jesus in garden and arrested
- 14th/before 9am – Jesus sentenced to crucifixion
- 14th/9am to 3pm – Jesus hangs on the cross
- 14th/3pm He dies. (Matt 27:45)
- New day begins at sunset, Jesus put in the grave before sunset (around 6pm).

15th – Friday – Unleavened Celebration

- 15th/6pm to 6am = 1 night in grave (Feast of Unleavened all day)

16th – Saturday – Sabbath

- 16th/6pm to 6am = 2 nights in the grave (Sabbath Day)

17th – Sunday – First Day of week – Resurrection – Feast of First Fruits

- 17th/6pm to 6am = 3 nights in the grave
- 17th/ early morning Mary sees Jesus at the Garden Tomb
- The Feast of Firstfruits all day.

Same Day Ark Rested – 17th of Month

The same day the Ark rested, symbolizing in advance that Christ would be our rest, and our escape from judgment of God, our ark of salvation, our new beginning. The 7th month, would become the first month right here after God says this month is now the first month.

(Genesis 8:4 NKJV) Then the ark rested in the seventh month, the seventeenth day of the month, on the mountains of Ararat.

Protection & Prophecy

What a wonderful, glorious study of His Word. You can be sure of His Word, every last word of it will come to pass. My, my how Awesome He is – Give Him glory for He is worthy of all Praise and Glory.

Jesus written of in the OT / 300 Times

In verse 45, grab that. Philip says, "We found him whom Moses in the law and also the prophets wrote." Jesus was prophesied over 300 times in the Old Testament. The chances of that prophesy of just 8 of them is staggering. The proof of Jesus being God is in the Old Testament scriptures. That's where he's proven out and that's where the faith can be found in the prophecies of Jesus Christ. It's not blind faith, there is enough prophecies that you have to look and go, "This is undeniable."

Top 8

His Birth & Lineage

- 1.) The Messiah would be born in Bethlehem. Micah 5:2a / Matthew 2:1-2
- 2.) The Messiah would be a descendant of David. Isaiah 9:7 / Matthew 1:1

His Environment & the World Setting

- 3.) The Messiah would be announced to his people 483 years, to the exact day, after the decree to rebuild the city of Jerusalem. Daniel 9:25 / John 12:12-13
- 4.) The Messiah would be killed before the destruction of the temple. Daniel 9:26c / Matthew 27:50-51
- 5.) The Jew's authority to administer capital punishment would be gone when the Messiah arrived. Genesis 49:10c / John 18:31

His Death

- 6.) The Messiah would be sacrificed on the same mountain where God tested Abraham. Genesis 22:14 / Luke 23:33
- 7.) The Messiah's back would be whipped. Isaiah 53:5c Matthew 27:26
- 8.) The Messiah's hands and feet would be pierced. Psalm 22:16c Matthew 27:38

All facts that can be backed up by historical writings

The Law of Compound Probability / The Quarter – 10 to 17th / Blindfold

The following probabilities (The Law of Compound Probability) are taken from Peter Stoner in Science Speaks (Moody Press, 1963) to show that coincidence is ruled out by the science of probability. Stoner says that by using the modern science of probability in reference to eight prophecies, 'we find that the chance that any man might have lived down to the present time and fulfilled all eight prophecies is 1 in 10 to the 17th.' That would be 1 in 100,000,000,000,000,000. That is more than the number of stars in our galaxy. In order to help us comprehend this staggering probability, Stoner illustrates it by supposing that "we take 10 to the 17th silver dollars and lay them on the face of Texas (which is about 270,000 square miles) It took me 16 hours to drive across the State from border to border, and I still had to get a hotel room in El Paso. They will cover all of the state two feet deep. "Now mark one of these silver dollars and stir the whole mass thoroughly, all over the state. Blindfold a man and tell him that he can travel as far as he wishes, but he must pick up one silver dollar and say that this is the right one. What chance would he have of getting the right one? Just the same chance that the prophets would have had of writing these eight prophecies and having them all come true in any one man."

We can Trust the Scriptures

Can you trust in these scriptures? Absolutely! Can you believe that Jesus is God and that He saves? Absolutely! Can you trust that He knows and is involved in every detail of your life? Absolutely! Trust Him, follow Him, live for Him, and celebrate Him.

The Triumphal Entry – The Peripheral (11:11)

Mark 11:11 And Jesus went into Jerusalem and into the temple. So when He had looked around at all things, as the hour was already late, He went out to Bethany with the twelve.

Jesus Looks Around

When He looked around at all things: Jesus came as the Messiah to Jerusalem, not as a mighty general to conquer the Romans. He came first to look at the standing of the people of God, and to make an inspection. In the rest of Mark 11, we see the results of this inspection.

Malachi 3:1–3 speaks prophetically of the Messiah coming to the temple in careful assessment.

Malachi 3:1–3 (NKJV) ¹ "Behold, I send My messenger, And he will prepare the way before Me. And the Lord, whom you seek, Will suddenly come to His temple, Even the Messenger of the covenant, In whom you delight. Behold, He is coming," Says the LORD of hosts. ² "But who can endure the day of His coming? And who can stand when He appears? For He is like a refiner's fire And like launderers' soap. ³ He will sit as a refiner and a purifier of silver; He will purify the sons of Levi, And purge them as gold and silver, That they may offer to the LORD An offering in righteousness.

Will Son of Man find Faith when He Returns

Jesus looks around for faith and faithfulness, but He will find man turning His house of prayer into a den of thieves we will study next week. In Luke 18, He says when the Son of Man returns, will He find faith on earth. To which I say Lord if you were to literally and physically walk into his church today, I pray you will say, yes I have!

Mark 11:15–19 (NKJV) ¹⁵ So they came to Jerusalem. Then Jesus went into the temple and began to drive out those who bought and sold in the temple, and overturned the tables of the money changers and the seats of those who sold doves. ¹⁶ And He would not allow anyone to carry wares through the temple. ¹⁷ Then He taught, saying to them, "Is it not written, 'My house shall be called a house of prayer for all nations'? But you have made it a 'den of thieves.'" ¹⁸ And the scribes and chief priests heard it and sought how they might destroy Him; for they feared Him, because all the people were astonished at His teaching. ¹⁹ When evening had come, He went out of the city.

Luke 18:1–8 (NKJV) ¹ Then He spoke a parable to them, that men always ought to pray and not lose heart, ² saying: "There was in a certain city a judge who did not fear God nor regard man. ³ Now there was a widow in that city; and she came to him, saying, 'Get justice for me from my adversary.' ⁴ And he would not for a while; but afterward he said within himself, 'Though I do not fear God nor regard man, ⁵ yet because this widow troubles me I will avenge her, lest by her continual coming she weary me.'" ⁶ Then the Lord said, "Hear what the unjust judge said. ⁷ And shall God not avenge His own elect who cry out day and night to Him, though He bears long with them? ⁸ I tell you that He will avenge them speedily. Nevertheless, when the Son of Man comes, will He really find faith on the earth?"

Sometimes Jesus Doesn't Work to our Expectations

When you think of it, this is kind of a letdown after such a great build up. There probably close to 2 million people in the city and surrounding being it is Passover. The streets would be packed, the whole city would be a buzz just being Passover. Now add here comes Jesus riding in being heralded the Messiah - Hosanna, save now!

Then He goes into the Temple, what the people must have thought, wow this is it, He is seizing and taking control starting in the Temple.

Then Jesus goes in, looks around, it being late, and leaves. He leaves, are you serious, no whips, no chords, no preaching, no miracles, He simply leaves. And when He leaves He leaves the city gates and sleeps outside the city.

How did He leave, fanfare or no? When did the people say, oh well not today?

Sometimes Jesus doesn't work in our great expectations, because He has greater things, just 4 days later on the 14th of Nissan, and then a week later, overcoming the grave on the 17th of Nissan.

Jesus is never a letdown, His build up is greater than ours ever could be.

Conclusion/Prayer

The Gospel (A-B-C) & a D:

Admit

Romans 3:23 (NKJV) ²³ for all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God,

Romans 6:23 (NKJV) ²³ For the wages of sin is death, but the gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord.

Believe

John 3:16–17 (NKJV) ¹⁶ For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have everlasting life. ¹⁷ For God did not send His Son into the world to condemn the world, but that the world through Him might be saved.

Confess

Romans 10:9–10 (NKJV) ⁹ that if you confess with your mouth the Lord Jesus and believe in your heart that God has raised Him from the dead, you will be saved. ¹⁰ For with the heart one believes unto righteousness, and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation.

Disciple

Matthew 16:24–26 (NKJV) ²⁴ Then Jesus said to His disciples, "If anyone desires to come after Me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross, and follow Me. ²⁵ For whoever desires to save his life will lose it, but whoever loses his life for My sake will find it. ²⁶ For what profit is it to a man if he gains the whole world, and loses his own soul? Or what will a man give in exchange for his soul?"

Prayer – Boldly Ask Your God

The Word of God is Living and Powerful, and is ready, and will do a mighty work in our lives.

Hebrews 4:12 (NKJV) ¹² For the word of God is living and powerful, and sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing even to the division of soul and spirit, and of joints and marrow, and is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart.

In Every Study

- Who Is God? (How Great is He?)
- What Does He Think of Me? (How Wonderful Are His Thoughts Towards Me?)
- What Does He Want Me to Do?
- What Can I Boldly Request of Him?
- What Do I Need to Be on Guard of When I Leave Here Today?

Boldly come to the throne of grace, ask God to reveal Himself in a mighty way to you, and to do I might work in you, and through you.

Hebrews 4:16 (NKJV) ¹⁶ Let us therefore come boldly to the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy and find grace to help in time of need.

There is a Prayer Team Available to Pray with and for You

End of Study

Mark 11:12-19

Today's Passage

Mark 11:11–19 (NKJV) ¹¹ And Jesus went into Jerusalem and into the temple. So when He had looked around at all things, as the hour was already late, He went out to Bethany with the twelve. ¹² Now the next day, when they had come out from Bethany, He was hungry. ¹³ And seeing from afar a fig tree having leaves, He went to see if perhaps He would find something on it. When He came to it, He found nothing but leaves, for it was not the season for figs. ¹⁴ In response Jesus said to it, "Let no one eat fruit from you ever again." And His disciples heard *it*. ¹⁵ So they came to Jerusalem. Then Jesus went into the temple and began to drive out those who bought and sold in the temple, and overturned the tables of the money changers and the seats of those who sold doves. ¹⁶ And He would not allow anyone to carry wares through the temple. ¹⁷ Then He taught, saying to them, "Is it not written, '*My house shall be called a house of prayer for all nations*'? But you have made it a '*den of thieves*.'" ¹⁸ And the scribes and chief priests heard it and sought how they might destroy Him; for they feared Him, because all the people were astonished at His teaching. ¹⁹ When evening had come, He went out of the city.

Intro / Recap

So last week we looked at the glorious and wonderful Triumphal Entry of Jesus Christ into Jerusalem, exactly to the day as prophecies in the Book of Daniel chapter 9. That day was Sunday the 10th of Nisan in the Jewish calendar and just four days away as instructed by the Lord, on the 14th of Nisan, the Passover Lamb would be sacrificed. So our text before us is the next day, Monday, and Jesus goes into the Temple of God and starts turning over tables and chasing out the men making merchandise of God's people.

Today definitely one of the most dramatically and passionate stories in all the Bible. Jesus using force and power, to send the message of His intent of His House shall be called a House of Prayer..... to all nations!

A very familiar passage, one of mine favorite, but every time we come into the House fo God, He gives us something fresh, and desires something great, to change us, to mold us, to shape us into His image, the image and character of Christ, so may He have His way with us today.

What do I believe is at stake, or better said, being offered to us today by a careful look and an open-heart look at the passage before us? I believe "zoe life", Jesus said I have come that they may have life, and that more abundant. The word for life, is "zoe" and it doesn't mean life or death physically, but life or death spiritually. It is the God life, the life Jesus lived, the life the apostle would live, the life promised to us as followers of Christ. A super-abundant spiritual life. Not just getting through this world, but living with the life, love, and power of God while in it. So may the Lord speak to our hearts today, and give us some fresh zoe life.

John 10:10 (NKJV) ¹⁰ The thief does not come except to steal, and to kill, and to destroy. I have come that they may have life, and that they may have *it* more abundantly.

Prayer – Boldly Ask Your God

The Word of God is Living and Powerful, and is ready, and will do a mighty work in our lives.

Hebrews 4:12 (NKJV) ¹² For the word of God is living and powerful, and sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing even to the division of soul and spirit, and of joints and marrow, and is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart.

In Every Study

- Who Is God? (How Great is He?)
- What Does He Think of Me? (How Wonderful Are His Thoughts Towards Me?)
- What Does He Want Me to Do?
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- What Do I Need to Be on Guard of When I Leave Here Today?

Boldly come to the throne of grace, ask God to reveal Himself in a mighty way to you, and to do I might work in you, and through you.

Hebrews 4:16 (NKJV) ¹⁶ Let us therefore come boldly to the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy and find grace to help in time of need.

The Triumphal Entry – The Peripheral (11:11)

Mark 11:11 And Jesus went into Jerusalem and into the temple. So when He had looked around at all things, as the hour was already late, He went out to Bethany with the twelve.

Letdown for People & Jesus / Lots Emotion – but no Devotion

Verse 11. Jesus comes and he looks around the temple and it's a letdown for the people because they were expecting action, no doubt. And him establishing his kingdom, but it was a letdown for Jesus, as he would go in in the midst of all this emotion but see no true devotion as the temple was not fulfilling what its purpose was. To be a house of prayer, a house to meet and fellowship with the Lord. And so we see that as our context for the passage that we read today.

The Fig Tree Withered (11:12-14)

Mark 11:12 Now the next day, when they had come out from Bethany, He was hungry.

He Hungers – He is a Man who Feels the Lashes

Verse 12. Jesus hungered, and the importance of that statement. He was fully God and fully man. Man hungers and man thirst and therefore man hurts when he is pierced, when he is whipped, when he is nailed to a cross. But as we're told in Isaiah 50 like steel, his face was like flint and nothing would deter him from Jerusalem and the destiny so that he might redeem man. And look at Isaiah 50 and 52 of what would happen to him being disfigured because of the beating that he would take. Every lash and every blow, taken and absorbed, for your sin..... Yes, sin matters, and sin hurts, look unto the Lord and see.

Isaiah 50:6-7 (NKJV) ⁶ I gave My back to those who struck Me, And My cheeks to those who plucked out the beard; I did not hide My face from shame and spitting. ⁷ "For the Lord GOD will help Me; Therefore I will not be disgraced; Therefore I have set My face like a flint, And I know that I will not be ashamed.

Isaiah 52:14 (NKJV) ¹⁴ Just as many were astonished at you, So His visage was marred more than any man, And His form more than the sons of men;

Bethany 2 Miles Outside Jerusalem

Verse 12. Bethany is about two miles outside of Jerusalem. It's on the east side. Thus, if Jesus was making a direct shot, he would come in through the east gate, which directly faces the Mount of Olives and is in direct alignment to the temple.

John 11:18 (NKJV) ¹⁸ Now Bethany was near Jerusalem, about two miles away.

See our prophecy update regarding the prophecy of the rebuilt temple in the last days and how significant this gate is. It's quite exciting for us to see pieces of this coming together before our very eyes almost 2000 years after this temple that Jesus would enter into was destroyed by the Roman army. Here we see plans, and blueprints, and pleas by many of the people of Israel for it, to be rebuilt after close to 2000 years.

Bethany (Lodged at Simon's or Lazarus)

Verse 12. When he was in Bethany, he probably stayed at Simon the Lepers, or Mary, Martha, and Lazarus, people who loved him and received him. People that said, "What's mine is yours, Lord," who just loved having the Lord in their home.

John 12:1-3 (NKJV) ¹ Then, six days before the Passover, Jesus came to Bethany, where Lazarus was who had been dead, whom He had raised from the dead. ² There they made Him a supper; and Martha served, but Lazarus was one of those who sat at the table with Him. ³ Then Mary took a pound of very costly oil of spikenard, anointed the feet of Jesus, and wiped His feet with her hair. And the house was filled with the fragrance of the oil.

Matthew 26:6-8 (NKJV) ⁶ And when Jesus was in Bethany at the house of Simon the leper, ⁷ a woman came to Him having an alabaster flask of very costly fragrant oil, and she poured it on His head as He sat at the table. ⁸ But when His disciples saw it, they were indignant, saying, "Why this waste?"

Never Lodged in Jerusalem / Not Welcomed in Jerusalem and Even His Own House (Temple)

Verse 12 Jesus is never recorded as staying in Jerusalem. It's always recorded of him leaving and coming, but never staying. I think that's because he doesn't stay where he is not welcome. As we see the context, as we see the

contention as we'll see it in our passage today, Jesus is not welcome in Jerusalem and he's not welcome even in his own temple.

Matthew 21:17 (NKJV) ¹⁷ Then He left them and went out of the city to Bethany, and He lodged there.

I believe in the millennial kingdom he will stay because he has established his kingdom on earth in his second coming. It's after the seven-year tribulation period where he will rule and reign from Jerusalem for 1000 years, but in his first coming, he is never recorded staying inside Jerusalem.

Isaiah 2:2-4 (NKJV) ² Now it shall come to pass in the latter days That the mountain of the LORD's house Shall be established on the top of the mountains, And shall be exalted above the hills; And all nations shall flow to it. ³ Many people shall come and say, "Come, and let us go up to the mountain of the LORD, To the house of the God of Jacob; He will teach us His ways, And we shall walk in His paths." For out of Zion shall go forth the law, And the word of the LORD from Jerusalem. ⁴ He shall judge between the nations, And rebuke many people; They shall beat their swords into plowshares, And their spears into pruning hooks; Nation shall not lift up sword against nation, Neither shall they learn war anymore.

So how about you and your home? Is he welcomed fully in your house? Can he spend the nights and the days in your home? Is he welcome in every activity in your home life?

- Would he be welcome to sit on the couch and watch what you watch?
- Or at the desk clicking where you click?
- Would he feel welcome in the conversations that you have?
- Would He be comfortable with how you talk to your children?

Or is he somebody that you only visit here on a Sunday. Once a week. Someone you come to visit, but then you're the one that leaves.

What's at stake, what is being offered to us today, is the "zoe life", the God life, the abundant life!

Let's Pray

Let's pray right now, we are in the House of Prayer, let's ask Him right now, Lord is there something You want to change, something that got to go, speak to me Lord. Lord are You comfortable in my home, do You feel you have free reign in my home? Lord strengthen what is good, what is pleasing, give me encouragement, let me what is pleasing to You in my home.

Mark 11:13 And seeing from afar a fig tree having leaves, He went to see if perhaps He would find something on it. When He came to it, He found nothing but leaves, for it was not the season for figs.

Mark 11:14 In response Jesus said to it, "Let no one eat fruit from you ever again." And His disciples heard it.

Figs Delicious / Hunger – Disappointment when Closed / Jesus had an Expectation for Israel

Verse 12. Figs are delicious. Ever have a craving for something, and you go through all the exercise to get there. You can't wait. You get in your car, and you drive all the way there, and you show up, and you find out it's closed. You're five minutes late, or that special thing that you wanted is all sold out. It is quite a letdown, and it's a disappointment. Hence, sets the illustration for us. Jesus is hungry. He has an expectation, but he's greatly let down.

Verse 14. Jesus had expectation. He was hungry for Israel to be living as the light unto the world that they were called, and to receive their messiah, but he will come into great disappointment.

Tree Cursed – For Appearance of Being Something it was Not

Verse 14. This tree is cursed for putting on the appearance to be something that it was not. It had leaves and when a fig tree had leaves, it should have had figs even if it was early in the season. Now fig trees have multiple seasons to which they bear figs, an early season and then a later season. But always, if it had leaves, it should have fruit.

The fig tree in the Old Testament was symbolic of the nation of Israel (Hosea 9:10, Jeremiah 24:3-10, Jeremiah 29:16-17). And here we see the full picture that's being told, the hypocrisy of the fig tree having leaves but no fruit. And here the symbolic picture of the hypocrisy of the nation of Israel at the time of Jesus having signs of devotion but no real fruit behind it as Jesus will be rejected.

Matthew 24:32–35 (NKJV) ³² "Now learn this parable from the fig tree: When its branch has already become tender and puts forth leaves, you know that summer is near. ³³ So you also, when you see all these things, know that it is near—at the doors! ³⁴ Assuredly, I say to you, this generation will by no means pass away till all these things take place. ³⁵ Heaven and earth will pass away, but My words will by no means pass away.

And so the challenge for all of us, again as God would speak to us, could we have any resemblance to this fig tree? We have the leaves and all the appearance of being believers, but truly when the tree is searched, there's no fruit that should come with the appearance.

Mike Rosale

There's an awesome brother in the Lord, his name is Mike Rosale and he has a ministry called Potter's Field Ministry. And I am reminded of his testimony. He was a big roller on Wall Street, very respected in work, the community, and the church. He said, "I remember one of the pastors calling me saying, 'Hey, can we get together for a chat?'" And he said he was so sure that he was being called to be asked if he'd be willing to be an elder at the church. He said, "Man, I had all the praise albums, I had the t-shirts, I had a big Bible that I would carry around. I had the fish bumper sticker on my car and I thought for sure they had recognized the depth of my spirituality. And when I got in there, the pastor just said, 'You know, I just have to be honest with you and I needed to talk to you and confront you. You have all the signs of spirituality, but we see absolutely no fruit in your life.'"

And he said it was crushing. He said, when he got in his car ride home, he felt like he was a little three-year-old, he felt so small, he said he felt like a child sitting behind the wheel, reaching up to the steering wheel crying, crying all the way home saying, how could this be? But he admitted to the reality of it. "I had all the appearances, but when I got home and the way I live my life inside my house, the way I treated my wife, it was true there was no fruit. All my fruit was outside, but truly on the inside there was nothing." It was all just an appearance, and God changed his heart. And God could change your heart today. He may be speaking to someone here today. I think it's a heart check for all of us. I think we can even kid ourselves that we are more spiritual than we really are, and thus the Lord gives us a word like this today to get real before Him and ask Him to search our hearts.

What's at stake, what is being offered to us today, is the "zoe life", the God life, the abundant life!

Let's Pray

Let's pray right now, we are in the House of Prayer, let's ask Him right now, Lord I'm outside the home now, do I act differently outside the home (or work or campus) than I do inside the home. Is there fruit in my life, or just a bunch of leaves. The fruit of the Spirit, is it evident in my life? Is it something that is truly inside me, or just something I display outwardly? Is there fruit in my life that others can pick and eat of and be nourished? Lord strengthen what is good, what is pleasing, give me encouragement, let me what is pleasing to You in my life. **Gal 5:22-23 NKJV** But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, longsuffering, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, self-control. Against such there is no law.

Jesus Cleanses the Temple (11:15-19)

Mark 11:15 So they came to Jerusalem. Then Jesus went into the temple and began to drive out those who bought and sold in the temple, and overturned the tables of the money changers and the seats of those who sold doves.

Dove for Poor

Doves were in the temple because they were for the poor man who couldn't afford a lamb. Hence, we see how poor Mary and Joseph were because, when they went to the temple for dedication of Jesus, they sacrificed doves, not lambs. Jesus came modest and lived modestly, yet he was a king with the resources of heaven. He can relate to you wherever you are, rich or poor, he can find you where you're at and speak to you because he's been there. **Luke 2:22–24 (NKJV)** ²² Now when the days of her purification according to the law of Moses were completed, they brought Him to Jerusalem to present Him to the Lord ²³ (as it is written in the law of the Lord, "Every male who opens the womb shall be called holy to the LORD"), ²⁴ and to offer a sacrifice according to what is said in the law of the Lord, "A pair of turtledoves or two young pigeons."

Second Time

This is the second time Jesus has done this, the first was two years prior at His first Passover in Jerusalem, so what we have here is a systemic problem, not a misunderstanding or honest mistake, they were ripping off the people and they knew it.

John 2:13–25 (NKJV) ¹³ Now the Passover of the Jews was at hand, and Jesus went up to Jerusalem. ¹⁴ And He found in the temple those who sold oxen and sheep and doves, and the money changers doing business. ¹⁵ When He had made a whip of cords, He drove them all out of the temple, with the sheep and the oxen, and poured out the changers' money and overturned the tables. ¹⁶ And He said to those who sold doves, "Take these things away! Do not make My Father's house a house of merchandise!" ¹⁷ Then His disciples remembered that it was written, "Zeal for Your house has eaten Me up." ¹⁸ So the Jews answered and said to Him, "What sign do You show to us, since You do these things?" ¹⁹ Jesus answered and said to them, "Destroy this temple, and in three days I will raise it up." ²⁰ Then the Jews said, "It has taken forty-six years to build this temple, and will You raise it up in three days?" ²¹ But He was speaking of the temple of His body. ²² Therefore, when He had risen from the dead, His disciples remembered that He had said this to them; and they believed the Scripture and the word which Jesus had said. ²³ Now when He was in Jerusalem at the Passover, during the feast, many believed in His name when they saw the signs which He did. ²⁴ But Jesus did not commit Himself to them, because He knew all men, ²⁵ and had no need that anyone should testify of man, for He knew what was in man.

Ripping the People Off / Misrepresenting God before the People

The temple area was filled with profiteers who worked in cooperation with the priests and robbed the pilgrims by forcing them to purchase approved sacrificial animals and currencies at inflated prices. Every Jewish male had to pay a yearly temple tax—an amount equaling about two days' pay. It had to be paid in the currency of the temple, and the money exchangers made the exchange into temple money at outrageous rates. These people are just ripping people off. They're misrepresenting God before the people. For money exchange, the coin of the empire was the Roman coin, and every Roman coin had a face of Caesar on it, who thought himself a god, and you shall have no other god before, so you could not use Roman money to pay your temple tax. So when you went to exchange it there at the Temple, the money exchangers would charge an exorbitant exchange rate, but you had no choice but to pay it else you couldn't pay your temple tax. Many people were traveling long distances, so it wasn't possible to bring a lamb all the way from your home, days, sometimes several days away, so you brought money and bought a "certified" lamb from the temple, of course at a tremendous mark-up. If you did bring your own lamb, the priest would find some kind of fault with it, and reject it, and send you to his brother-in law (haha) who ran the lamb exchange in the temple, and once again at a tremendous markup. Imagine, this is your holiday, this is your first rest since the fall harvest, you have been so looking forward to this, and then you get to the temple and get ripped off, and you are soured against the whole thing. These people, in cahoots with the religious leaders were ripping the people off, and misrepresenting God before the people, as they were the so-called anointed and appointed by God before the people.

Jesus is not having it!

Jesus Lived a Life of Prayer / He is Not in the Flesh or Emotion

Verse 15. Jesus has demonstrated his life of personal prayer repeatedly as we see him early in the morning, seeking his Father in heaven for prayer, and I'm reminded of Daniel in prayer, and I'm reminded that Daniel, a picture of Christ in the Old Testament, his prayers, three times a day, and David speaking, seeking the Lord three times a day in prayer.

Psalm 55:16–17 (NKJV) ¹⁶ As for me, I will call upon God, And the LORD shall save me. ¹⁷ Evening and morning and at noon I will pray, and cry aloud, And He shall hear my voice.

Daniel 6:10 (NKJV) ¹⁰ Now when Daniel knew that the writing was signed, he went home. And in his upper room, with his windows open toward Jerusalem, he knelt down on his knees three times that day, and prayed and gave thanks before his God, as was his custom since early days.

Luke 6:12 (NKJV) ¹² Now it came to pass in those days that He went out to the mountain to pray, and continued all night in prayer to God.

Matthew 14:22–23 (NKJV) ²² Immediately Jesus made His disciples get into the boat and go before Him to the other side, while He sent the multitudes away. ²³ And when He had sent the multitudes away, He went up on the mountain by Himself to pray. Now when evening came, He was alone there.

Mark 1:35 (NKJV) ³⁵ Now in the morning, having risen a long while before daylight, He went out and departed to a solitary place; and there He prayed.

Luke 5:16 (NKJV) ¹⁶ So He Himself often withdrew into the wilderness and prayed.

Luke 9:18 (NKJV) ¹⁸ And it happened, as He was alone praying, *that* His disciples joined Him, and He asked them, saying, "Who do the crowds say that I am?"

Luke 11:1–4 (NKJV) ¹ Now it came to pass, as He was praying in a certain place, when He ceased, *that* one of His disciples said to Him, "Lord, teach us to pray, as John also taught his disciples." ² So He said to them, "When you pray, say: Our Father in heaven, Hallowed be Your name. Your kingdom come. Your will be done On earth as *it is* in heaven. ³ Give us day by day our daily bread. ⁴ And forgive us our sins, For we also forgive everyone who is indebted to us. And do not lead us into temptation, But deliver us from the evil one."

So, Jesus has demonstrated his life of prayer, and therefore, what he's doing, he's prayed about it. He's led of the Spirit. He's not in an emotional reaction. In fact, he even viewed it the night before, went home, spent a night in prayer, spent a morning in prayer, seeking the Lord, the Father in heaven. And now he comes in, in response to what he has seen and what the Spirit has laid on him to do.

Good Principal for Us

And it's a good principle for us. If we feel the call to put someone in their place, I think there's a place that we need to be very careful that we are acting and not reacting, that we are being led of the Lord. Many times, people feel the need to put others in their place, but they haven't prayed about it. And then, only after they lay it out there, do they so called pray so they can try to convince themselves that what they did was truly in the spirit.

Jesus is turning over tables, but he's in absolute control over his emotions. And so too must we before we respond to all matters.

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Mark 11:16 And He would not allow anyone to carry wares through the temple.

Big Money Day – But they Stand Down

Now this is big money day. This isn't some kind of little kiosk in the back at the end of the mall that no one walks around anymore (I fee sorry for those guys). This is the temple, Passover. Deuteronomy 16 the big three, the feast that all males over the age of accountability were required to attend. There's millions of people coming into Jerusalem. That means there's millions of customers coming to the temple to make their sacrifices, and pay their temple tax. Yet Jesus stands before them and nobody rises up to stop him. And we know where your treasures are, there your heart is, and this is their treasure, their money, even if it meant gouging the their countryman.. And yet when Jesus stands against them, they stand down, and if you hit people in the pocket book, you will find out where their heart is and what they really believe. Many people can profess so many things about their belief in the Lord and their trust and faith in the Lord, but when it comes to finances, money truly shows what they trust in and where their heart is.

Holiness Revered

Verse 16. Jesus would not allow them to carry wears through the temple, so the guys who were coming in with whatever was next to sell, whether it was trinkets and bobets that should not have been in there or even the sacrifice animals and whatnot. Jesus would not allow them to come through. Imagine what that looked like. Just imagine somebody comes. They come to the door, and here comes Jesus. Stands in front of them and does not allow them to enter in. Imagine what that looks like? What do they do? Well, we're being told here. They don't come in. He doesn't allow it. They turned away. Imagine them going out running to the religious leaders. "Hey man, this guy won't let me in. He's disrupting our business." What a scene this would be. I mean, what we see here is an actual fear and reverence within man as they stand before a holy God.

And I believe that's still so regardless of the hearts of people. There are moments in time where they are truly encountering holiness. Maybe it's you, maybe it's a word you're saying. Maybe it's something that they're witnessing before them that's a work of God, and they actually find themselves in a reverence of God, and they can't rebel against it.

I remember street witnessing in California, and these guys came up, and they tried to hijack my witness, and they were actually trying to hijack my witness by getting these people to come to whatever religious thing they were trying to promote. But they saw that I had two people who were interested in the spiritual things. So, they figured here was a target for them, and they tried to interrupt and butt in, and I remember turning to them and saying to them, "You stop. This is holy ground right now. The word of the Lord is going forth, and you are disrupting what God is doing here on holy ground." And they both just stopped and immediately fell into reverence and said not another word, and then walked away when I was done.

I think there's a place, and I know it's a hard place at times, but when we are living in holiness and walking in holiness and speaking in holiness, there is a reverence of that holiness. People sense it. They experience it, and they'd become humbled before it. In revelation were told the 24 angels live 24/7 saying, "Holy, holy, Holy Lord, God Almighty." And when man is before God, they are before holiness. When man is before holiness, they are before God. And so, those are some awesome moments in life when we have these holy moments. Even the people who seem the hardest and most contentious against the things of the Lord will even find themselves humbled into reverence before him.

So, there is something about holiness that even carnal men respect when it is displayed, this holiness of the Lord.

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Prayer

Lord I pray that we would live in holiness, so that people may come and experience your holiness, and be stilled not before us, but before you, and at that moment know and realize that something outside the normal of this earth is going on, and that they are experiencing the very presence of God, and they will respond to you and towards you.

NOTICE! – They Yield / Then Jesus Yields

Now, here is something deep we get out of this verse that we really wouldn't consider until we slow down to consider is just how much Jesus yielded himself at the cross. No one could walk through the temple with their stuff. They all had to yield to Jesus, but when Jesus determined they could lay hands upon him and not just lay hands upon him, push him around. Yes, even beat him and nailed him to a cross. They can only do that when Jesus allowed that to be.

This verse puts into context how much control and power Jesus had and how much he yielded for me, for you, what he was willing to do, to have me and you. This verse helps us see how much he wanted you and me. Jesus literally would say to us, "I allowed them to push me around and brutalized me to have you. Oh, how I love you and desire you. Don't you see? Don't you know the power that was-"

Hebrews 12:1-2 (NKJV) ¹ Therefore we also, since we are surrounded by so great a cloud of witnesses, let us lay aside every weight, and the sin which so easily ensnares us, and let us run with endurance the race that is set before us, ² looking unto Jesus, the author and finisher of our faith, who for the joy that was set before Him endured the cross, despising the shame, and has sat down at the right hand of the throne of God.

Don't you see, don't you know the power that was in me and yet I yielded it to become for you when do you cannot be, and that was to become the righteousness of God and have our sins washed away.

2 Corinthians 5:21 (NKJV) ²¹ For He made Him who knew no sin to be sin for us, that we might become the righteousness of God in Him.

Lesson Learned from Jesus

Another thing we learned and can apply, although he yield at the cross, he had the greatest control over the matter. He would say if there'd be any other way, but there wasn't. Someone has to die for sin and although he yielded, he was in total control even down to the day and the hour, the triumphal entry, even down to the day and the hour on which he would be sacrificed as we have studied, he must come into Jerusalem on the 10th of Nisan on and he must go to the Cross on the 14th of Nisan, the day that the animal would be sacrificed, the Passover lambs as the blood would be applied over the door and death would pass over and for us, sin would be covered and death would be passed over.

We have a man mentality that he who yields loses, but Jesus proves that he who yields in accordance with God's will wins and he who yields is truly the one in control. Jesus, the power of the universe surging through his veins proves it here in verse 16 and yet again four days later, he lays his life down freely and with strength. The little strength that he has left after his beating and brutalizing, he puts the cross upon his shoulder and carries it to Golgotha.

Yielding in Marriage

You should try yielding in marriage sometimes, and see how you can diffuse so many non-essential arguments and disputes before they erupt into full on conflicts. Jesus yielded and we got eternal life; what might God be asking you to yield right now of in that relationship with your spouse, your parent, your family member, your brother or sister in Christ?

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Mark 11:17 Then He taught, saying to them, "Is it not written, 'My house shall be called a house of prayer for all nations'? But you have made it a 'den of thieves.' "

Isaiah 56:7-8

Verse 17 cross reference. Isaiah 56 verse 7.

Isaiah 56:7-8 (NKJV) ⁷ Even them I will bring to My holy mountain, And make them joyful in My house of prayer. Their burnt offerings and their sacrifices *Will be* accepted on My altar; For My house shall be called a house of prayer for all nations."⁸ The Lord GOD, who gathers the outcasts of Israel, says, "Yet I will gather to him *Others* besides those who are gathered to him."

Den of Thieves – Ripping the People Off

Verse 17. Den of thieves. A den is something that has confinement, something you're pressed in. That's what it felt like. The den of thieves is such a great analogy of it, again, because you're pressed in. It's their home turf now at this point. It's no longer what ... the Lord's. They've made it into their own little arena that you have to enter into and literally fight your way through to get out without losing everything that you own because of their thievery. Boy, doing this foreign travel and coming through these airports when you do international travel, you're tired, you're exhausted just getting to the airport. Then you get on an airplane and you fly for eight, ten, twelve, fourteen hours. You get off the airplane, you're exhausted de boarding. Then you have to go through security. Then you have to go fight your way through the restrooms and all those things. Then you get your way into visa entry or exit depending on it may be.

All that while, you're going through what I call the normal lighting, maybe even a little dimmer. But then, they force you into their den and the lights are bright, and the displays are brilliant, and I'm talking about this duty free mall or some airports just even every day sales. You have to get through that. It's between you and your transportation or your next flight. The isle ways are designed that you have to go through the racks and see great displays that would really speak to you, especially after a long flight. Again, it's super illuminated. The sale signs are big sale signs. They try to convince you that you'll never find a deal this good and you don't even have to pay taxes on it. Until you actually get out of the airport and find that it's for sale at half price at the convenience store right outside the airport.

Again, the isle ways are tight. There, it's like they jump out at you from behind the sign. These smiling sales people who didn't just spend eight, ten, twelve, fourteen hours on an airplane. They were at their home sleeping. They got up to shave and shower, brush their teeth, and here you are feeling like you've been run over by a truck. Here they are trying to tell you here's the greatest deal in your life. They've been waiting for you, and that's a fact. They know the state that you're in. They know you're beaten down, you're tired, you're not on your best thought process. It's real easy for you to make an impulsive buy or make a buy that you haven't been able to truly think through how much is this really going to cost. Should I just wait and order it on Amazon.

I don't appreciate it. In fact, I kind of even resent it. I don't resent the sales people. They're just trying to make a living. But I definitely don't appreciate the way the airports do it. I didn't come here to buy from you or to engage with you. I flew here and I flew through here to get to my purpose. I'm tired and I just want to get to where my destination that I purposed it to be.

So much the same, people come to the temple to meet with the Lord, to enjoy the Lord, to have time with the Lord, and then here they're pushed into this den of thieves, forced in to make decisions that maybe they normally wouldn't have. They're seeing the big sale sign, Rabbi approved, best exchange rate in the city. They leave out the parts, the only exchange rate in the city because they aint going to accept no other temple coin from outside their walls. They're surly not going to take the Roman coin. If you brought your lamb, you can be sure they're going to find fault in it. Here these pilgrimages, the pilgrims come excited to meet with the Lord. Their first vacation since the fall, and they're going to meet family, and they're going to fellowship with the Lord. Then they get there and they get ripped off.

The money they had purposed, the feed for the week, now has to stretch down to looks like we're just eating almonds this week because we surely didn't expect that. Then, for those who have been here and have been through the den of thieves, imagine their whole journey. They made the journey all the way up from Galilee. You get all that time to think about, when I get there, the den of thieves are going to rip me off. Here you are, you're just now going through a motion because you can't enjoy it because these guys are such ripoffs and this is what Jesus is so fired up about and turning tables over because these leaders, so called, are misrepresenting him and the fellowship, and the passion that the father in heaven has for these people.

He Taught Them – What Grace

Verse 17, he taught them, that's grace. That is compassion, for we have seen when Jesus has compassion upon the people, what does he do? He teaches. He's still even given the opportunity for these religious Pharisees to repent and turn from their err. He teaches so the man might be corrected from his errs.

*Mark 6:34 (NKJV)*³⁴ *And Jesus, when He came out, saw a great multitude and was moved with compassion for them, because they were like sheep not having a shepherd. So He began to teach them many things.*

And by the way, I do not believe Jesus' sermon/teaching was a one verse quote. In verse 19 Jesus will leave because it is evening, so I could see that Jesus was at the Temple teaching all day. I can easily see that Jesus was teaching on this one verse, the principal of prayer. Verse 18 the scribes' hated his teaching, but we see the people were astonished at His teaching, and I believe it was His teaching on this verse from Isaiah 56, on prayer, and people were being drawn to prayer. Luke adds some details to this passage, and we see Jesus would teach, not just quote. I believe Jesus gave a whole sermon on prayer, and the main point was, the Temple was meant to be a house of prayer.

*Luke 19:45-48 (NKJV)*⁴⁵ *Then He went into the temple and began to drive out those who bought and sold in it,*⁴⁶ *saying to them, "It is written, 'My house is a house of prayer,' but you have made it a 'den of thieves.' "*⁴⁷ *And He was teaching daily in the temple. But the chief priests, the scribes, and the leaders of the people sought to destroy Him,*⁴⁸ *and were unable to do anything; for all the people were very attentive to hear Him.*

Jim Cymbala Sermon

Verse 17. These people are just ripping people off. They're misrepresenting God before the people, and I've got to say one of the greatest sermons I ever heard on this was by pastor Jim Cymbala, and if you get a chance, listen to it. I probably listen to it every three or four months just to remind myself the power of prayer, especially corporate prayer, and Jesus saying, "My house be called a house of prayer."

God Stores Prayers in a Bottle

I love the point Pastor Cymbala makes in his message, what is prayer that God stores them in a bottle? How precious prayer is before God that every time you pray, the several times we have prayed already today in this message, God is storing them in a bottle. If God is storing them, do you think they matter? Why would He store them if they meant nothing? If He stores them than that means every last one of them has been captured. If last one of them has been captured that means He has heard every last one of them. Based on this, how meaningless or how great is prayer? Lord I know how precious and priceless prayer is to You, may I continually be reminded of

that, and may it lead me into the prayer room, the House of Prayer, the place where You hear my heart, and I leave with Yours!

Revelation 5:8 (NKJV) ⁸ Now when He had taken the scroll, the four living creatures and the twenty-four elders fell down before the Lamb, each having a harp, and golden bowls full of incense, which are the prayers of the saints.

Revelation 8:3-4 (NKJV) ³ Then another angel, having a golden censer, came and stood at the altar. He was given much incense, that he should offer it with the prayers of all the saints upon the golden altar which was before the throne. ⁴ And the smoke of the incense, with the prayers of the saints, ascended before God from the angel's hand.

Psalms 141:1-2 (NKJV) ¹ LORD, I cry out to You; Make haste to me! Give ear to my voice when I cry out to You. ² Let my prayer be set before You as incense, The lifting up of my hands as the evening sacrifice.

What's at stake, what is being offered to us today, is the "zoe life", the God life, the abundant life!

Power of Corporate Prayer

As we have taught in times past, oh the power of corporate prayer, coming to the house of the Lord together and praying corporately.

The Pygmy Hunter - A Hunter walking through the jungle found a huge dead elephant with a pigmy standing beside it.

Amazed, he asked: "Did you kill that?"

The pigmy said, "Yes."

The hunter asked, "How could a little bloke like you kill a huge beast like that?"

"I killed it with my club."

The astonished hunter asked, "How big is your club?"

The pigmy replied, "There's about 60 of us."

Oh saints of God, what we can do as a mighty prayer club here together.

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Mark 11:18 And the scribes and chief priests heard it and sought how they might destroy Him; for they feared Him, because all the people were astonished at His teaching.

Teaches to Those the Are Teachable

Verse 18, teaching is for those who are teachable. The Pharisees didn't want change, but others heard the teaching and said yes and amen and responded to this teaching of Jesus.

Heart Revealed these Religious Leaders - Mafia

Verse 18. Heart revealed. They're willing to kill him for money. It's not just an individual, but it's a group. It's what we would call a mob. Here, you see your early sign of a mafia, a group of men willing to kill for financial gain regardless of how the innocent is hurt and harmed.

Mark 11:19 When evening had come, He went out of the city.

Once Again – Leaves the City

Verse 19, once again, we see Jesus leaving the city. He won't sleep in a city. He won't sleep in a country, He won't sleep in a nation, and he won't sleep in a home where he's not welcome.

Conclusion

Next week we will look at four things that quench prayer as we finish the chapter, so read ahead and you will be well familiar with the story. And as for our study today, points of prayer:

- Is Jesus comfortable in your home
- Does my fruit match my appearance?

- Jesus was led by prayer and the Spirit before His actions
- The power of yielding
- The glory of the House of Prayer
- How precious is prayer to God, that He stores them in a bottle – may that lead me to prayer

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Prayer – Boldly Ask Your God

The Word of God is Living and Powerful, and is ready, and will do a mighty work in our lives.

Hebrews 4:12 (NKJV) ¹² For the word of God is living and powerful, and sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing even to the division of soul and spirit, and of joints and marrow, and is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart.

In Every Study

- Who Is God? (How Great is He?)
- What Does He Think of Me? (How Wonderful Are His Thoughts Towards Me?)
- What Does He Want Me to Do?
- What Can I Boldly Request of Him?
- What Do I Need to Be on Guard of When I Leave Here Today?

Boldly come to the throne of grace, ask God to reveal Himself in a mighty way to you, and to do I might work in you, and through you.

Hebrews 4:16 (NKJV) ¹⁶ Let us therefore come boldly to the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy and find grace to help in time of need.

There is a Prayer Team Available to Pray with and for You

End of Study

Mark 11:12-33

Intro / Recap / Stores Our Prayers in Bottles

So we are in Mark 11. We started the chapter with the Triumphal entry of Jesus into Jerusalem. It is the Passover, Jerusalem is packed with people coming for the Passover Feast, estimations of 2.5 million people. The Triumphal entry was Sunday (the 10th of Nisan in the Jewish calendar). The next day Jesus goes into the Temple and starts turning over the tables of the money changers who were ripping the people off, and prevented others from coming into the Temple who were intent on doing the same, and strictly called them out for their deed, turning the House of God that was intended to be a House of Prayer, into a den of thieves, a place to rip the people off, to make a buck off of them, to misrepresent God before the people coming to meet and fellowship with the Lord.

Mark 11:17 (NKJV) ¹⁷ Then He taught, saying to them, "Is it not written, 'My house shall be called a house of prayer for all nations'? But you have made it a 'den of thieves.'"

How much does prayer mean to God that He turns tables over, and drives people out, and stands in the way blocking them from come in? Again, we come to, what is prayer to God and then he stores it in a bottle? What must prayer be to God that he stores it? That's mind blowing. Amazing that every prayer that we lift, he catches it and he stores.

Revelation 5:8 (NKJV) ⁸ Now when He had taken the scroll, the four living creatures and the twenty-four elders fell down before the Lamb, each having a harp, and golden bowls full of incense, which are the prayers of the saints.

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Ask – Not Just for Things – but for the King

Ask and you'll be blessed. Isaiah 33:17, don't just ask for things but ask for the King and you'll see with your eyes when you ask to see the King, you'll see the King in beauty and that day and that moment will never be the same when you see the King lifted up.

Matthew 7:7-11 (NKJV) ⁷ "Ask, and it will be given to you; seek, and you will find; knock, and it will be opened to you. ⁸ For everyone who asks receives, and he who seeks finds, and to him who knocks it will be opened. ⁹ Or what man is there among you who, if his son asks for bread, will give him a stone? ¹⁰ Or if he asks for a fish, will he give him a serpent? ¹¹ If you then, being evil, know how to give good gifts to your children, how much more will your Father who is in heaven give good things to those who ask Him!

Isaiah 33:17 (NKJV) ¹⁷ Your eyes will see the King in His beauty; They will see the land that is very far off.

Psalms 66:5 (NKJV) ⁵ Come and see the works of God; He is awesome in His doing toward the sons of men.

Zoe Life

What's at stake, what is being offered to us today, is the "zoe life", the God life, the abundant life!

John 10:10 (NKJV) ¹⁰ The thief does not come except to steal, and to kill, and to destroy. I have come that they may have life, and that they may have it more abundantly.

Outline Mark 11:12-33:

1. Religion Quenches Prayer
Freedom from Religion – Leads to Abundant Life Prayer (11:12-19)
2. Doubt Quenches Prayer
Faith in Asking – Leads to Abundant Life Prayer (11:20-24)
3. Unforgiveness Quenches Prayer
Forgiveness of Others – Leads to Abundant Life Prayer (11:25-26)
4. Denying the Absolute Authority of the Scriptures Quenches Prayer
Fighting for the Absolute Authority of the Scriptures – Leads to Abundant Life Prayer (11:27-33)

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1..) Religion Quenches Prayer

Freedom from Religion – Leads to Abundant Life Prayer (11:12-19)

Mark 11:12 Now the next day, when they had come out from Bethany, He was hungry.

Mark 11:13 And seeing from afar a fig tree having leaves, He went to see if perhaps He would find something on it. When He came to it, He found nothing but leaves, for it was not the season for figs.

Mark 11:14 In response Jesus said to it, "Let no one eat fruit from you ever again." And His disciples heard it.

Mark 11:15 So they came to Jerusalem. Then Jesus went into the temple and began to drive out those who bought and sold in the temple, and overturned the tables of the money changers and the seats of those who sold doves.

Mark 11:16 And He would not allow anyone to carry wares through the temple.

Mark 11:17 Then He taught, saying to them, "Is it not written, 'My house shall be called a house of prayer for all nations'? But you have made it a 'den of thieves.' "

Mark 11:18 And the scribes and chief priests heard it and sought how they might destroy Him; for they feared Him, because all the people were astonished at His teaching.

Mark 11:19 When evening had come, He went out of the city.

Days

Verses 1 through 11, it's Sunday.

Verses 12 through 19, it's Monday.

Verses 20 through 33, it's Tuesday.

Religion - Relink

Point one: freedom from religion. We've watched religion keep people from freely coming to the house of prayer, and it's still the same 2000 years later. Many times, religion keeps people from coming to the house of prayer, whether that's corporate prayer or individual prayer. Some churches put trips on people that you need to pray more, and so then people feel this bondage that if they're not praying, they're not being faithful to the lord, and that's what religion does, religion always binds people. And you can do the same for yourself, in that you can make coming to the Lord individually in time of prayer something binding, and it won't be something that's free and enjoyable because you can but it upon yourself that if I don't pray, God's not pleased, and that's what religion is always based on; man connecting to God. Religion misses that it's a relationship and it's God connecting and reaching out to man in an invitation of intimacy.

Religion is from the Latin word, which means to relink, and so many men try to relink to God through their own means, rather than through the invitation to intimacy, and so we can turn prayer into a religion, whether that's

corporately or individually, that we're trying to relink to God, or stay linked and connected to God, and then we put ourselves under this bondage of performance. I've got to pray three times a day, or I've got to read three chapters a day, and if I don't, God's not happy. And what does he do, what has he said? He says, "Come away with me. Come spend time with me." He doesn't put a time limit, he doesn't put a chapter requirement, he just says, "Come. I want to be with you. I want to spend time with you." And then when we do we find just this freedom to enjoy him, and we don't want to leave. That's the best part, because we're not bound to stay, we're free to stay.

Matthew 11:28–30 (NKJV) ²⁸ *Come to Me, all you who labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest.* ²⁹ *Take My yoke upon you and learn from Me, for I am gentle and lowly in heart, and you will find rest for your souls.* ³⁰ *For My yoke is easy and My burden is light.*"

God has a banquet spread before us and says come, let's eat and fellowship together, I have everything you need, just come.

2.) Doubt Quenches Prayer

Faith in Asking – Leads to Abundant Life Prayer (11:20-24)

The Lesson of the Withered Fig Tree (11:20-24)

Mark 11:20 Now in the morning, as they passed by, they saw the fig tree dried up from the roots.

Days

Verses 1 through 11, it's Sunday.

Verses 12 through 19, it's Monday.

Verses 20 through 33, it's Tuesday.

Dried Roots – Dried Leaves – Dead Tree

Verse 20. Once a root is dried, that means the tree has died. It means the soil is bone dry because trees drink from the roots.

Verse 20, if the roots were withered, that would mean the leaves are withered and remember the reason that the tree is cursed is because it was putting on the appearance of something that it wasn't. The leaves are represented the appearance of health that would bring fruit, but when it was time to pick and eat, there was no fruit to be had.

Mark 11:21 And Peter, remembering, said to Him, "Rabbi, look! The fig tree which You cursed has withered away."

Mark 11:22 So Jesus answered and said to them, "Have faith in God.

Mark 11:23 For assuredly, I say to you, whoever says to this mountain, 'Be removed and be cast into the sea,' and does not doubt in his heart, but believes that those things he says will be done, he will have whatever he says.

Mark 11:24 Therefore I say to you, whatever things you ask when you pray, believe that you receive them, and you will have them.

Jesus Demonstrates Faith by Cursing Tree

Verse 24. Jesus is using his demonstration of cursing the tree as proof of asking in prayer by faith. He spoke it without wavering or doubting and it came to pass.

Worse Epitaph – You Have Not Because You Ask Not

I like what Pastor Jim Cymbala says, "The worst epitaph on anyone's tombstone will be you have not because you ask not."

James 4:2 (NKJV) ² *You lust and do not have. You murder and covet and cannot obtain. You fight and war. Yet you do not have because you do not ask.*

Matthew 7:7–11 (NKJV) ⁷ *"Ask, and it will be given to you; seek, and you will find; knock, and it will be opened to you.* ⁸ *For everyone who asks receives, and he who seeks finds, and to him who knocks it will be opened.* ⁹ *Or what man is there among you who, if his son asks for bread, will give him a stone? ¹⁰ Or if he asks for a fish, will he give him a serpent? ¹¹ If you then, being evil, know how to give good gifts to your children, how much more will your Father who is in heaven give good things to those who ask Him!*

Mountains – turn Back or Go Around

When I come to a mountain, I either stop and turn around or I either go around. And here the Lord's given us the call to say to the mountain be removed by faith. And that takes us to the place believing that there is no thing in our lives that are too big for us to overcome. No mountains that will stop us in our track. No mountains that will make us go back. No mountains that will make us leave the path of straightforward. By faith believing that God's big enough when we ask to throw the mountain out of the way so we can move on and ahead.

The Mountain that Seems Impossible

Verse 24. If I actually need to cast a mountain into the sea, I could, but is there any reason we would need to cast a mountain into a sea? Many of my prayer requests, and here's the point, what's before me seems like a mountain, and that's the point. It seems impossible, and Jesus is saying don't make your prayers start with impossibility. You must make your prayers start with the possibility. Too many prayers start with defeat, start with impossibility. Well, I would consider a mountain impossible. God says not so. It can be done if it needs to be thrown into the see. So Christian, what mountain is before you, and what seems impossible to overcome? Is it that addiction? Is it that anger? Is it the unforgiveness in your heart? It is that you can never love again? Is it that you're filled with fear? Is it ... and you fill in the blank. It seems like a mountain until you say, with God all things are possible. I yield it to you.

Key to v24 is v21

Verse 24, key to Verse 24 is Verse 21, Peter is remembering the word that the Lord spoke and that will be a continual theme. The power is in his word and recalling it and remembering it.

Romans 10:17 / DL Moody

Romans 10:17 So then faith comes by hearing, and hearing by the word of God.

I could tell you about countless difficult and drawn out circumstances over which we have tried to stand firmly in faith until they finally came to pass. Sometimes we made it and sometimes we were weak and began to doubt. But God mercifully came through for us on most of these things, despite our lack of strength to stay faith-ful.

There are some things in our lives that take a lot of prayer and a lot of faith to overcome. But why is it so hard sometimes to stand in faith for those things?

D.L. Moody spent many hours praying for faith. He once said, "If all the time I have spent praying for faith was put together, it would be months. I thought that someday faith was going to come down and strike me like lightning. But faith did not come. Then one day I read in the 10th chapter of Romans, "So then faith comes by hearing and hearing by the Word of God." I now opened my Bible and began to read God's Word and faith has been growing ever since."

Much of what we believers describe as 'faith' has nothing to do with Biblical faith. Our faith must not be based on emotion, or want, and not on the latest exciting conference or revival. But it must be centered on God's Word, on Yeshua (Jesus), His death and resurrection, His salvation. The Living Word is the eternal, everlasting love of God which has been poured out upon our lives.

Great People of Great Faith (Always were – People of Word and Prayer)

If you will notice, the people of great faith, are always people of the Word, for the two are inseparable. Our fourth point every week, "what can I boldly request of Him?", will only happen by faith when we study the scriptures and find out who He is (His greatness – His love, mercy, care, compassion), and what He think of me (love and passion and intimacy and so much to give His only Son for me), then I will boldly request of Him, because I know His thoughts towards me are thoughts of peace and a desire to grow me into His image and to love my neighbor as myself. But, really, I have to exercise number three first, of what does He want me to do, for if I don't respond to what does He want me to do, like repent, study to show myself approved, fellowship, be accountable, and the likes..... I cant ask, because I am not obeying in the other things first. And, what can I say about point 5, what to be on guard about, and that will always be the Devil, the world, my flesh saying give it up, you think He is going to listen to you, your weak faith, you're a sinner, fill in the blanks..... to which we have to respond, yes.... He will

deliver, He will come, because I just read in the Word a God who loves me, and calls me His own, and calls me to Himself.... So get behind me Satan.

So you want to increase the power of your prayer life, keep doing what you are doing by being students of the Word, and when you pray, pray the scriptures, because faith is incorporated in them already, because faith comes by hearing and hearing by the word of God.

Best Mountain Moving Prayer Time – Is In Systematic Prayer Time

The best time to be praying for the mountainous things, is in your systematic reading through the Bible. Stop and make it a two-way conversation, as God speaks His word to you through the scriptures, receive them as promises you can claim, and then stop and pray them right there on the spot.

Example: Lord you say, *Therefore I say to you, whatever things you ask when you pray, believe that you receive them, and you will have them*, Lord I am asking you to move this mountain of _____ before me, I believe You can, and so I ask You today. Lord, I pray you wither the roots of this tree in my life that is fruitless! Lord, water the roots of my spiritual life, so that I may produce fruit, and that You may eat of and be pleased with, may I be a tree that can nourish others, strengthen them for their journey when they are spiritually hungry. Oh Lord make my life count.

Prayer – Boldly Ask Your God

The Word of God is Living and Powerful, and is ready, and will do a mighty work in our lives.

Hebrews 4:12 (NKJV) ¹² For the word of God is living and powerful, and sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing even to the division of soul and spirit, and of joints and marrow, and is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart.

In Every Study

- Who Is God? (How Great is He?)
- What Does He Think of Me? (How Wonderful Are His Thoughts Towards Me?)
- What Does He Want Me to Do?
- What Can I Boldly Request of Him?
- What Do I Need to Be on Guard of When I Leave Here Today?

Boldly come to the throne of grace, ask God to reveal Himself in a mighty way to you, and to do I might work in you, and through you.

Hebrews 4:16 (NKJV) ¹⁶ Let us therefore come boldly to the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy and find grace to help in time of need.

Faith in Asking – Is Believing He Has Heard

Point two is the faith in asking, just the faith believing that whatever we ask in his name, he's heard it, and he's going to do what he's going to do for his glory, because we ask. So I know that never fails is a prayer that would bring God glory. Now, a prayer that may fail is a prayer that's about my glory, and so I have to be careful of that. When I come to prayer that brings God glory, I can have full faith that I've asked, that he's heard, and that he's working. The opposite of faith is doubt. Doubt quenches prayer. The doubt of asking because we doubt he'll respond or fails to hear will quench prayer, but faith in asking, believing that he wants us to ask, so that he can respond somehow in this place of God's sovereignty and man's free will, which I won't try to reconcile, I'll simply have faith believing that God says, "Ask, so that I might do something." Therefore, I have to conclude that if I don't ask, there's a possibility that it doesn't happen.

So faith in asking leads to power in prayer, and you know what's a great way to end your prayer, but of course always be careful that you don't turn it into a formula, because that takes back to religion. Religion has all these formulas to relink to God, or to get God to do what we think he should do, making ourselves God and him a responder. But you know a great way to end all your prayer quests are, so that you might be glorified, and you're not saying that to sway God, but when you end any prayer with so that you might be glorified, you'll hear yourself, and it will determine, and it will filter out whose glory am I really doing this for, whose glory am I seeking? And it could then refine that particular prayer, and you can find yourself going down a whole nother path of prayer that turns into praise, because prayer isn't always asking. It's also proclaiming, acknowledging adoration of how great God is.

You may pray, "Lord I ask that you'll give me the power to overcome this thing in my life," and then you end it with, "so that you might be glorified." Then the next thing you find yourself being led into is, "Lord, I want to lead a life that glorifies your name. I want to lead a life that's a light on a shining hill. Lord, I want to make a difference in my life." And then prayer's a two way thing where God starts speaking back to you. I will, I want to, you are. It's amazing, this power and privilege of prayer.

1 Timothy 2:8

Our call is to pray without doubting.

1 Timothy 2:8 (NKJV) ⁸¹I desire therefore that the men pray everywhere, lifting up holy hands, without wrath and doubting;

Grain of Wheat in Pocket or Ground

If you keep a grain of wheat in your pocket, it will look exactly the same ten years from now. But place it in the right environment -- some good ground, enough water -- it will sprout into a living sheaf of grain!

Every kind of life requires its particular corresponding environment in order to achieve its full and predestined potential. It's no different with the seeds of the fruit of the Spirit in our hearts!

God has readily made available to us the seeds of success. He gives us the opportunity to live a life of much fruit! A life abounding in the fruits of love, joy, peace, longsuffering, gentleness, goodness, faith and self-control.

But here they are -- just seeds -- sitting in our pocket -- waiting 'til we decide to plant them and allow them to become trees of plenty in our lives.

Youth – Christianity is Exciting Life

Can I just tell the youth something here, and please I go tell to the younger youth, please youth and young adults hear me..... the life of the Christian is meant to be an exciting life. The lie of the world is that it is a life of "don't do", a life of rules, a narrow life. Christianity is anything but that! He only tells us what to steer clear of to protect us. But regarding life and that more abundant, the Christian life is the most exciting there is to have. To go across the street or across the sea, and change a life, see the world, watch the work of God.... there is nothing this world has to compare to that. To walk with God, to hear His voice, sense His presence, to hear Him say "go", go in My Name, go in My power, go as My Ambassador, ha this world has nothing that can even come close. But you have to "go", you have to "leave", leave your comfort zone, your self, your sin, maybe your friends who wont leave and wont go. When I got saved, I left any and all who would not go, who would not leave, saved or unsaved, and I set sail on a great adventure, and haven't looked back since.

John 10:10 (NKJV) ¹⁰The thief does not come except to steal, and to kill, and to destroy. I have come that they may have life, and that they may have it more abundantly.

Regardless of Age – It is Exciting / Story of 86-year-old Rose

But, that goes for you regardless of your age.

Story - The first day of school our professor introduced himself and challenged us to get to know someone we didn't already know. I stood up to look around when a gentle hand touched my shoulder. I turned around to find a winkled, little old lady beaming up at me with a smile that lit up her entire being. She said, "Hi handsome. My name is Rose. I'm 86 years old. Can I give you a hug?" I laughed and responded, "Of course you may!" and she gave me a big squeeze. "Why are you in college at such a young, innocent age?" I asked. She replied, "I'm here to find a rich man, get married, have a couple of children, and then retire and travel." "No seriously," I asked. I was curious what may have motivated her to be taking on this challenge at her age. "I always dreamed of having a college education and now I'm getting one!" she told me. After class we walked to the student union building and shared a chocolate milkshake. We became friends. Every day for the next 3 months we would leave class together and talk nonstop. I was always mesmerized listening to this time machine as she shared her wisdom and experience. Over the course of the year, Rose became a campus icon and she easily made friends wherever she went. She reveled in the attention bestowed upon her from the other students. She was living it up.

At the years end Rose finished her college degree she had began many years before. One week after graduation Rose died peacefully in her sleep. Over 2,000 college students attended her funeral in tribute to the wonderful woman who taught by example that it's never too late to be all you can possibly be.

3..) Unforgiveness Quenches Prayer

Forgiveness of Others – Leads to Abundant Life Prayer (11:25-26)

Forgiveness and Prayer (11:25-26)

Mark 11:25 “And whenever you stand praying, if you have anything against anyone, forgive him, that your Father in heaven may also forgive you your trespasses.

Mark 11:26 But if you do not forgive, neither will your Father in heaven forgive your trespasses.”

Stand to Pray

Verse 25 I like it. Jesus says, when you stand to pray, and they said that was the customary and you'll still see it in Israel today. If you watched him praying at the Temple Mount on the Western Wall, they stand and pray, which sometimes I think maybe that's what I need to do 'cause it's pretty hard to get distracted when you're standing and praying. I start sitting or kneeling and I'll say, I'm fixing holes in the wall that need fixed and all the work that I have to do for the day. Do y'all know that period?

Forgiveness = Let Go

Forgive Means "Let Go", to “send away”.

The Monkey Trap

I have read descriptions of two monkey traps based on the same principle. One is a vase with a neck just wide enough for a monkey to stick its open paw in. The other is a coconut with a hole cut in it that is just big enough for a monkey to stick its open paw in. Some nuts or pieces of fruit are placed in each. The vase is buried with just a little of the neck above ground while the coconut is tied or chained to a tree. Then the monkey hunter waits for a hungry monkey to come along.

The hungry monkey smells the treat and finds the buried vase or chained coconut. He reaches in, grabs his meal, pulls... and pulls... but can't get his fist with the treat through the narrow opening. Now he is hungry and mad. As he continues pulling, he screams his displeasure, but he never lets go. He holds tighter, pulls harder, and screams louder.

The monkey hunter, who may be having lunch, or reading, or napping, hears the screams, walks to his trap, and throws a net over the monkey, who is still holding tightly to his treat.

“And when you stand praying, if you hold anything against anyone, forgive him...”

The Greek word for “forgive” was also used in Bible days for loosening a ship from its mooring or for releasing an accused person. As I understand it, the root meaning is “to let go.” “And when you stand praying, if you hold anything against anyone, forgive him...” Let go of whatever you are holding against him. Let go of your grievance. Forgive him.

We Hold on to Wrongs / But Not Wrongs We Done to God / Matthew 18 Turned Over to Tormentors

Verse 26, how we hold on to the wrongs done against us, yet not remembering the wrongs we've done against God, and even others. We forget the grace and mercy that has been shown to us by God and others, and yet when a wrong comes to us, we hold it and let it grind us out. What we've done against God, as we've studied and read up to this point, the power that he had, yet the heart to yield. How can we hold resentment towards anyone.

Mathew 18 says tormentors will come if you don't forgive. So Christian, forgive and move on. I ask you today, who do you need to forgive? Be set free. You've been tormented enough by what they've done. What they've done hurt once, but now it relives itself every day because you bring it to life every day, and you can never enter into

sweet prayer with the Lord, communion with the Lord, because of your unforgiveness, that hard heart that needs to be broken so the living water, that can flow through, can't because you won't forgive.

Matthew 18:21–35 (NKJV) ²¹ Then Peter came to Him and said, "Lord, how often shall my brother sin against me, and I forgive him? Up to seven times?" ²² Jesus said to him, "I do not say to you, up to seven times, but up to seventy times seven. ²³ Therefore the kingdom of heaven is like a certain king who wanted to settle accounts with his servants. ²⁴ And when he had begun to settle accounts, one was brought to him who owed him ten thousand talents. ²⁵ But as he was not able to pay, his master commanded that he be sold, with his wife and children and all that he had, and that payment be made. ²⁶ The servant therefore fell down before him, saying, 'Master, have patience with me, and I will pay you all.' ²⁷ Then the master of that servant was moved with compassion, released him, and forgave him the debt. ²⁸ "But that servant went out and found one of his fellow servants who owed him a hundred denarii; and he laid hands on him and took him by the throat, saying, 'Pay me what you owe!' ²⁹ So his fellow servant fell down at his feet and begged him, saying, 'Have patience with me, and I will pay you all.' ³⁰ And he would not, but went and threw him into prison till he should pay the debt. ³¹ So when his fellow servants saw what had been done, they were very grieved, and came and told their master all that had been done. ³² Then his master, after he had called him, said to him, 'You wicked servant! I forgave you all that debt because you begged me. ³³ Should you not also have had compassion on your fellow servant, just as I had pity on you?' ³⁴ And his master was angry, and delivered him to the torturers until he should pay all that was due to him. ³⁵ "So My heavenly Father also will do to you if each of you, from his heart, does not forgive his brother his trespasses."

Unforgiveness Quenches Prayer

Point three; forgiveness of others leads to powerful prayers. There is a stoppage that will quench all prayer, all relationship, all the sweet intimacy in our lives, and that is unforgiveness, where we just refuse to forgive other people. And, you know, there's a danger that your heart can be so hard that you don't even realize how unforgiving you are. You may have justified it, and therefore you just keep on moving on, and all the while you have unforgiveness in your heart. I pray that right now the Lord who's in this place is speaking to you, and convicting you, and showing you your unforgiveness. That you need to forgive that person. Your holding on to what they did to you and how they harmed you, but you're the one who's being held hostage, not them.

By no means is this forgiveness meant to be open the door, come back in, and hurt me again. There's a wisdom that comes from the Lord on how to handle those things, but there's a clear calling here on how to handle unforgiveness in our heart, and that is to forgive them. Unforgiveness quenches prayer, forgiveness empowers prayer, and this verse here simply says it. There's nothing more to debate and read into it other than this is what it says. Verse 26 says that Jesus says if you will not forgive, then neither will he forgive you. Those are simple words of Christ, hence why we see the power of forgiveness, because if we won't forgive, then Christ won't forgive, and when we come to prayer there will always be this contention between us and the Lord, who we come to seek, and the point is intimacy. But when there's unforgiveness, whether it's in your marriage, or if it's in your relationships with someone else, or your relationship with the Lord, intimacy is strained and communication is diminished.

Breaking the Heart – So Living Water Can Flow

Verse 26, when I was working on a mission project in Central America, PVC pipe wasn't as readily available as it is here and so what they would do is get bamboo, which was in plentiful supply all around the mission base, the orphanage we were building and they would take a rod and run it through the inside of the bamboo and then you would say, "We're breaking it's heart," because if you see the little knot every foot or so in a bamboo, that's pretty much a year of growth. But what happens is a thin film where that knot is grows over on the inside during the growing season and then there's a dormant season. So they said in order to get water to flow, they have to break the heart because that's what it's called, the heart. It's in the dead center of the bamboo. They said they have to break the heart so that the water may flow through it and we see God will do that for us. So often he has to break our hard hearts so that the living water can flow through us and so there is pain in the suffering, but there is joy in the breaking. Unforgiveness makes your heart very hard, and it will keep the Living Water from flowing, it will not only quench your prayer life, but every area of your life.

John 4:11–14 (NKJV) ¹¹ The woman said to Him, "Sir, You have nothing to draw with, and the well is deep. Where then do You get that living water? ¹² Are You greater than our father Jacob, who gave us the well, and drank from it himself, as well as his sons and his livestock?" ¹³ Jesus answered and said to her, "Whoever drinks of this water will thirst again, ¹⁴ but whoever drinks of the water that I shall give him will never thirst. But the water that I shall give him will become in him a fountain of water springing up into everlasting life."

Some Won't Come to Jesus Because Past Hurts

The great quencher of prayer is unforgiveness but I will even go on to say to somebody here today that you won't even come to receive forgiveness, you won't come before the Lord because you are so hardened and so unforgiving of that person who hurt you or that church that disappointed you, the Christian that you felt wronged

you, how can they be a Christian? And now you are so bitter and hardened that you won't even come and ask the Lord for your sin to be forgiven so that you might have eternal life and eternal salvation. And you are being totally ripped off. I pray the Lord would soften your heart and that today you will let that go and you will turn and reach for the God who can then take your sin and send it away and you can be white as snow, be made new, and walking without that baggage that's burdened you for all these years.

4.) Denying the Absolute Authority of the Scriptures Quenches Prayer

Fighting for the Absolute Authority of the Scriptures – Leads to Abundant Life Prayer (11:27-33)

The Religious Leaders Question Jesus' Authority (11:27-33)

Mark 11:27 Then they came again to Jerusalem. And as He was walking in the temple, the chief priests, the scribes, and the elders came to Him.

Days

Verses 1 through 11, it's Sunday.

Verses 12 through 19, it's Monday.

Verses 20 through 33, it's Tuesday.

Hitting Pockets of the People

Verse 27, the chief priests, they're hitting the pockets of the people. Caiaphas, he's the chief priests. Jesus has just damaged his financial enterprise, the scribes, they're the religious experts who were to know every word of the scriptures, they're here and the challenge will come upon them, and the elders, they represent the mature leadership. So you have everyone present who should know and they will be challenged by you should know, but knowing and doing are two different things completely.

Get the Brooms Out / Reject Divisive Men

Verse 27 imagine these men, oh boy, get the brooms out, call the carpenter shop. Here comes Jesus and he has some cleaning up to do but interestingly, he doesn't overturn the tables or drive out the money changers. It's as if he's done it once three years prior, he did it just now and therefore he rejects them, those divisive men after the second admonishing as we're told in the book of Titus.

Titus 3:9–11 (NKJV) ⁹ But avoid foolish disputes, genealogies, contentions, and strivings about the law; for they are unprofitable and useless. ¹⁰ Reject a divisive man after the first and second admonition, ¹¹ knowing that such a person is warped and sinning, being self-condemned.

Mark 11:28 And they said to Him, "By what authority are You doing these things? And who gave You this authority to do these things?"

They Recognize His Power – Ask Where it Came From

Verse 28, they come and ask, "Where does he get this authority?" which is asking where do you get this power? So they're recognizing that Jesus has power.

Mark 11:29 But Jesus answered and said to them, "I also will ask you one question; then answer Me, and I will tell you by what authority I do these things:

Mark 11:30 The baptism of John—was it from heaven or from men? Answer Me."

The Prophecy of Forerunner

Verse 30, the prophecy of John goes back to Malachi 3, it goes back to chapter one where we began, and it goes back to the remembrance that John isn't just baptizing the people of Israel, he baptized Jesus. And so Jesus, he's going to challenge these guys by saying, you should have known the season that was before you and so many passages that would reflect on that Daniel 9 as we studied, but it would also be the fig tree when it blossomed, and they should have known.

Malachi 3:1 (NKJV) ¹ "Behold, I send My messenger, And he will prepare the way before Me. And the Lord, whom you seek, Will suddenly come to His temple, Even the Messenger of the covenant, In whom you delight. Behold, He is coming," Says the LORD of hosts.

Mark 1:1–11 (NKJV) ¹ The beginning of the gospel of Jesus Christ, the Son of God. ² As it is written in the Prophets: "Behold, I send My messenger before Your face, Who will prepare Your way before You." ³ "The voice of one crying in the wilderness: 'Prepare the way of the LORD; Make His

paths straight.' " 4 John came baptizing in the wilderness and preaching a baptism of repentance for the remission of sins. 5 Then all the land of Judea, and those from Jerusalem, went out to him and were all baptized by him in the Jordan River, confessing their sins. 6 Now John was clothed with camel's hair and with a leather belt around his waist, and he ate locusts and wild honey. 7 And he preached, saying, "There comes One after me who is mightier than I, whose sandal strap I am not worthy to stoop down and loose. 8 I indeed baptized you with water, but He will baptize you with the Holy Spirit." 9 It came to pass in those days that Jesus came from Nazareth of Galilee, and was baptized by John in the Jordan. 10 And immediately, coming up from the water, He saw the heavens parting and the Spirit descending upon Him like a dove. 11 Then a voice came from heaven, "You are My beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased."

Mark 11:31 And they reasoned among themselves, saying, "If we say, 'From heaven,' He will say, 'Why then did you not believe him?'

Mark 11:32 But if we say, 'From men' "—they feared the people, for all counted John to have been a prophet indeed.

Mark 6 – The Devil Thought he Had a Victory

Verse 32. Mark 6, story of John the Baptist getting beheaded. Looks like victory for Satan, but oh what a backfire. The devil kills John, thinks he's silenced a witness, but here it is all this time later. The people can't come against Jesus, these religious leaders, because the witness and testimony of John still rings on and on as people remember his truth, his martyrdom. He's a true hero of faith. So the devil thinks he's won, but here he puts these religious leaders in a place they can't turn against Jesus for fear of the people. Because, if they could turn the people on this day, the the whole prophesy would have been quenched. Jesus must die on the 14th. Today is only the 12th, and John the Baptist plays the key role in that.

Mark 11:33 So they answered and said to Jesus, "We do not know." And Jesus answered and said to them, "Neither will I tell you by what authority I do these things."

Religious Leaders to Search the Scriptures

Verse 33, it was these men's responsibility to search out the scriptural answer and to come to the answer. It was their job to search the scriptures and Jesus has given them that responsibility. I do what I do because the word of God, which they rejected.

Verse 33, Jesus has full authority to do what he wants in this world and he has full authority to do what he wants in our life very specifically. Do we say, yes Lord, all authority over me is given to you.

Verse 33, his authority is based on who he is, who sent him and the word of God, and Jesus really is making it known. You should have known your day and hour of my coming based on the scriptures, and we studied that last week in the triumphal entry, but they should have been looking for the Messiah when John the Baptist came on the scene because he was on the scene exactly as prophesied by the word of God.

Jesus Saying You Know the Answer – Just Won't Accept It

Jesus is saying to these religious leaders, "You know the answer, you just won't accept the answer. And because you will dismiss the answer, the authority that word of God said it therefore it settles it, it is impossible for these religious men to turn the house of prayer into a house of prayer.

I Use the Words Fighting Because the Attack Upon the Bible

I use this word fighting for the authority of the word of God because there is a battle on in the church, the world, ourself on keeping the authority. The first challenge in the Bible is in Genesis and the devil says, "Did God really say?" And then when the challenge was made on the authority of the word, then the setup was made for the first lie, the first lie in the Bible and it's literally the theme of the whole bio, Satan would say, "You shall surely not die if you eat of the fruit." And hence began to redemption as Eve and Adam would eat of the fruit. They would bite into the lie and they would find out that it was so and Jesus would have to come and redeem man through his own sacrifice to take away and cover the lie that bring man me life.

Verse 33 (exousa) Power / Do I Truly Believe It's Power / Billy Graham

Verse 33, the word in the Greek is [exousa]. It means power and the power is in the word, and again, we tag back to Verse 21, Peter remembered the word that had been spoken. I believe there's a time for all who say they are of the faith that they really have to come to this place. Do I truly believe that the Bible is the inspired word of God? Is it truly authoritative in that God said it, that settles it or we can question, well, different cultures or that great debate inspired by man, not of God? Everyone has to come to settle that on their own, and this may be your day to truly settle it, but you won't be alone. I've had my moment that I'll save for another time, but let me share with you, you'll be in good company. There is a man who is dearly loved and beloved, and we call him Billy Graham, who has since gone home to be with the Lord. But early in his ministry, in his 20s, preaching for Christ in powerful ways, he was challenged by a friend who was actually considered a greater evangelist than him in a magazine that listed the most influential evangelists of that day. Billy Graham was not the one. It was the man he partnered with Charles Templeton, who would preach and thousands would come to hear and hundreds would come to receive faith in Christ. But Charles Templeton came to a place where he started to wrestle with, is the Bible, the word of God truly to which to make a long journey into a short story? He reached a point that I can no longer accept that the Bible was inspired and a man who led thousands to the altar would himself walk away and he finished in his last years of life, writing a book called *My Farewell to God: Why I can no longer accept and embrace the Christian faith*. But as young men in their 20s, maybe early 30s, he challenged Billy Graham and the challenge in his persuasion was so strong that Billy Graham will say it even shook him to the core, that he questioned if the Bible was and is the authoritative word of God. And Billy got alone one day after much struggling with the challenge and it was him and God out in the woods with his Bible on a stump opened and him kneeling before it, and he came to a place that he felt the spirit met with him and he heard God speak to him and he said that it was that place that I settled it, right there saying, "I don't understand everything in this Bible, but I do believe it is your inspired, infallible word and therefore I will live it and preach it as such." And Billy Graham will say, there was a new power in his life and a new power in his preaching. And if you wonder, then maybe you can hear him in your mind, the echoes, nobody said it more than him. "The Bible says", and he would quote it. Then he would say it again, "The Bible said", and then he would quote something else and he spelled that every time he used that phrase, not that it was a magical phrase, but it was a reminding phrase. The Bible says that he was quoting God himself and there's power in God's word. And Billy's life was never the same and we can all attest to that.

Many Christians Haven't Settled the Issue of His Authority

Verse 33. Many Christians haven't settled the issue that Jesus has full and total authority in their lives and over their lives because they haven't searched the scriptures, nor have they yielded to the truth that they've read in the scriptures and that they know are true. Have you settled that? Can you take every verse of this Bible and say it's your friend and say it to yourself, "The Bible says", and that you believe it. And that's the authoritative word of God in your life and therefore it has full authority in your life.

People Happy to Claim Some – But Not All

And there's a place for many, they're happy to claim the Bible is the word of God and it's the authoritative word of God and is the bedrock foundation that they're soon as forgiven. They claim that based on the word of God, they claim based on the word of God that he will never leave them nor forsake them. They claim it, especially upon death, that he goes prepare a place for them. But how about those other places in the Bible where it says, "Repent, therefore?" Or how about the place where the Bible says, "Thou shall not hate your brother"? How about the place in the Bible that says, "Thou shall not slander gossip"? How about the place that says, "Love your wife"? How about the place that says, "Love your neighbors"? When you can come to that place and says, the Bible says, husbands love your wife and you take that as authoritative power and apply it to your life, you'll start loving your wife like never before and everything else that I've just said.

Story Wealthy Rancher – Guaranteed Fence

A wealthy rancher ran an advertisement in a newspaper: "A bonus of \$50,000 will be given to anyone who can build a fence around my property that is guaranteed never to fall down." Various ones applied for the job, but none could convince the rancher their fence would never fail. Finally one man pulled it off, got the job, built the fence and walked away with the big money.

His plan was simple: His wall was four feet high and five feet wide. "If this fence ever falls," he said, "it will be higher than it was before!"

I love that little story. I first ran across it in "The Sword of the Lord," a fundamentalist weekly from maybe 40 years ago. The storyteller was a pastor making a point in his sermon about the "living and abiding" word of God. Every time people have tried to banish or destroy the Holy Bible, it has come back stronger than ever.

Conclusion

Outline Mark 11:12-33:

1. Religion Quenches Prayer
Freedom from Religion – Leads to Abundant Life Prayer (11:12-19)
2. Doubt Quenches Prayer
Faith in Asking – Leads to Abundant Life Prayer (11:20-24)
3. Unforgiveness Quenches Prayer
Forgiveness of Others – Leads to Abundant Life Prayer (11:25-26)
4. Denying the Absolute Authority of the Scriptures Quenches Prayer
Fighting for the Absolute Authority of the Scriptures – Leads to Abundant Life Prayer (11:27-33)

What Does Prayer Mean to God – That He Stores Them in a Bottle

How much does prayer mean to God that He turns tables over, and drives people out, and stands in the way blocking them from come in? Again, we come to, what is prayer to God and then he stores it in a bottle? What must prayer be to God that he stores it? That's mind blowing. Amazing that every prayer that we lift, he catches it and he stores.

Revelation 5:8 (NKJV) ⁸ Now when He had taken the scroll, the four living creatures and the twenty-four elders fell down before the Lamb, each having a harp, and golden bowls full of incense, which are the prayers of the saints.

Revelation 8:3-4 (NKJV) ³ Then another angel, having a golden censer, came and stood at the altar. He was given much incense, that he should offer it with the prayers of all the saints upon the golden altar which was before the throne. ⁴ And the smoke of the incense, with the prayers of the saints, ascended before God from the angel's hand.

Psalms 141:1-2 (NKJV) ¹ LORD, I cry out to You; Make haste to me! Give ear to my voice when I cry out to You. ² Let my prayer be set before You as incense, The lifting up of my hands as the evening sacrifice.

Christian..... oh the power and promise of prayer! And how it leads us to the abundant life in Christ Jesus!

Prayer – Boldly Ask Your God

The Word of God is Living and Powerful, and is ready, and will do a mighty work in our lives.

Hebrews 4:12 (NKJV) ¹² For the word of God is living and powerful, and sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing even to the division of soul and spirit, and of joints and marrow, and is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart.

In Every Study

- Who Is God? (How Great is He?)
- What Does He Think of Me? (How Wonderful Are His Thoughts Towards Me?)
- What Does He Want Me to Do?
- What Can I Boldly Request of Him?
- What Do I Need to Be on Guard of When I Leave Here Today?

Boldly come to the throne of grace, ask God to reveal Himself in a mighty way to you, and to do I might work in you, and through you.

Hebrews 4:16 (NKJV) ¹⁶ Let us therefore come boldly to the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy and find grace to help in time of need.

There is a Prayer Team Available to Pray with and for You

End of Study

Mark 12
Mark 12:1-12

Recap/Intro

We have come as far as chapter 12 in our verse-by-verse study of the Book of Mark. The day is Tuesday, and I know I am overturning the world's custom, but contrary to the church ritual, Jesus was not crucified on a Friday, but a Thursday. The Passover Lambs were sacrificed on the 14th of Nisan (Exodus 12), and Jesus rode into Jerusalem on Triumphal Entry on Sunday the 10th of Nisan, so the 14th is on a Thursday. Not to mention, that to spend 3 days and 3 nights in the grave, it has to be a Thursday crucifixion for a Sunday (first day of the week resurrection). And since I am at it, have you ever wondered why Easter Sunday sometimes falls on a Sunday in March, and sometimes a Sunday in April? It is because it is based on the "first full moon of spring equinox (aka – first day of spring)"; so, Easter is never earlier than March 19-21 (the first day of spring), and it is based on the moon. This determination was made it appears in 325AD at the Council of Nicaea by the early Church fathers. But I am happy the world does select a date, and Easter is remembered, and so any opportunity I have to declare..... He is Alive! I will take it!

Matthew 12:40 (NKJV) ⁴⁰ For as Jonah was three days and three nights in the belly of the great fish, so will the Son of Man be three days and three nights in the heart of the earth.

Exodus 12:3 (NKJV) ³ Speak to all the congregation of Israel, saying: 'On the tenth of this month every man shall take for himself a lamb, according to the house of his father, a lamb for a household.

Exodus 12:5-6 (NKJV) ⁵ Your lamb shall be without blemish, a male of the first year. You may take it from the sheep or from the goats. ⁶ Now you shall keep it until the fourteenth day of the same month. Then the whole assembly of the congregation of Israel shall kill it at twilight.

John 20:1 (NKJV) ¹ Now on the first day of the week Mary Magdalene went to the tomb early, while it was still dark, and saw that the stone had been taken away from the tomb.

Jesus must come, exactly to the day, and to the time, or He is not God. But if He does come, exactly to the day, and to the time, which He did..... Now what does that mean to me, how do I respond to such truths. I pray that we will see today that God is in the details, and that means every detail of our lives, and may He we invite Him here right now to give more than information, but transformation,

The Jewish Calendar of Events:

Nissan 10th – Sunday – First Day of Week:

- Jesus Triumphal Entry into Jerusalem (Mark 11:1-10)
- Goes into Temple but Leaves (Mark 11:11)
- Sleeps outside city in Bethany (Matt 21:17 / Mark 11:11)

11th – Monday

- Curses Fig Tree (Mark 11:12-14)
- Cleanses the Temple (Mark 11:15-18)
- Leaves the city when Evening Came (Mark 11:19)

12th – Tuesday

- Explains the Cursing of Fig Tree (Mark 11:20-26)
- Goes to Temple (Authority Challenged) - (Mark 11:27 – 12:1-44)
- The Olivet's Discourse (Mark 13)
- Jesus goes out to Bethany (Matt 26:6)

13th – Wednesday

- The Gospels are Silent

14th – Thursday –

- Passover Meal (Mark 14:1-31)
- Garden of Gethsemane (Mark 14:32-52)
- The Trial (Mark 14:53 – 15:1-14)
- The Passover Sacrifice – Jesus Beaten & Crucified (Mark 15:15-41)
- Jesus Buried (Mark 15:42-47)

15th – Friday – Feast of Unleavened Begins

16th – Saturday - Sabbath

17th – Sunday – First Day of week – Resurrection – Feast of First Fruits (Mark 16)

So, let's read our passage today. The context is on Monday Jesus turned over the tables in the Temple (declaring that His House shall be a house of prayer to all nations. Then when He came back the day on Tuesday they (the religious leaders) challenged His authority for doing what He does and saying what He says, and here in verse 1 of chapter 12 we are still in the Temple, before the religious leaders, still in the context of the challenge against Jesus' authority.

Mark 12:1–12 (NKJV) ¹ Then He began to speak to them in parables: "A man planted a vineyard and set a hedge around it, dug a place for the wine vat and built a tower. And he leased it to vinedressers and went into a far country. ² Now at vintage-time he sent a servant to the vinedressers, that he might receive some of the fruit of the vineyard from the vinedressers. ³ And they took him and beat him and sent him away empty-handed. ⁴ Again he sent them another servant, and at him they threw stones, wounded him in the head, and sent him away shamefully treated. ⁵ And again he sent another, and him they killed; and many others, beating some and killing some. ⁶ Therefore still having one son, his beloved, he also sent him to them last, saying, 'They will respect my son.' ⁷ But those vinedressers said among themselves, 'This is the heir. Come, let us kill him, and the inheritance will be ours.' ⁸ So they took him and killed him and cast him out of the vineyard. ⁹ "Therefore what will the owner of the vineyard do? He will come and destroy the vinedressers, and give the vineyard to others. ¹⁰ Have you not even read this Scripture: 'The stone which the builders rejected Has become the chief cornerstone. ¹¹ This was the LORD's doing, And it is marvelous in our eyes?' ¹² And they sought to lay hands on Him, but feared the multitude, for they knew He had spoken the parable against them. So they left Him and went away.

Outline Mark 12:1-12:

- The Vineyard & the Fruit (12:1-2)
- The Prophets Rejected (12:3-5)
- The Son Rejected & Inheritance Lost (12:6-8)
- Jesus - The Chief Cornerstone (12:9-12)

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- Who Is God? (How Great is He?)
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Hebrews 4:16 (NKJV) ¹⁶ Let us therefore come boldly to the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy and find grace to help in time of need.

The Vineyard & the Fruit (12:1-2)

The Parable of the Wicked Vinedressers (The Stone Builders Rejected) – (12:1-12)

Mark 12:1 Then He began to speak to them in parables: "A man planted a vineyard and set a hedge around it, dug a place for the wine vat and built a tower. And he leased it to vinedressers and went into a far country.

Them (Religious Leaders)

Verse 1, the them is chapter 11:27.

Mark 11:27–28 (NKJV) ²⁷ Then they came again to Jerusalem. And as He was walking in the temple, the chief priests, the scribes, and the elders came to Him. ²⁸ And they said to Him, "By what authority are You doing these things? And who gave You this authority to do these things?"

Again – Same Day

Verse 1 comes at the heels of verse 33 in chapter 11. Mind you, there were no chapter breaks in the original manuscripts of the gospel. It just kept flowing. So Jesus is casting a story, this parable, alongside of where we ended. It's still the same day. It's still literally the same moment of where we ended, even though we're a week later here in our study. So He is giving them more scripture to go search out, the scribes, the experts in the scriptures who should have known this passage and quickly tied it all together and had opportunity for correction and not just a course adjustment, but a life adjustment.

The Vines Outside the Temple

This is one of those moments you had to have been there... A few feet away stood the doors of the Temple. They were 100 feet tall, overlaid with gold, and carved into them were giant grapevines. The vine was a symbol of Israel. Even more than the fig tree, the grapevine represented the Hebrew nation.

Isaiah 5- Israel is Vineyard

Just to tell you the end at the beginning this is a parable about the Nation Israel. Isaiah also used a vineyard to portray Israel's relationship with God (Isaiah 5:7). Therefore, Jesus' audience would have recognized the vineyard as a picture of themselves and the vineyard owner as God. But the story isn't going to end well for the hearers of this. The cross references are Psalm 80:8-16, and Isaiah 5:1-7, and Jeremiah 2:21.

Isaiah 5:1–7 (NKJV) ¹ Now let me sing to my Well-beloved A song of my Beloved regarding His vineyard: My Well-beloved has a vineyard On a very fruitful hill. ² He dug it up and cleared out its stones, And planted it with the choicest vine. He built a tower in its midst, And also made a winepress in it; So He expected it to bring forth good grapes, But it brought forth wild grapes. ³ “And now, O inhabitants of Jerusalem and men of Judah, Judge, please, between Me and My vineyard. ⁴ What more could have been done to My vineyard That I have not done in it? Why then, when I expected it to bring forth good grapes, Did it bring forth wild grapes? ⁵ And now, please let Me tell you what I will do to My vineyard: I will take away its hedge, and it shall be burned; And break down its wall, and it shall be trampled down. ⁶ I will lay it waste; It shall not be pruned or dug, But there shall come up briers and thorns. I will also command the clouds That they rain no rain on it.” ⁷ For the vineyard of the LORD of hosts is the house of Israel, And the men of Judah are His pleasant plant. He looked for justice, but behold, oppression; For righteousness, but behold, a cry for help.

Psalm 80:8–19 (NKJV) ⁸ You have brought a vine out of Egypt; You have cast out the nations, and planted it. ⁹ You prepared room for it, And caused it to take deep root, And it filled the land. ¹⁰ The hills were covered with its shadow, And the mighty cedars with its boughs. ¹¹ She sent out her boughs to the Sea, And her branches to the River. ¹² Why have You broken down her hedges, So that all who pass by the way pluck her fruit? ¹³ The boar out of the woods uproots it, And the wild beast of the field devours it. ¹⁴ Return, we beseech You, O God of hosts; Look down from heaven and see, And visit this vine ¹⁵ And the vineyard which Your right hand has planted, And the branch that You made strong for Yourself. ¹⁶ It is burned with fire, it is cut down; They perish at the rebuke of Your countenance. ¹⁷ Let Your hand be upon the man of Your right hand, Upon the son of man whom You made strong for Yourself. ¹⁸ Then we will not turn back from You; Revive us, and we will call upon Your name. ¹⁹ Restore us, O LORD God of hosts; Cause Your face to shine, And we shall be saved!

Jeremiah 2:21 (NKJV) ²¹ Yet I had planted you a noble vine, a seed of highest quality. How then have you turned before Me into the degenerate plant of an alien vine?

Parable – To Cast Alongside Of

Verse 1, it's a parable, and that's a compound word that means to cast alongside of and it's the casting of a story. It's a masterful way of the Lord's teaching as he takes a spiritual truth and He casts the story alongside of it to amplify it and exemplify it, the meaning of the truth that He's teaching and conveying.

Interesting – Devil Does the Same (in a lying sense)

And it's always quite interesting to me is that everything that the devil does is always a counterfeit and replication and attempt for reproduction of what Jesus does. And so he likes to take untruths and cast them alongside of unspiritual things and get people to buy into that lie, and that's what he does and has done to Judas, and many other people. He takes a story, creates a story such as evolution, or he creates a story such as God doesn't care or God doesn't love, and he builds this whole parable around it. And it's all a lie, and people get deceived by it. But Jesus here is going to take a truth, He's going to tell a story, and before it's over these religious leaders are going to know exactly what the truth is and who the story's about, and of course, they're not going to have it.

God says He Will Speak in Parables / Here He Does – Exactly As Said He Would / I am So Glad He Does Exactly

Verse one. Psalm 78:2 says that God will speak to his people in parables. And here Jesus is speaking to the religious leaders in parables exactly as he said he would several hundred years prior.

Psalm 78:1–2 (NKJV) ¹ Give ear, O my people, to my law; Incline your ears to the words of my mouth. ² I will open my mouth in a parable; I will utter dark sayings of old,

Which, by the way, is a proof position that Jesus is God. He's doing what God said he would do.

To which I will also add, I'm thankful that God is faithful to his word. He does exactly what he says he's gonna do, exactly as he spoke here in this word of God that we hold. He does what he says he's gonna do, and that's a promise to me and you that we can claim and believe. Just as you spoke in parables to the nation of Israel like you said you would, you speak to me your love and your promise, your commitment to me. Your promise that you're gonna see me through, that no one can snatch me out of your hands. Those are beautiful promises. I thank him for that and I rest in his faithfulness, but I also honor the words that he speaks that are difficult, because I know the difficult words are as precious. I don't know if you realize that, but they're as precious as the comforting and the pleasant words in that the difficult words are there to ... his promise that he's gonna not leave me in the state that I'm in. He's gonna change me. He's gonna mold me. He's gonna take me from glory to greater glory. He's gonna bring me into his holiness and he's gonna make me holy as he is holy. That's a beautiful promise, but sometimes it's not easy getting to it, that place that he's bringing us. But I'm thankful for his faithfulness.

And here the heart of God is that he promises us, John 10:10. The abundant life. He promises me eternal life, not just a temporal life. He promises me abundance in terms of spirituality, which will always be greater than the temporal things you'll get materially. I think one of the greatest promises. And thus we ask, what's my role? What do I have to do? Is it my performance? No, as we studied last week. It's not my performance. I prayed three times a day and read 13 chapters three times a day, went and knocked on 33 doors three times a day. No, our calling is John 15, that we simply abide. And as we abide, we draw our nourishment and our strength from him, and that's how the abundant life will come and that's how the fruit will come. We'll bear much fruit just by abiding with him. **John 10:10 (NKJV)** ¹⁰ The thief does not come except to steal, and to kill, and to destroy. I have come that they may have life, and that they may have it more abundantly.

John 15:3–5 (NKJV) ³ You are already clean because of the word which I have spoken to you. ⁴ Abide in Me, and I in you. As the branch cannot bear fruit of itself, unless it abides in the vine, neither can you, unless you abide in Me. ⁵ "I am the vine, you are the branches. He who abides in Me, and I in him, bears much fruit; for without Me you can do nothing.

He very well may lead us to a place that we do read 13 chapters in a day or we do go share the good news with 33 people. But it won't be a burden. It'll simply be because we're abiding. So I can always evaluate myself. If something does seem burdensome, lots of times I say it's not of the Lord. But a close evaluation I see, no, I'm just simply not abiding in the Lord, and that's why I don't have the strength, because I'm not drawing from the vine. I don't have any fruit to give out because I haven't been attached to the vine and letting the fruit bloom in me.

Israel – Was to Be Light unto World – And the Fruit for World to Partake Of / Israel was Lifted up in Pride

Verse one, this is the prophecy, the foretelling, the symbolism all bound together that the nation of Israel is God's vineyard, and Jesus is quoting what we know as Isaiah 5. And God has declared and determined that Israel would be the light unto the world. It would be the nation that he used to be a light unto the Gentiles, and all the world would see what a nation is like because God is the Lord.

But the nation of Israel took that and it made it something prideful rather than humble in the sweet humility. Wow, that the Lord would choose me instead turned into of course the Lord would choose me. Look at me, how wonderful I am. And so many people can take that same attitude and feel because they're chosen or the elect, they look down on somebody whose life isn't as perfect as theirs, and then they'll cast a judgment upon them rather than coming with sweet humility and saying, "Brother, can I share some good news with you? Sister, can I lead you into a place of absolute freedom?"

So if you're saved, you're the elect. And if you're the elect, it's definitely nothing based on your goodness because it's all grace, God's riches at Christ's expense, so there's nothing to brag about or be prideful of. He had to save a wretched sinner whose sin was and always will be an offense before the holy God, and therefore must be covered and cleansed and put away, and that's what forgiveness means, to send away. And so if you are saved, you're the elect. If you're the elect, you're called to be the light unto the world, just as the Gentiles were supposed to see the nation Israel, the whole world is supposed to see you and let your light so shine before man. And as it goes on to say, so that God may be glorified. He puts a beacon on. Look at the grace and my grace that I give.

The Man (God) – Did all the Work

The man, who was God, he did all the work. A man just came and reaps what God, the man, had already done all the work, labored all the work, did all the building. And that's so true of our life, and yet so many times people get confused and they take the credit and the glory for what God's already done in our life, the one who gives us breath. Then, even as Christians, the one who did all the work for salvation, and it's easy for us to come and forget that. But here's what I see, who better to be the master builder, who knows better how to build my life and to lead my life than the master builder, God, himself? There's something worth yielding to.

Mark 12:2 Now at vintage-time he sent a servant to the vinedressers, that he might receive some of the fruit of the vineyard from the vinedressers.

The Making of Wine

The fruit of the vineyard would be wine. It is quite interesting. I've been to Israel, and what they do and especially you got to consider this is desert. It's arid and it's dry. We would liken it to Napa Valley in California as, if you've ever been there, as the conditions of the environment. It's not anything like the Deep South with the muggy, humid atmosphere and environment.

What they would do is, and they would do this out of stone, and they would pack it with a mortar, but they would make and they would prepare these vats that were made of stone, picture them as a big bowl, and they would put the grapes in the big bowl. Then, there would be a trench made to the next bowl and then a trench made to the next bowl after that. There would be kind of a strainer, a meshy fabric made with sackcloth or what we would know as a burlap. There would be, again, trench to trench, so it would have a drop in elevation so the liquid would flow lower and lower as it seeped through, but the sediment part would stay above.

They would put the grapes into the vat and the tower, what I believe in this story, it could be a watch tower. That would apply for protection of the vineyard, but I think the tower could very well have been the tower, and it had an arm extending out of it, just kind of like a pole, what you would consider looks like our For Sale sign that goes in the front of homes when they're for sale. Coming off of that arm would be a rope, and the person, the worker would go in. They'd pour all the grapes in when they were ripe. Then, the person would go in with their bare feet and washed feet. Then, they would hang from the rope because it's going to soon become slippery, and they would start stomping the grapes. They would be hanging onto the rope so they wouldn't fall in and slip.

Then, as they crush the grapes, the juices would flow into the next vat below, but all the big sediments would stay in the one that was broken up. Then, they would do that a couple times until you had nothing but pure liquid. Then, they would scoop that and put it into the barrels and let it ferment to turn into wine that was meant to partake in a picture of joy in the scriptures.

Poor Me – Pour Me

Verse Two. When it was vintage time, after the crushing, they would then have to again scoop it in the buckets and pour it sometimes from the vat, and then clean out the other vat. Then, when it went into the barrels to ferment, they would still strain it while it was in the barrels. Then, they would also put the bucket in and pour it from barrel to barrel 'cause they're getting all the impurities out of it. They're getting all the sediments that would spoil the wine. 'Cause if you leave that fruit sediment in the barrel or in the vat, eventually it's going to rot. The liquids would ferment, but the sediments would rot. Then, you'd have this sour wine, very unpleasant wine, in fact, a very unhealthy wine. It can make you sick.

And sometimes, people will say, "Poor me. Oh, you don't know what I'm going through. Oh, my life is so hard." And sometimes, I can just look and see is that they don't understand, 'cause I know I've been there myself, where it's really God is pouring man from vat to vat, using hardships and trials to make a purified, perfect crystal and fruitful bottle of wine. And really, there's times, when we're dry, there's times when we can see there's something spoiled in us. We can see there's something impure about us, whether it's a thought life or an action, where we should be saying, "Lord, pour me, pour me," and let him turn us over and let us take him take us from vat to vat so he can purify us and strain out the impurities to turn us into that perfect, fruitful bounty that he has so desires of us.

Vintage Time – Takes Time

Verse Two. We look at a Christian, and it's hard for us to accept it, but there is a vintage time. That means there's a season in planting, there's a season in watering, there's a season in growing, and there's a season in harvesting. And so often, we want it quick and rushed and now, and we miss it takes harvest time to come. As we've just studied, it takes fine wine long to come.

Wine – Picture of Joy / Never Drunkardness / Religion had Become Strong Drink in Israel

The fruit of the vineyard would be wine. Wine is a picture of joy, wine, but it's always in the bounds of control. It's never the picture of drunkenness. It's never the picture out of something that influences into a negative way.

How interesting it is that the Lord uses the picture of wine, because that's what, in a sense, this system has become there in Israel. It had become an intoxicating drink that clouded and deluded the minds of the people. And rather than bringing joy, it brought emptiness, the hangover of the emptiness that after all the religion, there was still no peace. There was still no joy. There was still no drawing near into the presence of the Lord. The pitcher of the wine kept them distanced from entering in a strong drink deceive them. And that's what this empty religion is doing here, that Israel has made it. The temple is no longer the house of prayer, for all nations, as it was intended, for the whole nations, all the nations to come and see. Instead it became a den of thieves, and when people came in they were trapped. They were ripped off. And that's all of them. Speaks directly to the religious people themselves. The high priests and the scribes and the elders. It was robbing them as well as it was robbing the people, and there will be nothing that can compare to the joy that when you step into the presence of the Lord and have the sweetness. Now, there's the joy that overflows.

The Prophets Rejected (12:3-5)

Mark 12:3 And they took him and beat him and sent him away empty-handed.

Sent Away Empty Handed – Alcohol Can Do That

Verse Three. What a sad statement that when they came, they were sent away empty-handed. And the Lord, so often, he comes to us and he's looking for the fruit in our lives. Because we haven't allowed ourselves to be harvested and the time that it takes to bring the season and what the husbandmen, the vine dresser, let's our Lord do his work of pruning and shaping and picking and plowing and everything that it takes to bring a bountiful crop. We short circuit it. We won't allow ourselves to be put under that. Then, he comes and he's looking for his harvest, and he finds nothing, and he leaves empty-handed.

I think we're talking about alcohol, and it can sound so appealing and wonderful, but I don't know how many people, the Lord comes and he goes away empty-handed and it is because of alcohol. They're more interested in their alcohol, they're more interested in indulging, that they don't have time or no desire to invest in the things of the Lord, and the Lord goes away empty-handed because alcohol has a way of doing that. What seems like no big deal, we can find out how much it leaves everyone empty.

Israel wanted Fruits of God – But not God / USA the Same

Verse three. For these leaders of Israel, it had become religion. They wanted the things of God. They wanted all of the fruit and the prosperity, but they didn't want God himself. But that story isn't just about Israel is it? And there's many people in many nations and this nation be one of them, where people want the fruit and the blessings that God gives. They want a prosperity and they want a comfort and they want a pleasure, but they don't

want a God of those things. They don't want a God who tells them what they can do and what they're not to do, what they can watch and what they can put in their refrigerator or put into their bodies. So this nation is not far at all from the nation of Israel, and in fact, as Israel, the temple was to be the house of prayer, you can't go to the house down on the hill and pray. You can't go to the school and pray, because people say, "No, we don't want prayer here."

Mark 12:4 Again he sent them another servant, and at him they threw stones, wounded him in the head, and sent him away shamefully treated.

Mark 12:5 And again he sent another, and him they killed; and many others, beating some and killing some.

Prophet after Prophet / Stiff-Necked

So Jesus describing how Israel had hardened their heart towards God, how God sent them prophet after prophet calling out to them to turn from their sin and come unto God, but time after time we read in the OT of the Nation Israel rejecting the prophets. God the Father blessed the nation abundantly and gave the Jews a land that was rich and pleasant. All He asked was that they obey His statutes and give Him the "spiritual harvest" He deserved. Instead of being grateful for their blessings and joyfully giving the Lord His due, the nation proceeded to rob God and reject His messengers (see Neh. 9:26; Jer. 7:25–26; 25:4). God was patient and sent them one servant after another, but they refused to obey (Matt. 23:29–39). Many of these prophets are mentioned in the Hall of Faith (Hebrews 11)

Hebrews 11:35–38 (NKJV) ³⁵ Women received their dead raised to life again. Others were tortured, not accepting deliverance, that they might obtain a better resurrection. ³⁶ Still others had trial of mockings and scourgings, yes, and of chains and imprisonment. ³⁷ They were stoned, they were sawn in two, were tempted, were slain with the sword. They wandered about in sheepskins and goatskins, being destitute, afflicted, tormented— ³⁸ of whom the world was not worthy. They wandered in deserts and mountains, in dens and caves of the earth.

Jeremiah 7:23–26 (NKJV) ²³ But this is what I commanded them, saying, 'Obey My voice, and I will be your God, and you shall be My people. And walk in all the ways that I have commanded you, that it may be well with you.' ²⁴ Yet they did not obey or incline their ear, but followed the counsels and the dictates of their evil hearts, and went backward and not forward. ²⁵ Since the day that your fathers came out of the land of Egypt until this day, I have even sent to you all My servants the prophets, daily rising up early and sending them. ²⁶ Yet they did not obey Me or incline their ear, but stiffened their neck. They did worse than their fathers.

The Passion of Jeremiah

Verse five by Jeremiah was said that people preferred the false prophets who spoke peace over the real prophets. Sent them away.

Jeremiah 7:4–11 (NKJV) ⁴ Do not trust in these lying words, saying, 'The temple of the LORD, the temple of the LORD, the temple of the LORD are these.' ⁵ 'For if you thoroughly amend your ways and your doings, if you thoroughly execute judgment between a man and his neighbor, ⁶ if you do not oppress the stranger, the fatherless, and the widow, and do not shed innocent blood in this place, or walk after other gods to your hurt, ⁷ then I will cause you to dwell in this place, in the land that I gave to your fathers forever and ever. ⁸ 'Behold, you trust in lying words that cannot profit. ⁹ Will you steal, murder, commit adultery, swear falsely, burn incense to Baal, and walk after other gods whom you do not know, ¹⁰ and then come and stand before Me in this house which is called by My name, and say, 'We are delivered to do all these abominations?' ¹¹ Has this house, which is called by My name, become a den of thieves in your eyes? Behold, I, even I, have seen it," says the LORD.

And boy, Jeremiah, you can see the resemblance to Jesus. Jesus turned over tables, and here's Jeremiah, he's standing outside the temple going, "The temple of the Lord, the temple of the Lord. You think you're going to haven. You think that the temple of the Lord is going to save you when you have a wickedness in your heart and abominations, you're sacrificing your children and you're reading the stars." And of course they would have none of that, and Jeremiah was repeatedly beaten and thrown into prison.

Remember the Rescue of Jeremiah / We Need to Rescue our Brethren

And let me not miss the opportunity to make this point as often as I possibly can. Jeremiah, he was thrown into the cistern. He indicted the king and all of the people. "Hey, you're even taking your neighbor's wife." Calling out a judgment. He ends up in the cistern, a pit that you can't climb out of filled with mud and water and dysentery and sickness and who knows what other rodents might be down there. And he would have died there if it wasn't for the faithful Ethiopian eunuch who was brave enough to go to the king and plead on his behalf. The king could have killed him. It was the king who allowed Jeremiah all this hard harm and hardness, and yet he went, and that's what we need to do for brothers and sisters who are fallen.

[Jeremiah 38:7-9 \(NKJV\)](#) ⁷ Now Ebed-Melech the Ethiopian, one of the eunuchs, who was in the king's house, heard that they had put Jeremiah in the dungeon. When the king was sitting at the Gate of Benjamin, ⁸ Ebed-Melech went out of the king's house and spoke to the king, saying: ⁹ "My lord the king, these men have done evil in all that they have done to Jeremiah the prophet, whom they have cast into the dungeon, and he is likely to die from hunger in the place where he is. For *there is no more bread in the city.*"

We need to go rescue them. We need to go plead for them. We need to get them out of the pit that they're in. We need to get them out and clean them up and put on some new clothes, robed in righteousness again. But we have a king greater than a man king. We have the God-man king, Jesus Christ, that we can go to and speak and plead on their behalf and then get our marching orders to go at whatever the risk. Your brother and sister's worth the risk. Who's not here? Who can you reach out? And just so you know, it's just not feasibly possible for us to keep that tracking on every person. It needs to be the people that you meet and greet and connect with. That's why we say get out and greet one another. Hopefully you start connecting with people. You'll call them, they'll call you. Hey, how are you doing? Oh, not so good? Here's a word from the Lord of encouragement. Oh, not so good? Can I take you out to lunch? Who remembers this Ethiopian eunuch? He's not even an Israelite, but he knows who the God of Israel is and he committed himself to him and he became one with him and had a great relationship with the God of Israel.

[The Son Rejected & Inheritance Lost \(12:6-8\)](#)

Mark 12:6 Therefore still having one son, his beloved, he also sent him to them last, saying, 'They will respect my son.'

John 3:16

Verse six. Nicodemus, religious leader comes at night and Jesus gives him the greatest Bible passage, praying all the world ...

[John 3:16 \(NKJV\)](#) ¹⁶ For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have everlasting life.

Mark 12:7 But those vinedressers said among themselves, 'This is the heir. Come, let us kill him, and the inheritance will be ours.'

Their Inheritance Comes in 70AD

Verse 7, unfortunately since the nation of Israel will reject the Christ and not know their day and his visitation, what should have been their inheritance is the harvest for all nations to come and enjoy the fruit of as the light of the world for all to see. In 70 AD they will reap a harvest and it'll be the Roman army will come and utterly destroy Israel. Disperse them throughout the land, a few remnant remains. But most of them will be scattered. Those who couldn't run will be slaughtered and killed in Israel, Jerusalem. The great temple that they took such great joy in, the temple of the Lord, the temple of the Lord will be utterly destroyed. And I've been there and you can see these massive stones still laid in the valley, untouched, turned over when Rome came in to destroy the city. And the reason the temple would be turned over is because there was gold mounted to those rocks. But when it was set on fire, the gold melted into the the rocks. And the only way to get the gold out of the rock was to have it drop several stories to bust loose all the gold. A sad inheritance indeed for these people.

Sad-Sad / They Could Still be the Fruit of the Vineyard

Verse 7, here's the saddest part of the story. The story's about Israel. Israel is the vineyard. The fruit of the vineyard was meant to be the people of Israel. Jesus is literally standing before these men and it comes out in condemnation because they reject. But had they repented, they could have received what Jesus is offering them right now. He's declaring to them and any who would come to Him that, "You were intended to be my fruit, and you can live a fruitful, bountiful life and be used by me as I designed you to be." Jesus is making the statement, "Those who come to me are my fruit. They're my harvest. They're my bounty."

Jesus is saying, "I desire fruit." And unfortunately, right here He's not finding any, as he turned the tables over in the temple because they were no fruit unless you would consider spoiled food. And He says, "I desire fruit." He's offering them to be the fruit, and that's what the Lord would speak to us, "I desire fruit from your life. I desire you to be my bounty and my harvest." As he would say to these men, "Do you understand the potential that you have?"

Do you understand the potential you're not living up to?" And you can take these things as the negative and take a beat down, or we could all take them as, you mean to tell me, Lord, you're offering me to be your fruit? Your harvest that you give out to others to partake of? I have the opportunity to present myself to the Lord as a living sacrifice? As a vineyard, if you would? That He can extend and give out to others? What a life. What a glorious life. And we say, "Here we are, Lord, extending our arms. Here's my gift to you." And our gift is simply, "Here I am, Lord. I give you all of me."

Romans 12 – We are the Living Sacrifice

Romans chapter 12, verse 1 and 2. To which the Lord, He will take and receive it literally. He says, "All I want is you. That's why I came, is for you. I love you. I didn't come to make your life miserable or a burden. I came to give you life, and that more abundant."

Romans 12:1–2 (NKJV) ¹ I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that you present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable to God, which is your reasonable service. ² And do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind, that you may prove what is that good and acceptable and perfect will of God.

Lord – I Give Me as an Inheritance

Verse 7 in the parable, they want their inheritance and they totally miss the mark. They fall so short. Give me an inheritance, whereas it should be, Lord, I give me as an inheritance. Your inheritance. And they totally missed their potential and what was being offered to them.

Mark 12:8 So they took him and killed him and cast him out of the vineyard.

Jesus Crucified

Verse 8. The son of man, the son of the vine dresser, he'll be cast out and the literal location will be Golgotha. There on the mount where the cross is.

Jesus Clearly Referring to Self

Verse eight. Very clear that Jesus is making reference to himself, and these religious leaders, again, they knew what he was talking about, the authority. They asked, "Where did you get it from?" And he points to John the Baptist, and John prophesied through the word of God. And here Jesus is talking about prophets, that they should have studied and knew every word of. They would have known Daniel. They would have known David. They lived in the coming of the king exactly as prophesied 173888 days to the mark. Jesus would ride into Jerusalem and be heralded the Messiah. Save now.

Jesus Crucified at hands of Jews and Gentiles / For the Whole World

Let it be known that the crucifixion of Jesus Christ was through the Jews at the hands of the Gentiles, the Romans. And so Jesus was crucified for both Jew and non-Jew. That's why he was crucified for the sin of the world, not just one nation's sin. And it's a beautiful thing that it was at the hands of the world so then the sacrifice, the propitiation, the substitution, would be for the whole world.

John 3:16 (NKJV) ¹⁶ For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have everlasting life.

Jesus - The Chief Cornerstone (12:9-12)

Mark 12:9 "Therefore what will the owner of the vineyard do? He will come and destroy the vinedressers, and give the vineyard to others."

In Gospel of Luke

In the Gospel of Luke, these religious leaders respond by saying, "certainly not"; they say no way, no how, we are not going anywhere, and this is our land now!

Luke 20:15–16 (NKJV) ¹⁵ So they cast him out of the vineyard and killed him. Therefore what will the owner of the vineyard do to them? ¹⁶ He will come and destroy those vinedressers and give the vineyard to others." And when they heard it they said, "Certainly not!"

Jesus giving Opportunity – Not Protecting Self

In giving the Jewish leaders yet another opportunity to repent, Jesus wasn't trying to protect His own life. He knew He would die on the Cross to pay for their sins. Rather, He was pleading with them to save their own lives. What was their answer? A tragically defensive, "God forbid."

If you Have not given your Life to Christ

If you are here today and have yet to give your life fully to Christ, he is pleading with you to do it today, for you know not what tomorrow may bring.

Mark 12:10 Have you not even read this Scripture: 'The stone which the builders rejected Has become the chief cornerstone.

Quotes Psalm 118 / Cornerstone when Building Temple - The Missing Stone

The verse Jesus quotes—Psalm 118:22—is the most oft-quoted Old Testament verse in the New Testament. It refers to the construction of the temple under Solomon's reign when the massive stones were chiseled miles away from the building site in order that no sound be heard upon the temple mount. When the stones arrived, one stone didn't fit and was thrown down the hill into the Kidron Valley. When it became evident that the cornerstone was missing, the stone that had been rejected turned out to be the one that fit perfectly. Jesus applies this to Himself. "You're trying to build your religion apart from Me," He says, "but you're going to see that I am the Cornerstone. Without Me, nothing stands."

[Psalm 118:22–23 \(NKJV\)](#) ²² The stone *which* the builders rejected Has become the chief cornerstone. ²³ This was the LORD's doing; It is marvelous in our eyes.

Same Conversation on Authority

Again, mind you, we're still on the same conversation of the authority, the power. Where did Jesus get His authority and power? He got it from heaven, and He proved that the Word of God was the basis of why He does what He does, and performs what He performs. And so the promise to us.

Gospel of Luke

In the Gospel of Luke, it says whoever the cornerstone falls on, will be crushed.

[Luke 20:17–18 \(NKJV\)](#) ¹⁷ Then He looked at them and said, "What then is this that is written: 'The stone which the builders rejected *Has become the chief cornerstone*'? ¹⁸ Whoever falls on that stone will be broken; but on whomever it falls, it will grind him to powder."

Fall Upon and Be Broken – by Admitting need a Savior / It Falls On - Rejection

The one who falls upon Jesus, the Cornerstone, will indeed be broken, for its only in admitting our sin and our need that we can be saved. You see, those who aren't broken before Him will one day be broken by Him. Every knee shall bow and every tongue will confess that Jesus is Lord (Philippians 2:10). The only question is when will this happen? Will you do it now in brokenness before Him and be saved? Or will you wait too long and be broken by Him?

[Philippians 2:10 \(NKJV\)](#) ¹⁰ that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of those in heaven, and of those on earth, and of those under the earth,

As Prophesied in Daniel

This Rock crushing is another prophecy of Jesus from the Old Testament, back in the Book of Daniel. The dream Nebuchadnezzar had of the great image (of gold, silver, bronze, iron mixed with clay) being destroyed by the rock coming down from heaven. The Rock is none other than Jesus Christ.

[Daniel 2:44–45 \(NKJV\)](#) ⁴⁴ And in the days of these kings the God of heaven will set up a kingdom which shall never be destroyed; and the kingdom shall not be left to other people; it shall break in pieces and consume all these kingdoms, and it shall stand forever. ⁴⁵ Inasmuch as you saw that the stone was cut out of the mountain without hands, and that it broke in pieces the iron, the bronze, the clay, the silver, and the gold—the great God has made known to the king what will come to pass after this. The dream is certain, and its interpretation is sure."

Have You Not Read

Notice how many times Jesus has said, "Have you not read, or have you not heard."

Mark 12:10–11 (NKJV) ¹⁰ Have you not even read this Scripture: 'The stone which the builders rejected *Has become the chief cornerstone.* ¹¹ *This was the LORD's doing, And it is marvelous in our eyes?'*

In Luke's account of the triumphal entry, he says, "If you'd have known the day that was before you, you would have known this day." He's clearly telling them, "If you'd have known the scriptures, you'd have known this was your day. I've come to save you, and you're missing it."

Luke 19:41–42 (NKJV) ⁴¹ Now as He drew near, He saw the city and wept over it, ⁴² saying, "If you had known, even you, especially in this your day, the things that make for your peace! But now they are hidden from your eyes."

The scriptures declared who was standing before them. The one who was foretold before them.

Mark 1:1–3 (NKJV) ¹ The beginning of the gospel of Jesus Christ, the Son of God. ² As it is written in the Prophets: "Behold, I send My messenger before Your face, Who will prepare Your way before You." ³ "The voice of one crying in the wilderness: 'Prepare the way of the LORD; Make His paths straight.' "

Luke 3:3–6 (NKJV) ³ And he went into all the region around the Jordan, preaching a baptism of repentance for the remission of sins, ⁴ as it is written in the words of Isaiah the prophet, saying: "The voice of one crying in the wilderness: 'Prepare the way of the LORD; Make His paths straight. ⁵ Every valley shall be filled And every mountain and hill brought low; The crooked places shall be made straight And the rough ways smooth; ⁶ And all flesh shall see the salvation of God.' "

Isaiah 40:3–5 (NKJV) ³ The voice of one crying in the wilderness: "Prepare the way of the LORD; Make straight in the desert A highway for our God. ⁴ Every valley shall be exalted And every mountain and hill brought low; The crooked places shall be made straight And the rough places smooth; ⁵ The glory of the LORD shall be revealed, And all flesh shall see it together; For the mouth of the LORD has spoken."

Mark 12:11 This was the LORD's doing, And it is marvelous in our eyes?'"

Psalm 118 – Rejected & Marvelous

Verse 11 is Psalm 118. Just as Jesus was prophesied riding in on the very day, he ties it in that he's also the cornerstone that was rejected. How marvelous how he ties those together. This is a marvelous thing, the scriptures declare, and exactly as spoken in Psalm 118:22-23.

Psalm 118:22–23 (NKJV) ²² The stone *which* the builders rejected *Has become the chief cornerstone.* ²³ This was the LORD's doing; *It is marvelous in our eyes.*

1 Peter 2

Verse 10. God will build a new temple and it's the temple of his body. And Peter will expound on that in his living epistle.

1 Peter 2:4–10 (NKJV) ⁴ Coming to Him as to a living stone, rejected indeed by men, but chosen by God and precious, ⁵ you also, as living stones, are being built up a spiritual house, a holy priesthood, to offer up spiritual sacrifices acceptable to God through Jesus Christ. ⁶ Therefore it is also contained in the Scripture, "Behold, I lay in Zion A chief cornerstone, elect, precious, And he who believes on Him will by no means be put to shame." ⁷ Therefore, to you who believe, He is precious; but to those who are disobedient, "The stone which the builders rejected *Has become the chief cornerstone,*" ⁸ and "A stone of stumbling And a rock of offense." They stumble, being disobedient to the word, to which they also were appointed. ⁹ But you are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, His own special people, that you may proclaim the praises of Him who called you out of darkness into His marvelous light; ¹⁰ who once were not a people but are now the people of God, who had not obtained mercy but now have obtained mercy.

Have you Not Read – Worse Epitaph

Verse 10. Jesus said, "Have you not read the scriptures?" Again, Jim Cymbala, the worst epitaph on anyone's tombstone will be that you have not because you asked not. That's James chapter 4, verse 2. Matthew 7, verse 7, "Ask and it will be given. Seek and you will find. Knock and it shall be opened." The promises of the Lord. And I take that and I apply it to myself. As Jesus would say, every time I'm burdened, every time I'm busted, every time I'm burned out, man, I hear His words say, "Have you not read the scriptures, Ray? All those who labor and heavy-laden, come to me and I will give you rest." Have you not read the scripture? All the promises of God are yes and Amen, in Christ Jesus. Get yourself into Jesus. Get yourself into His presence and watch the bummers turn into blessing. Watch the burdens turn into opportunities to glorify Jesus. Watch addictions become fruit that you can use and declare to the world it is true. All of those promises are true. And He delivered me when nothing else could, and now here I am, a living harvest. A living bounty. A living fruit tree for others to partake of.

James 4:2-3 (NKJV) ² You lust and do not have. You murder and covet and cannot obtain. You fight and war. Yet you do not have because you do not ask. ³ You ask and do not receive, because you ask amiss, that you may spend it on your pleasures.

This is an Invitation / Invitation to Build a Life upon Solid Foundation / God who Loves Us

Falling on this stone, rather than the stone falling on us, is an invitation to build a life upon that which is solid and unmovable. We fall on a God who loves us deeply, and bleed for us profusely from the Cross as He demonstrated the depth of His love for us.

Brokenness is Beautiful – But can only Build off of Brokenness

Brokenness is a beautiful thing, you can only build off of brokenness, for we must first be broken of our self. We have to be broken of who has the authority in our lives, come to the place where He has full-authority in our lives, not partial.

Everything is Built off of Him

Everything is built off of Him, but everything first must be built off of brokenness. God is saying to you today, let's build something together, let's build something great together. Jesus had said to this same people "oh if only you knew the day of your visitation", here I am right before You and you don't even see it. And here God is right before you today saying here I am, and I am so wanting and desiring to do something great together with you – Today!

- Let's build a great marriage together, but first you have to be broken. You have to die to your desires and live wholly unto your spouse.
- Let's build a great witness together at your workplace, but first you have to be broken, you have to die to your career plans and ambitions and just say Lord I am your voice and witness in this workplace
- Let's build a great ministry together, but first you have to be broken, you have to die to your terms of how you will be used and let Me use you as I deem, submitting to My authority.
- Let's build a great child together, but first you have to be broken, you have to die to your career path, your free time, your hobby, and fully engage them at whatever the cost.
- Let's build something great together, but time is short (count you days), and be willing to be broken on each of those days.

Luke 19:42 (NKJV) ⁴² saying, "If you had known, even you, especially in this your day, the things that make for your peace! But now they are hidden from your eyes.

Psalms 90:12 (NKJV) ¹² So teach us to number our days, That we may gain a heart of wisdom.

Mark 12:12 And they sought to lay hands on Him, but feared the multitude, for they knew He had spoken the parable against them. So they left Him and went away.

They Can't Kill Him on Tuesday

Of course, they can't kill Him on Tuesday (12th of Nisan), for the Passover lambs were not to be killed until the (14th of Nisan). From the 10th through the 13th, the lambs were to be examined for spot of defect.

Luke's Account – Pretend Righteous

Luke's account said they pretended to be righteous.

Luke 20:19-20 (NKJV) ¹⁹ And the chief priests and the scribes that very hour sought to lay hands on Him, but they feared the people—for they knew He had spoken this parable against them. ²⁰ So they watched Him, and sent spies who pretended to be righteous, that they might seize on His words, in order to deliver Him to the power and the authority of the governor.

They got it – But it didn't get Them / No Heart Change

Well they got it the parable of the vineyard, but unfortunately the parable didn't "get" them to change their hearts and see it was an invitation to repent and come unto the vineyard owner.

They are Furious – Kill Him / Pretend to be Righteous / They will Succeed

They are furious and they want to kill Jesus right there, but know they can't do it in front of the people at this point, so they have to set a new trap. This new trap, I love the wording, is to "pretend to be righteous". We are going to

act like we are the righteous ones, the protectors of the faith, and thus swing the popular vote back to us.....and they will be successful (but only as God allows it) for in just 3 days the crowds will not be hanging on his every word (Luke 19:48), but will yell out crucify Him (Luke 23:21).

Luke 19:48 (NKJV) 48 and were unable to do anything; for all the people were very attentive to hear Him.

Luke 23:21 (NKJV) 21 But they shouted, saying, "Crucify Him, crucify Him!"

Be on Guard / Grace out the Window

We all must continually be on guard for people pretending to be righteous, but truly have a self-seeking motive behind their agenda. And just so you are not surprised, if a wolf comes in here and you hear about us dealing harshly with them, don't be surprised, for we will not tolerate anyone who comes in here to harm you.

Matthew 7:15 (NKJV) ¹⁵ "Beware of false prophets, who come to you in sheep's clothing, but inwardly they are ravenous wolves.

They Want to Lay Hands on Jesus – The Word Leaves a Mark

Verse 12, they sought to lay hands on him. They know exactly what this parable means. They know who he's talking about.

So the word of God pierced their heart, and it turned them to anger. But for others, the word of God pierces the heart and crushes the grapes and the wine breaks forth to joy of the Lord.

Every week we put this verse up here. "The Word of God is living and powerful and sharper than a two-edged sword." You know why it's two edges? Because on one side it cuts people to anger and resentment, and the other side it cuts people to freedom and the breaking of ropes that bind them. But it's the same sword; it just comes with two sides. And there is no middle ground because it pierces and goes all the way through.

The word of God always leaves a mark and effects, even when people walk away and it looks like nothing's happened. Oh, it's hit them underneath.

They Can't Yet – But They Will – After He Yields / Behold the Man

Verse 12 we've read multiple times, and it says that they fear him. That's why they couldn't lay hands on him. But that won't be the case we know. And in only three days they will lay hands on him, they will not fear the crowd. Why? Because they've turned the crowd against him. From Hosannah, save now. The chant will go to kill him now. And how did they, these religious leaders get the crowd to turn on him? As we studied Jesus will yield himself. And when that restraint is lifted, and I think that's also a picture of the last days, the restraint is lifted. The flesh and the devil will have free reign to do whatever they want. And so they will come and they will turn on Jesus. But I want you to take it even deeper with me. Is that Jesus yielded himself, gave himself and he did it there in the garden. It was there that he yielded himself. And these religious leaders will come in the night, they will take him and they will beat him, and they will scourge him. And then in the morning he will go to the cross and be hung there.

But before all that will happen of the cross, he will be beaten. He will be brutalized. As we've studied Isaiah 50, he will be unrecognizable, he will be beaten down so much. And then they will bring him before the crowd, Pilate will say, "Behold the man." But the people will look and they won't see the victorious man who rode in just a few days earlier on that donkey, coming in peace. The one who they screamed, "Save now." Expecting him to set up his kingdom. What they will see is a man who was beaten and brutalized by the kingdom they wanted freed of. The religious leaders will beat him so bad that when the people see him they will not see a victor, they'll see a man who is defeated. And they will say in their hearts, "And surely he can't deliver us." And that's why they will turn on him. It's after he's brutalized and beaten. And they said there's no hope in him to overthrow Rome if he can't save himself.

And that's what the religious leaders will mock, shake their fists at him. You saved others, save yourself. But he won't. Because of his love for you, his desire to have you, to make you his own. As he will say, "That's why I came. I came for you."

God Loves You / Cares About You

Verse 12, God loves you. He cares about you. He wants a personal relationship with you. And that relationship comes one way, through his Son. Jesus said, "He who has seen me has seen the Father." To know God you must know his Son. For his Son is the picture and the provision.

- He is the picture of who God is and what he is like. And we see that in Jesus as he walked this Earth.
- And he is the provision as the only way to the holy God is through a holy sacrifice, a perfect sacrifice that can wipe away the sins from our hearts that condemn us.

And Jesus said, "I am the way, the truth, and the life." He's the only way. The verb tenses are, "I am the only way, I am the only truth, I am the only life." And that word for life is the word Zoe, the abundant life.

- He is the truth, and by not the lie of the world, or the devil, or even your flesh that there's any other way you can come before the presence of God, except the way through Jesus.
- And he is the life, the traded life. As he traded his perfect life as the Son. And he took your sin. That's what we call a propitiation, a substitution, a trade. It's the traded life, and that's the great life. He takes our sin and puts himself in us.

Have you done that today as God offers it to you today, to have this life, this traded life, this new life. That you can walk out of here a new person, all your sins washed away, covered, gone into the depths of the sea. Have you done that? Have you asked Jesus to trade with you?

John 14:5-7 (NKJV) ⁵ Thomas said to Him, "Lord, we do not know where You are going, and how can we know the way?" ⁶ Jesus said to him, "I am the way, the truth, and the life. No one comes to the Father except through Me. ⁷ "If you had known Me, you would have known My Father also; and from now on you know Him and have seen Him."

John 14:8-14 (NKJV) ⁸ Philip said to Him, "Lord, show us the Father, and it is sufficient for us." ⁹ Jesus said to him, "Have I been with you so long, and yet you have not known Me, Philip? He who has seen Me has seen the Father; so how can you say, 'Show us the Father'? ¹⁰ Do you not believe that I am in the Father, and the Father in Me? The words that I speak to you I do not speak on My own authority; but the Father who dwells in Me does the works. ¹¹ Believe Me that I am in the Father and the Father in Me, or else believe Me for the sake of the works themselves. ¹² "Most assuredly, I say to you, he who believes in Me, the works that I do he will do also; and greater works than these he will do, because I go to My Father. ¹³ And whatever you ask in My name, that I will do, that the Father may be glorified in the Son. ¹⁴ If you ask anything in My name, I will do it.

Prayer – Boldly Ask Your God

The Word of God is Living and Powerful, and is ready, and will do a mighty work in our lives.

Hebrews 4:12 (NKJV) ¹² For the word of God is living and powerful, and sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing even to the division of soul and spirit, and of joints and marrow, and is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart.

In Every Study

- Who Is God? (How Great is He?)
- What Does He Think of Me? (How Wonderful Are His Thoughts Towards Me?)
- What Does He Want Me to Do?
- What Can I Boldly Request of Him?
- What Do I Need to Be on Guard of When I Leave Here Today?

Boldly come to the throne of grace, ask God to reveal Himself in a mighty way to you, and to do I might work in you, and through you.

Hebrews 4:16 (NKJV) ¹⁶ Let us therefore come boldly to the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy and find grace to help in time of need.

There is a Prayer Team Available to Pray with and for You

End of Study

Mark 12:12-17

Mark 12:12–17 (NKJV) ¹² And they sought to lay hands on Him, but feared the multitude, for they knew He had spoken the parable against them. So they left Him and went away. ¹³ Then they sent to Him some of the Pharisees and the Herodians, to catch Him in *His* words. ¹⁴ When they had come, they said to Him, “Teacher, we know that You are true, and care about no one; for You do not regard the person of men, but teach the way of God in truth. Is it lawful to pay taxes to Caesar, or not? ¹⁵ Shall we pay, or shall we not pay?” But He, knowing their hypocrisy, said to them, “Why do you test Me? Bring Me a denarius that I may see *it*.” ¹⁶ So they brought *it*. And He said to them, “Whose image and inscription *is* this?” They said to Him, “Caesar’s.” ¹⁷ And Jesus answered and said to them, “Render to Caesar the things that are Caesar’s, and to God the things that are God’s.” And they marveled at Him.

A most wonderful invitation, and with each invitation from God comes a promise of Him to accomplish it, and God gives each and every one of us to the invitation to be image bearers of God. Is there a higher calling on this earth, than to bear the image of God, to be a reflection of God, be His?

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Recap/Intro

Introduction. As we come into the Easter season, most of the world is celebrating the triumphal entry, as the calendar says. We're a week away from Eastern but unfortunately the next time they come together; they'll be celebrating the resurrection. I don't mean that in such a bad way but what I am saying is they miss what happened. Those days between the triumphal entry and the resurrection. For us, we come and as we study this chapter by chapter and verse by verse, we know what has happened since the triumphal entry leading up to the cross and then the resurrection. There's power in knowing what is happening.

So we're in chapter 12 and we left off in verse 12.

Let's recap last few days that has happened.

- On Sunday, which is the 10th of Nisan in Jewish calendar, Jesus rides into Jerusalem in what is known as the triumphal entry (Mark 11:1-11). The religious leaders, as we continue to see them in our passage today, they tell Jesus to tell the disciples and the followers to shut up, but Jesus said in Luke's gospel, if they were to remain silent, the very rocks would cry out.
 - **Luke 19:39–40 (NKJV)** ³⁹ And some of the Pharisees called to Him from the crowd, “Teacher, rebuke Your disciples.” ⁴⁰ But He answered and said to them, “I tell you that if these should keep silent, the stones would immediately cry out.”
- And then on Monday, (Mark 11:15-18), Jesus goes into the temple and turns tables over, for they turned the temple from a house of prayer into a den of thieves, and we read there in verse 18, they sought to kill him and destroy him, but they couldn't because they feared the people.
- Then Tuesday came. That's Mark 11:27-33, and they come, these religious leaders, and they questioned his authority, and that continued on after chapter 11 into chapter 12, where we're at.

- In Mark 12:1-12, Jesus gives the indictment against the nation of Israel who's supposed to be God's vineyard, his fruit, which he would come and partake in, and as we study that, they clearly see that he was indicting them, and so in verse 12, it says again that they want to kill him, but they can't, and they can't because he hasn't yielded himself yet.

So we come in to our passage today and they go away. They regroup. They're filled with hate and here they send a new group to try to catch him and ensure him before the people, to try to incite the people against him, to which they will fail again because Jesus hasn't yielded yet.

Outline Mark 12:12-17:

- The Chief Priest, Scribes, and Elder Come to Challenge Jesus (12:1-12)
- The Pharisees and Herodians Come to Challenge Jesus (12:13)
- There is Only One Way to Teach the Word of God (12:14)
- They Test Jesus to Find Fault or Impurity (12:15)
- Give to God the Things that are God's (12:16-17)

The Chief Priest, Scribes, and Elder Come to Challenge Jesus (12:1-12)

Mark 12:12 And they sought to lay hands on Him, but feared the multitude, for they knew He had spoken the parable against them. So they left Him and went away.

They Can't Yet – But They Will – After He Yields / Behold the Man

Verse 12 as we have read multiple times, and it says that they fear him. That's why they couldn't lay hands on him. But that won't always be the case we know. And in only a couple days they will lay hands on him, they will not fear the crowd. Why? Because they've turned the crowd against him. From Hosanna, save now. The chant will go to kill him now. And how did they, these religious leaders get the crowd to turn on him? As we studied Jesus will yield himself. (And when that restraint is lifted, and I think that's also a picture of the last days, the restraint is lifted. The flesh and the devil will have free reign to do whatever they want). And so they will come and they will turn on Jesus. But I want you to take it even deeper with me in that Jesus yielded himself, gave himself up to be the sacrifice for sin (and his yielding was determined in its finality there in the garden, it was there that he yielded himself). And these religious leaders will come in the night, they will take him and they will beat him, and they will scourge him. And then in the morning he will go to the cross and be hung there.

But before all that will happen at the cross, he will be beaten. He will be brutalized. As we've studied Isaiah 52, he will be unrecognizable because he will be beaten so much. And then they will bring him before the crowd, Pilate will say, "Behold the man." But the people will look, and they won't see the victorious man who rode in just a few days earlier on that donkey (as the King to come). The one who they screamed, "Save now." Expecting him to set up his kingdom. What they will see is a man who was beaten and brutalized by the kingdom they wanted freed of. The religious leaders will beat him so bad that when the people see him, they will not see a victor, they'll see a man who is defeated. And they will say in their hearts, "surely he can't deliver us." And that's why they will turn on him. It's after he's brutalized and beaten. And they said there's no hope in him to overthrow Rome if he can't save himself.

And that's what the religious leaders will mock, shake their fists at him. You saved others, save yourself. But he won't. Because of his love for you, his desire to have you, to make you his own. As he will say, "That's why I came. I came for you." Precious listener..... God love You!

Mark 11:9–10 (NKJV) ⁹ Then those who went before and those who followed cried out, saying: "Hosanna! 'Blessed is He who comes in the name of the LORD!' ¹⁰ Blessed is the kingdom of our father David That comes in the name of the Lord! Hosanna in the highest!"

John 19:5–6 (NKJV) ⁵ Then Jesus came out, wearing the crown of thorns and the purple robe. And Pilate said to them, "Behold the Man!" ⁶ Therefore, when the chief priests and officers saw Him, they cried out, saying, "Crucify Him, crucify Him!" Pilate said to them, "You take Him and crucify Him, for I find no fault in Him."

Isaiah 52:14 (NKJV) ¹⁴ Just as many were astonished at you, So His visage was marred more than any man, And His form more than the sons of men;

Matthew 27:41–43 (NKJV) ⁴¹ Likewise the chief priests also, mocking with the scribes and elders, said, ⁴² “He saved others; Himself He cannot save. If He is the King of Israel, let Him now come down from the cross, and we will believe Him. ⁴³ He trusted in God; let Him deliver Him now if He will have Him; for He said, ‘I am the Son of God.’”

God loves you! He gave Himself for you!

Is It Lawful to Pay Taxes to Caesar (12:13-17)

The Pharisees and Herodians Come to Challenge Jesus (12:13)

Mark 12:13 Then they sent to Him some of the Pharisees and the Herodians, to catch Him in His words.

A Carefully Crafted Trick Question

This was a carefully crafted trick question. If He said, “Pay taxes” they would accuse Him of sympathizing with Rome. They might even call Him an idolater... Since Rome viewed their emperor as a god, paying taxes to him could be viewed as tantamount to emperor worship. But if Jesus said, “Don’t pay the taxes” they could take Him to the Romans for treason. The Roman governor would have little choice but to punish Jesus. Either way, the Jews thought they had Him trapped!

These guys were called from somewhere else, how far away we do not know, but they have time to walk together and plot together.

Herod was Puppet King / And Taxes were Everything to Man of Greed

King Herod was the political head of these Herodians, and he wasn't for the Jews but for himself. He was a puppet king for Rome, so the story, how important it was as we read about, give Rome their taxes because for him, there is money to be had in it because he's Rome's puppet king to keep the money flowing. You can imagine the setup. The Herodians come and if Jesus says don't pay taxes, they're gonna write back to King Herod and he's gonna go right to Pilate and that's gonna be it. There's gonna be immediate death to Jesus for saying, "Don't pay taxes." These guys, they go to the king, the king goes to Rome, Rome goes to the soldiers and the sword goes to Jesus.

Two Parties of Hatred – Just Doubled Hatred / Dividers only Produce more Division (and Hatred)

Verse 13. The Herodians, they were a political party but as we read through the scriptures in the history of Israel, the Herodians and the Pharisees, they hated each other but they join forces for a common foe, and that common foe being Jesus. What you see is then and here now, when the divided unite, it will always produce more division. When two groups of people are filled with hate and they join together, all that comes is double hatred.

The hatred, it can happen to you. What do you do? You count it all joy. Now don't get prideful but don't get defeated either. When they come to hate you because you reflect Jesus Christ or doing the work of Christ, count it all joy as Jesus said too, and the way you respond is don't respond in hatred or you become just like them. They can seem so “righteous” just like these religious people in our story, but it is all a pretense, and underlying is hatred that causes division.

Luke 20:19–20 (NKJV) ¹⁹ And the chief priests and the scribes that very hour sought to lay hands on Him, but they feared the people—for they knew He had spoken this parable against them. ²⁰ So they watched Him, and sent spies who pretended to be righteous, that they might seize on His words, in order to deliver Him to the power and the authority of the governor.

1 John 4:20–21 (NKJV) ²⁰ If someone says, “I love God,” and hates his brother, he is a liar; for he who does not love his brother whom he has seen, how can he love God whom he has not seen? ²¹ And this commandment we have from Him: that he who loves God must love his brother also.

There is Only One Way to Teach the Word of God (12:14)

Mark 12:14 When they had come, they said to Him, "Teacher, we know that You are true, and care about no one; for You do not regard the person of men, but teach the way of God in truth. Is it lawful to pay taxes to Caesar, or not?"

Prerequisite to Teach – Only Way to Teach

Verse 14 - teach the way of God. If you are going to be a teacher, this is a prerequisite, especially today. We can't fear what man thinks.

Greg Laurie Tells the Story of a Doctor

Greg Laurie tells a story that a doctor who for 30 years had a cure for a certain type of cancer, but he, to make more money, diluted the drug and after it was found out what he had done, it had been determined that dozens of people died who would have lived if the doctor would have given the full strength of the medicine that could heal that person. And so to it is the word of God and the Gospel of Jesus Christ cannot be diluted, but given in its full strength and that's the only way it will bring life.

They Call Jesus a Great Teacher – Even Though Trying to Tear Him Down

Verse 14. They call Jesus a teacher, quite flattering at that. That's interesting. They seek to tear him down but they're not afraid to call him a teacher and actually they call him a great teacher, not fearing man. They commend him for that. You would think they'd be afraid to give him credit for anything in fear of building him up before the people, but they don't fear that, saying he's a good teacher.

For Most Today – Ask Them and They will Say Jesus is Good Moral Teacher

They have no fear in that at all, and so it is today, opponents of Jesus have no problem saying he was a good teacher, a good moral man taught good virtues. But everything changes at the line of repentance when the call comes to turn from something. That's whenever things go from a generic good teacher. They'll go from general, be fine with "Jesus is good," but when you get specific, that's when things change.

The Cross is Where the Line Changes

Lots of people will celebrate Jesus's resurrection next Sunday (21April2019) they are celebrating his triumphal entry this Sunday (14April2019). But how about Friday, the crucifixion, will they truly stop and say, what about the crucifixion? See, at the cross, if someone truly looks, then they have to make the determination, why did he die and how sinful is sin? How much of a price does it cost, sin? Because if sin is a big enough deal that it sins God's son to the cross, then it's a big enough deal that causes man, the calling to repent and turn from sin, call for a need for a savior, admit that they need a savior and then have to yield to not just savior but now lord, the king of their life.

The cross comes with a call, and that call is to turn and follow. If Jesus is God, and God went to the cross, then we have to turn and repent and follow.

Mark 8:34–38 (NKJV) ³⁴ When He had called the people to Himself, with His disciples also, He said to them, "Whoever desires to come after Me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross, and follow Me. ³⁵ For whoever desires to save his life will lose it, but whoever loses his life for My sake and the gospel's will save it. ³⁶ For what will it profit a man if he gains the whole world, and loses his own soul? ³⁷ Or what will a man give in exchange for his soul? ³⁸ For whoever is ashamed of Me and My words in this adulterous and sinful generation, of him the Son of Man also will be ashamed when He comes in the glory of His Father with the holy angels."

Only Because of the Cross

Jesus says, "All those who labor and are heavy laden, come and I will give you rest."

Matthew 11:28 (NKJV) ²⁸ Come to Me, all you who labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest.

Jesus said, "If I be lifted up, I will draw all men to myself."

John 12:32 (NKJV) ³² And I, if I am lifted up from the earth, will draw all peoples to Myself."

Jesus said, "No greater love has he than this, to lay down his life for a friend."

John 15:13 (NKJV) ¹³ Greater love has no one than this, than to lay down one's life for his friends.

In every one of those statements and many more I could go on with, they have a line that defines and divides, and that line is the cross.

Jesus could only say, "Come to me all you who labor and are heavy laden," but truly only after the cross would it be accomplished, "and I will give you rest."

Before the cross, Jesus could say, "If I be lifted up," but truly only after the cross would it be accomplished, "And I will draw all men to myself."

Before the cross, Jesus could say, "No greater love has he than this," but truly only after the cross would it be accomplished, "that he lays down his life for a friend."

The cross is the dividing line. It is the intersection of life and death. The cross is the accomplishment, the sealing, of the promises of God.

John 10:10, Jesus would say that, "The devil comes to steal, kill, and destroy." But he could not say until after the cross the second half of that verse would be accomplished, "But I have come that they may have life and that more abundantly."

[John 10:10 \(NKJV\)](#) ¹⁰ The thief does not come except to steal, and to kill, and to destroy. I have come that they may have life, and that they may have it more abundantly.

Your Testimony

Who here has a testimony of where your life changed at the cross.

Preach – Study – Live

Before moving on, just a word on the cross. If you want the abundant life, the God-Life, then preach in light of the cross, study your bible in light of the cross, and live your life in the light of the cross. For the cross beams light on everything else, and shows us and determines for us what matters most in life.

The Question of Paying Taxes – Won't be Found in Mosaic Law / We Often Ask the Wrong Questions

Now this question about paying taxes to Rome, they won't find the answer in the Old Testament (Mosaic Law) because Israel was never meant to be subservient to another nation. They were never meant to be under a nation but under God, and so this question has no roots in the Old Testament of if they should pay or not pay.

Israel was called to be one nation under God, and you remove the "under God" and as so much of it is being stripped away, you can have a nation that's no longer under God. We need to look at the nation of Israel as at this time of Christ and the history of Israel and see what happens when you remove God as one nation under God.

Nowhere in the Mosaic law was it ever called out, how the nation of Israel was to pay taxes to another nation. They were only called out how they were to pay taxes among their own nation.

Do you see how these men, they can't see how far they've fallen? They need to ask the question, "How do we get back to what God intended us to be?" Lots of time we're asking the Lord the wrong questions.

Lots of times we're asking the Lord the wrong questions. "Lord, how do I fix my marriage? How do I overcome this thing? How do I change my life? How do I change my tongue? How do I remove this heart of hatred?" And you can go on and on, when we should be asking, "Lord, how did I get here? What did I do to bring me to this place?"

I believe the Lord will show us how we will and have allowed ourselves to come to a place he never designed for us, that the specific questions we're asking are truly all just a result of the one question that we're not asking. "How did I get here and how did I allow myself to drift away from him? How did I allow myself to not be one nation

under God?" But if we will come to him and ask that question, then the other questions will come with their answers, and he'll lead us back to that place.

Have you considered this? And is God speaking to you right now, something that you might be asking the wrong questions and that you need to change, "How do I fix this and how do I get out of that?" To the big question, "How did I find myself in this place so far away from you, no longer a person under God."

They Test Jesus to Find Fault or Impurity (12:15)

Mark 12:15 Shall we pay, or shall we not pay?" But He, knowing their hypocrisy, said to them, "Why do you test Me? Bring Me a denarius that I may see it."

Denarius – Small Roman Coin

A denarius was a small Roman coin - size of a dime. On one side of the coin was the bust of the Caesar, with the words, "Tiberias Caesar, son of the divine Augustus." On the other side were the words, "Pontifex Maximus" - which is Latin for "High Priest". This coin was dedicated to the Roman emperor.

Notice They use Word "Pay" 3 Times / Looking to Incite

Verse 15, notice they repeat the pay three times here. They use the word "pay." They're trying to incite the people, incite the crowd, because no one likes to pay taxes and the more they say the word "pay," the more it digs in the people, so this is a total setup.

Hypocrisy – Masks Used for Actors on a Stage

Verse 15, hypocrisy. That word there was used for actors on a stage who would switch masks to show people a big smiley face or a big frown face. And we're told in Luke 20 that these men, and this would apply to all of them, pretended to be righteous. They put on a mask like they were righteous, but God was indicting them, that they were unrighteous, greedy and selfish.

Luke 20:19–20 (NKJV) ¹⁹ And the chief priests and the scribes that very hour sought to lay hands on Him, but they feared the people—for they knew He had spoken this parable against them. ²⁰ So they watched Him, and sent spies who pretended to be righteous, that they might seize on His words, in order to deliver Him to the power and the authority of the governor.

Test (to Find Fault or Impurity to Reveal) / Pilate – I Find no Fault

Verse 15, tested. They expected that Jesus was going to fail. That word test means to test for impurity, to test for mental strength, to test for integrity, to test to find impurities, to reveal something. They had hoped to reveal to the people something in Jesus that would turn the people against Jesus. They also had hoped that by Him giving a wrong answer, that He was flawed, imperfect.

It's interesting, the lamb for Passover was to be brought into the house on the 10th day of the month and then it was to be put in the house and live among the house and part of it was to inspect it for blemishes, to find faults. And if there was any fault in the lamb, then it could not be the Passover lamb. And here Jesus, he's continually tested. And yet all through every test, no imperfection is found. He qualifies to be the perfect lamb of God who takes away the sins of the world. Then Pilate, his very words would be, "I find no fault in this man."

Luke 23:4 (NKJV) ⁴ So Pilate said to the chief priests and the crowd, "I find no fault in this Man."

Exodus 12:3–6 (NKJV) ³ Speak to all the congregation of Israel, saying: 'On the tenth of this month every man shall take for himself a lamb, according to the house of his father, a lamb for a household. ⁴ And if the household is too small for the lamb, let him and his neighbor next to his house take it according to the number of the persons; according to each man's need you shall make your count for the lamb. ⁵ Your lamb shall be without blemish, a male of the first year. You may take it from the sheep or from the goats. ⁶ Now you shall keep it until the fourteenth day of the same month. Then the whole assembly of the congregation of Israel shall kill it at twilight.

People Put God on Trial or Test / Every Situation Shows Me – What is In Me

Still today people want to put Jesus to the test. If you don't do this for me, Lord, then I don't believe you love me or that you are God. If you don't come though right now, I won't follow you. They put him on trial, looking for him to then have to respond accordingly.

But it is never God who is on trial. That word test means to test for impurity, to test for mental strength, to test for integrity, to test to find impurities, to reveal something. It is never God who is on the test.

Every situation that I find myself in is a testing to be refined, to see what is in me. Something happens at work (on the campus, in the marriage, church, relationship), and I can stew over the mistreatment, disrespect, the unfairness; but if I trust God I say ok Lord, You are on the throne and you will provide and take care of me, and say to self and ask God, what have I learned about me today? God then shows you your pride, arrogance, self-centeredness. And many times He shows you how far He has brought you, how greatly He has been conforming you into His image, and you are an image bearer.

I remember we were doing an afterglow at Bible College, just waiting on the Lord in prayer and worship and the word, much like we do here on Tuesday nights. And I was sitting next to my friend Darren, and we are just having a time of inward reflection asking the Lord to search us, and then Darren goes (in a low voice), oh no, oh my, and then stands up and goes to the front and says the Lord has given me a word for myself (and all), and he goes on to say, the Lord showed him a beautiful bottle, with beautiful deep dark glass, so deep and beautiful that you could not see inside the bottle. He said that is man, a beautiful vessel, and then he said the Lord turned the bottle over, and as he poured out the content it was filled with sludge and grime, and very unpleasant. Then the Lord said it is not until the bottle is turned over that man can see what is truly inside.

How I respond determines what's in me. Every day I have, every day you have an opportunity to be refined, tested, and purified. These men test Jesus, but he's already pure. The real testing was for these men to find out what was in their heart so that they could be refined and have opportunity before the Lord and say, "I see my heart, I see where my heart is wrong and I need you to refine it and change it and purify it."

Psalm 139:23–24 (NKJV) ²³ Search me, O God, and know my heart; Try me, and know my anxieties; ²⁴ And see if there is any wicked way in me, And lead me in the way everlasting.

Give to God the Things that are God's (12:16-17)

Mark 12:16 So they brought it. And He said to them, "Whose image and inscription is this?" They said to Him, "Caesar's."

Jesus Doesn't Have Coin – Appears Religious Leaders Don't Either

Verse 16, the way this is worded, it appears that the religious leaders didn't have a coin on them either. Jesus clearly does not.

Now picture the scene here; Jesus is holding the coin up and displaying to everyone who is gathered around Him, asking the question, whose image and description is on this coin?

The Roles Change – Jesus Orchestrates

Verse 16, Jesus asked whose image and whose inscription. And it's interesting, these men who thought they were orchestrating now become the participants. The roles change as Jesus now is the orchestrator and now they're the responders. How they respond determines their lives, not Jesus'

Mark 12:17 And Jesus answered and said to them, "Render to Caesar the things that are Caesar's, and to God the things that are God's." And they marveled at Him.

Genesis 1:27 – Created In His Image / Give Coins to Caesar – But Lives to God

Genesis tells us God made mankind "in His image and likeness." Jesus is saying, Give your coins to Caesar, but your life to God.

Genesis 1:27 (NKJV) ²⁷ So God created man in His own image; in the image of God He created him; male and female He created them.

Genesis 1:27 – Created In His Image / Give Coins to Caesar – But Lives to God

Jesus says to these men that give to Caesar what Caesar has made in Caesar's image, give it to Caesar. But man is made in God's image, give God what is his. In Genesis we're told every man is made in the image of God, every

woman is made in the image of God. And then God goes on and he begins his refining process in our lives to shape us, mold us until he can see his reflection in us and we bear the reflection, the image, of God himself.

[Genesis 1:27 \(NKJV\)](#) ²⁷ So God created man in His own image; in the image of God He created him; male and female He created them.

To Not Give Caesar is Rob – To Not Give God is to Rob

Verse 17, to not give Caesar, who is the face and the head of the Roman government, what was due him was to rob him. And the same is true that Jesus is making to not give God what is due him is to rob him.

Image of God – Found in Jesus

And how deep and dynamic this passage is, in that if you want to know what God is like, you need only look at Jesus (John 14). Give your life to Him, and then study His life, live your life like Him, and you will be an image bearer.

[John 14:8–9 \(NKJV\)](#) ⁸ Philip said to Him, "Lord, show us the Father, and it is sufficient for us." ⁹ Jesus said to him, "Have I been with you so long, and yet you have not known Me, Philip? He who has seen Me has seen the Father; so how can you say, 'Show us the Father'?"

Here Again Invitation to Greatness / What Could be Greater Than Made in Image of God

We can take this as negative, or we can look and know the heart of God, that he wishes none should perish but all should seek repentance. And yet another invitation that he makes to these men who come against him and he says to all who come to hear him, "I give an invitation to come, I give an invitation to be, I give an invitation to be with me." And with that invitation comes a promise to be made into his image, to bear his likeness.

Can we grasp this? Do we grasp this? To be made and then living in his image, to reflect him. Could there be any greater glory of a life than to reflect the very one who is seated above the heavens?

The Lord Says – I Love You (Have destined You for Greatness)

Ending conclusion. I love you. The Lord says, "I love you." The Lord said, "I destine you into greatness and for greatness, to bear my image, to be my image bearer."

Israel missed their destiny. All that was intended for them, all their potential to be the image bearer of God, and they missed their potential and they missed their destiny, but you don't have to, and here you are today. God presenting you the offer and the opportunity to be the image bearer of God, to live your potential, what you were made for.

Do you understand what you were made for was to be God's image and to bear his image before the world.

Steel mills of Western PA

Verse 17. I grew up in western Pennsylvania, and it truly is steel country. You couldn't drive ten miles without seeing a steel mill and you couldn't look out onto the horizon without seeing smokestacks. Steel was the life blood of the whole region. And so, of course, I grew up among many steel millers. Both my parents worked in the steel mills. And it was interesting to me as I heard of the steel making process, and this goes back before the high technology, all the ingredients and materials to make steel were put into a vat that was heated to red hot temperatures. And all the materials would be melted and then what would come to the top was the impurities and the more impurities, the weaker the steel. The more pure the steel, the stronger it would be. And some steel had much impurities because there was a long process to boil out all the impurities. But for some steel, they didn't care that it was extreme strength 'cause it was only going to hold a light load. And that would be your cheap steel, they would just crank it out and send it out. But when it came time to make the steel that was going to hold height, stress, carry extreme burdens, the kind that would be used in skyscrapers and bridges and battleships, that steel went through extra refining process. And what I was told is they had a scraper, a scoop if you would, and as the impurities came to the surface, they would scrape it off and put it into the waste barrel. And they would keep working it and working it until little impurity was left. And they knew that they had come to the finest steel that could be made was when the steel maker could look into the steel, the liquid steel, and see the reflection of his face. When the image of the steel maker's face could be seen, then the steel was ready to be made and poured and then used.

Malachi 3:3 (NKJV) ³ He will sit as a refiner and a purifier of silver; He will purify the sons of Levi, And purge them as gold and silver, That they may offer to the LORD An offering in righteousness.

Psalm 66:10 (NKJV) ¹⁰ For You, O God, have tested us; You have refined us as silver is refined.

Romans 12:1–2 (NKJV) ¹ I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that you present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable to God, which is your reasonable service. ² And do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind, that you may prove what is that good and acceptable and perfect will of God.

God Loves You / Cares About You

Verse 12, God loves you. He cares about you. He wants a personal relationship with you. And that relationship comes one way, through his Son. Jesus said, "He who has seen me has seen the Father." To know God you must know his Son. For his Son is the picture and the provision.

- He is the picture of who God is and what he is like. And we see that in Jesus as he walked this Earth.
- And he is the provision as the only way to the holy God is through a holy sacrifice, a perfect sacrifice that can wipe away the sins from our hearts that condemn us.

And Jesus said, "I am the way, the truth, and the life." He's the only way. The verb tenses are, "I am the only way, I am the only truth, I am the only life." And that word for life is the word Zoe, the abundant life.

- He is the truth, and by not the lie of the world, or the devil, or even your flesh that there's any other way you can come before the presence of God, except the way through Jesus.
- And he is the life, the traded life. As he traded his perfect life as the Son. And he took your sin. That's what we call a propitiation, a substitution, a trade. It's the traded life, and that's the great life. He takes our sin and puts himself in us.

Have you done that today as God offers it to you today, to have this life, this traded life, this new life. That you can walk out of here a new person, all your sins washed away, covered, gone into the depths of the sea. Have you done that? Have you asked Jesus to trade with you?

John 14:5–7 (NKJV) ⁵ Thomas said to Him, "Lord, we do not know where You are going, and how can we know the way?" ⁶ Jesus said to him, "I am the way, the truth, and the life. No one comes to the Father except through Me. ⁷ "If you had known Me, you would have known My Father also; and from now on you know Him and have seen Him."

John 14:8–14 (NKJV) ⁸ Philip said to Him, "Lord, show us the Father, and it is sufficient for us." ⁹ Jesus said to him, "Have I been with you so long, and yet you have not known Me, Philip? He who has seen Me has seen the Father; so how can you say, 'Show us the Father'? ¹⁰ Do you not believe that I am in the Father, and the Father in Me? The words that I speak to you I do not speak on My own authority; but the Father who dwells in Me does the works. ¹¹ Believe Me that I am in the Father and the Father in Me, or else believe Me for the sake of the works themselves. ¹² "Most assuredly, I say to you, he who believes in Me, the works that I do he will do also; and greater works than these he will do, because I go to My Father. ¹³ And whatever you ask in My name, that I will do, that the Father may be glorified in the Son. ¹⁴ If you ask anything in My name, I will do it.

Prayer – Boldly Ask Your God

The Word of God is Living and Powerful, and is ready, and will do a mighty work in our lives.

Hebrews 4:12 (NKJV) ¹² For the word of God is living and powerful, and sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing even to the division of soul and spirit, and of joints and marrow, and is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart.

In Every Study

- Who Is God? (How Great is He?)
- What Does He Think of Me? (How Wonderful Are His Thoughts Towards Me?)
- What Does He Want Me to Do?
- What Can I Boldly Request of Him?
- What Do I Need to Be on Guard of When I Leave Here Today?

Boldly come to the throne of grace, ask God to reveal Himself in a mighty way to you, and to do I might work in you, and through you.

Hebrews 4:16 (NKJV) ¹⁶ Let us therefore come boldly to the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy and find grace to help in time of need.

There is a Prayer Team Available to Pray with and for You

End of Study

Mark 12:18-27 (Easter 2019)

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Introduction

Let's recap last few days that has happened.

- On Sunday, which is the 10th of Nisan in Jewish calendar, Jesus rides into Jerusalem in what is known as the triumphal entry (Mark 11:1-11). The religious leaders, as we continue to see them in our passage today, they tell Jesus to tell the disciples and the followers to shut up, but Jesus said in Luke's gospel, if they were to remain silent, the very rocks would cry out.
 - *Luke 19:39-40 (NKJV)* ³⁹ And some of the Pharisees called to Him from the crowd, "Teacher, rebuke Your disciples." ⁴⁰ But He answered and said to them, "I tell you that if these should keep silent, the stones would immediately cry out."
- And then on Monday, (Mark 11:15-18), Jesus goes into the temple and turns tables over, for they turned the temple from a house of prayer into a den of thieves, and we read there in verse 18, they sought to kill him and destroy him, but they couldn't because they feared the people.
- Then Tuesday came. That's Mark 11:27-33, and they come, these religious leaders, and they questioned his authority, and that continued on after chapter 11 into chapter 12, where we're at.
- In Mark 12:1-12, Jesus gives the indictment against the nation of Israel who's supposed to be God's vineyard, his fruit, which he would come and partake in, and as we study that, they clearly see that he was indicting them, and so in verse 12, it says again that they want to kill him, but they can't, and they can't because he hasn't yielded himself yet.

So we come in to our passage today and they go away. They regroup. They're filled with hate and here they send a new group to try to catch him and ensure him before the people, to try to incite the people against him, to which they will fail again because Jesus hasn't yielded yet.

Not Typical Easter Passage

Not a typical Easter passage I would expect, until we consider the powerful statement Jesus makes, as many are mistaken of the power of the resurrection, and so we will see and hear the power of the resurrection in our passage and testimony today.

Mark 12:24 (NKJV) ²⁴ Jesus answered and said to them, "Are you not therefore mistaken, because you do not know the Scriptures nor the power of God?"

Outline Mark 12:18-27:

- The Sadducees Come to Challenge Jesus (12:18)
- The Sadducees Hypothetical Question (12:19-23)
- Jesus Answers the Question with Power (12:24-25)
- Jesus Answers the Question with Hope (12:26-27)

The Sadducees Ask About the Resurrection (12:18-27)

The Sadducees Come to Challenge Jesus (12:18)

Mark 12:18 Then some Sadducees, who say there is no resurrection, came to Him; and they asked Him, saying:

Overview on Sadducee

Believing only in the five books of Moses, also known as the Pentateuch, the Sadducees didn't believe in miracles, angels, or resurrection because they saw none of those elements in the Pentateuch. They were smaller in number than the Pharisees or Herodians, but, being the wealthier businessmen, they were the elite of the day. And the majority of the Sanhedrin, which is the equivalent to the Jewish supreme court, were Sadducees. They controlled the temple business.

Coming to the conclusion that there was no resurrection, no afterlife, they lived for here and now. There was no afterlife, and so this was the only life, and get all that you can out of the life. And of course so when Jesus comes and he starts turning over tables, they start losing money. And now here we go, another collision course, because they controlled the temple business.

The Sadducees Hypothetical Question (12:19-23)

Mark 12:19 "Teacher, Moses wrote to us that if a man's brother dies, and leaves his wife behind, and leaves no children, his brother should take his wife and raise up offspring for his brother.

Mark 12:20 Now there were seven brothers. The first took a wife; and dying, he left no offspring.

Mark 12:21 And the second took her, and he died; nor did he leave any offspring. And the third likewise.

Mark 12:22 So the seven had her and left no offspring. Last of all the woman died also.

Mark 12:23 Therefore, in the resurrection, when they rise, whose wife will she be? For all seven had her as wife."

Deuteronomy 25

According to Deuteronomy 25, if a man died childless, it was the obligation of his next younger brother to marry his widow and bear a child to be his heir, to carry on his name. In order to examine Jesus' theology, the Sadducees pose this question concerning a hypothetical woman who had been widowed seven times over.

Deuteronomy 25:5-10 (NKJV) ⁵ "If brothers dwell together, and one of them dies and has no son, the widow of the dead man shall not be married to a stranger outside the family; her husband's brother shall go in to her, take her as his wife, and perform the duty of a husband's brother to her. ⁶ And it shall be that the firstborn son which she bears will succeed to the name of his dead brother, that his name may not be blotted out of Israel. ⁷ But if the man does not want to take his brother's wife, then let his brother's wife go up to the gate to the elders, and say, 'My husband's brother refuses to raise up a name to his brother in Israel; he will not perform the duty of my husband's brother.' ⁸ Then the elders of his city shall call him and speak to him. But if he stands firm and says, 'I do not want to take her,' ⁹ then his brother's wife shall come to him in the presence of the elders, remove his sandal from his foot, spit in his face, and answer and say, 'So shall it be done to the man who will not build up his brother's house.' ¹⁰ And his name shall be called in Israel, 'The house of him who had his sandal removed.'

A Strange Question for Someone who Denies the Resurrection

Verse 21. This would be a rather strange question for someone, a group of people who don't believe in the resurrection to come and ask questions about the resurrection.

See they come like they're asking a question like they don't know the answer. But that's not the case. They know the answer; they've determined the answer. And even beyond that, that they are the experts regarding the theology of the resurrection. And they were sent as the so-called experts because they're going to say that there is no resurrection.

All Heresies

Do you realize, all heresies rise out of a denial of God's power, or an ignorance of the Bible... People deny the creation - or parting of the Red Sea - or the virgin birth - or the resurrection - or the Second Coming - because they deny God's power. They refute the Trinity - or the blood atonement - or salvation by grace through faith - because they're ignorant of Scripture. All heresies spring from the denial of God's power or the ignorance of God's Word.

These Sadducees were like many people today, who do not believe that the Bible is literal, only allegorical, stories made up, not literal, therefore the Bible was powerless to them.

Jesus Walked the Earth

A man named Jesus Christ walked this earth, there is not a major media outlet (CNN< NBC< FOX, etc) who don't all agree a man named Jesus Christ walked this earth, that He was a real person. This man Jesus, divided time, that is how real He is (BC/AD). Of course the question is, is He God, did He rise from the dead.

Jesus Answers the Question with Power (12:24-25)

Mark 12:24 Jesus answered and said to them, "Are you not therefore mistaken, because you do not know the Scriptures nor the power of God?"

Mark 12:25 For when they rise from the dead, they neither marry nor are given in marriage, but are like angels in heaven.

It's Good to Ask Lord Question – But Be Ready for Answer "C"

Verse 24. It's good to ask the Lord questions, it's good to keep asking him questions. But our questions so often fall so short because we limit him on his answers. We ask him is it A or B, not knowing that the answer could be C. Something that we never even considered. I'm reminded of Joshua before the battle there at Jericho he asked the Lord as the angel appeared before him. "Are you for us or against us?" And I love the Lord's answer, "Neither." So there was another answer that Joshua had not even considered. He thought it was two things and two things only. One or the other.

Joshua 5:13–15 (NKJV) ¹³ And it came to pass, when Joshua was by Jericho, that he lifted his eyes and looked, and behold, a Man stood opposite him with His sword drawn in His hand. And Joshua went to Him and said to Him, "Are You for us or for our adversaries?" ¹⁴ So He said, "No, but as Commander of the army of the LORD I have now come." And Joshua fell on his face to the earth and worshiped, and said to Him, "What does my Lord say to His servant?" ¹⁵ Then the Commander of the LORD's army said to Joshua, "Take your sandal off your foot, for the place where you stand is holy." And Joshua did so.

Angels – spiritual beings

Made like the angles speaks that we will be eternal beings, we shall be spirit beings.

No Resurrection – Because God has no Power

Verse 24. They don't believe in the resurrections because they don't believe in the power of God.

They Are (As Many Today – Mistaken About Resurrection)

Verse 24. They think because they're experts and since they are proud of that, they think they can trip Jesus up in front of the people.

But Jesus says, "you're mistaken." And we mistake and limit the power of the resurrection. We think that it is after our last breath that's the resurrection. We think that it is after death, that's the resurrection. When we step into heaven, that's the resurrection. But it's so far and falls so short and we miss the power of the resurrection today, right here and right now. The promise of John 10:10 that they may have life and that more abundant. It's not just speaking of eternity, but it's speaking here and now. And that will only come through the power of the resurrection. We're told in Ephesians 1 that the same power that rose Jesus from the grave is available to us today, to you today. There is a resurrection power that is available to you today, and maybe you're mistaken that it is not.

John 10:10 (NKJV) ¹⁰ The thief does not come except to steal, and to kill, and to destroy. I have come that they may have life, and that they may have it more abundantly.

Ephesians 1:19–21 (NKJV) ¹⁹ and what is the exceeding greatness of His power toward us who believe, according to the working of His mighty power ²⁰ which He worked in Christ when He raised Him from the dead and seated Him at His right hand in the heavenly places, ²¹ far above all principality and power and might and dominion, and every name that is named, not only in this age but also in that which is to come.

Personal Testimony

I'd like to share with you an abundant life that has been changed, first through the washing of the blood for forgiveness of sin. And then the power of the Spirit of God taking up residence and doing its mighty and wonderful work. For notes: Testimony of Steve Johnson (Easter April 2019)

2 Corinthians 5:17 (NKJV) ¹⁷ Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation; old things have passed away; behold, all things have become new.

Jesus Answers the Question with Hope (12:26-27)

Mark 12:26 But concerning the dead, that they rise, have you not read in the book of Moses, in the burning bush passage, how God spoke to him, saying, 'I am the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob'?

Mark 12:27 He is not the God of the dead, but the God of the living. You are therefore greatly mistaken."

Exodus 3-4

Verse 26 is referencing the burning bush passage of Exodus 3 and 4. Where God appeared to Moses in the burning bush, but was not a burning bush.

Exodus 3:4-6 (NKJV) ⁴ So when the LORD saw that he turned aside to look, God called to him from the midst of the bush and said, "Moses, Moses!" And he said, "Here I am." ⁵ Then He said, "Do not draw near this place. Take your sandals off your feet, for the place where you stand is holy ground." ⁶ Moreover He said, "I am the God of your father—the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob." And Moses hid his face, for he was afraid to look upon God.

Present Tense (I Am – Not I was)

Ignoring altogether the absurd hypothetical situation of the widow and speaking to them from the Pentateuch itself, Jesus reminded the Sadducees that five hundred years after Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob had passed from the scene, God identified Himself to Moses as the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. And by using the present tense to do so, the implication was obvious that Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob were still alive—verifying the reality of resurrection.

The I Am statement being made here by Jesus is emphatic present tense, not I was. He's making a present tense statement, I AM the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob.

The I AM – Becoming One

The "I AM" statement of Exodus 3. The name means, "the Becoming One". As God says to you today, I will become to you all that you need, what is your need? I Am the God of the living, and I walk among my living and become to them what they need. Beloved of God, the resurrection power is available to you today, to become to you all you need, and you need only to call upon the Lord. You can do that right now, at this moment, and ask him to become to you all you need.

Exodus 3:13-15 (NKJV) ¹³ Then Moses said to God, "Indeed, when I come to the children of Israel and say to them, 'The God of your fathers has sent me to you,' and they say to me, 'What is His name?' what shall I say to them?" ¹⁴ And God said to Moses, "I AM WHO I AM." And He said, "Thus you shall say to the children of Israel, 'I AM has sent me to you.'" ¹⁵ Moreover God said to Moses, "Thus you shall say to the children of Israel: 'The LORD God of your fathers, the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob, has sent me to you. This is My name forever, and this is My memorial to all generations.'"

The Gospel / There is a Decision to Be Made by You

And today I don't want to just make the Easter story, the Resurrection Sunday about a time some far away. But I want to tell you the power of it today. It can change a life. So the power of the resurrection is always two fold. It's today as we live and it's tomorrow when we die. And let me first tell you, this Easter Sunday many will want to hear a sinless Easter message. But Easter is all about sin. It's why Jesus went to the cross. He is the Lamb of God who takes away the sins of the world. And he came in exactly as foretold by John the Baptist, the Lamb of God who takes away the sins of the world. And he died exactly at the prescribed time that the Passover lamb was to be killed, and that was the 14th of Nisan at twilight. And that's Exodus 12.

Exodus 12:3-7 (NKJV) ³ Speak to all the congregation of Israel, saying: 'On the tenth of this month every man shall take for himself a lamb, according to the house of his father, a lamb for a household. ⁴ And if the household is too small for the lamb, let him and his neighbor next to his house take it according to the number of the persons; according to each man's need you shall make your count for the lamb. ⁵ Your lamb shall be without blemish, a male of the first year. You may take it from the sheep or from the goats. ⁶ Now you shall keep it until the fourteenth day of the same month. Then the whole assembly of the congregation of Israel shall kill it at twilight. ⁷ And they shall take some of the blood and put it on the two doorposts and on the lintel of the houses where they eat it.'

John 1:29 (NKJV) ²⁹ The next day John saw Jesus coming toward him, and said, "Behold! The Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world!"

And here's the A, B, C of the gospel.

- A is for all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God. We've all missed the mark, we've all missed God's standards, his holy law. Thou shall not steal, thou shall not lie, thou will honor thy Lord their God. And our sin separates us from the holy God. Because he is perfect and pure. But he did not leave us in this state of separation, hopeless and helpless. He came to help. We couldn't help ourselves so he came to help. And he sent his only begotten Son, Jesus Christ.
- And that's the B. "For God so loved the world that gave his only begotten Son that whoever should believe in him shall not perish but have everlasting life." John 3:16. And we need his help. Because Romans 6:23 is clear without a shadow of a doubt, "The wages of sin is death," and that death is eternal separation from God. And eternal separation from God is a place called Hell and it's real. But he goes on to say, because there was a cross, that "the gift of God is eternal life."
- The C - And what's our role is to see, and we confess with our mouth the Lord Jesus Christ, believe in our heart that God raised him from the dead, we shall be saved. And believe means to believe that we needed a Savior, to recognize the need. And secondly, it's a calling to turn and follow. Believe comes with a turn and follow, it's called repentance. And then there's the receiving what we pray and ask him into our hearts. Romans 10:9-10. If we believe in our heart that God raised him from the dead you too shall be saved." And there's the power of the gospel, it's the resurrection life. For at the moment Jesus would be sacrificed, when all the other Passover lambs were being sacrificed at the temple, Jesus is being sacrificed there on Golgotha, on a cross. And down at the temple in accordance with Leviticus 1-5, men, women were coming and they were laying their hand on the head of the lamb, the Passover lamb. And they were transferring, symbolic, a transferring their sin onto the innocent lamb. And then the lamb would be slain. And then the blood would be sprinkled.

Admit

Romans 3:23 (NKJV) ²³ for all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God,

Romans 6:23 (NKJV) ²³ For the wages of sin is death, but the gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord.

Believe

John 3:16-17 (NKJV) ¹⁶ For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have everlasting life. ¹⁷ For God did not send His Son into the world to condemn the world, but that the world through Him might be saved.

Confess

Romans 10:9-10 (NKJV) ⁹ that if you confess with your mouth the Lord Jesus and believe in your heart that God has raised Him from the dead, you will be saved. ¹⁰ For with the heart one believes unto righteousness, and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation.

Disciple

Matthew 16:24-26 (NKJV) ²⁴ Then Jesus said to His disciples, "If anyone desires to come after Me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross, and follow Me. ²⁵ For whoever desires to save his life will lose it, but whoever loses his life for My sake will find it. ²⁶ For what profit is it to a man if he gains the whole world, and loses his own soul? Or what will a man give in exchange for his soul?"

And just like there in the first Passover the blood was placed over the door of the home, and when death came it passed over when it saw the blood. But anybody without the blood cannot be saved. Death would stop and enter in. You need a Passover lamb and his name is Jesus Christ.

And that's the beauty and the celebration of Easter. I've been made clean. I've been washed and made new. Not just patched up, but made totally brand new. John 3:3 Jesus would say to Nicodemus at night, "Unless a man be born again he cannot enter the kingdom of God." There is no patching up. It's total regeneration, something brand new. And that's what Jesus has done. And that comes with an inheritance as we're told. And that inheritance is now the resurrection power to live today the abundant life, as promised by God.

John 3:3 (NKJV) ³ Jesus answered and said to him, "Most assuredly, I say to you, unless one is born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God."

Prayer – Boldly Ask Your God

The Word of God is Living and Powerful, and is ready, and will do a mighty work in our lives.

Hebrews 4:12 (NKJV) ¹² For the word of God is living and powerful, and sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing even to the division of soul and spirit, and of joints and marrow, and is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart.

In Every Study

- Who Is God? (How Great is He?)
- What Does He Think of Me? (How Wonderful Are His Thoughts Towards Me?)
- What Does He Want Me to Do?
- What Can I Boldly Request of Him?
- What Do I Need to Be on Guard of When I Leave Here Today?

Boldly come to the throne of grace, ask God to reveal Himself in a mighty way to you, and to do I might work in you, and through you.

Hebrews 4:16 (NKJV) ¹⁶ Let us therefore come boldly to the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy and find grace to help in time of need.

There is a Prayer Team Available to Pray with and for You

End of Study

Mark 12:28-34

Today's Passage

Mark 12:28-34 (NKJV) ²⁸ Then one of the scribes came, and having heard them reasoning together, perceiving that He had answered them well, asked Him, "Which is the first commandment of all?" ²⁹ Jesus answered him, "The first of all the commandments is: 'Hear, O Israel, the LORD our God, the LORD is one.' ³⁰ And you shall love the LORD your God with all your heart, with all your soul, with all your mind, and with all your strength.' This is the first commandment. ³¹ And the second, like it, is this: 'You shall love your neighbor as yourself.' There is no other commandment greater than these." ³² So the scribe said to Him, "Well said, Teacher. You have spoken the truth, for there is one God, and there is no other but He. ³³ And to love Him with all the heart, with all the understanding, with all the soul, and with all the strength, and to love one's neighbor as oneself, is more than all the whole burnt offerings and sacrifices." ³⁴ Now when Jesus saw that he answered wisely, He said to him, "You are not far from the kingdom of God." But after that no one dared question Him.

What do You Suppose Jesus' Tone Was?

So how would you suppose Jesus' tone was when He said this? Do you think it was a demanding and commanding, LOVE GOD (or else)? Or do you think it was in the tone of His nature, love? So, let's keep that tone, His nature, His love in the context of our passage today. And before I even begin, can I say, and may you hear, God loves you!

Each and every one of you, regardless of where you have been, and what you have done, He loves you!

1 John 4:8 (NKJV) ⁸ He who does not love does not know God, for God is love.

1 John 4:19 (NKJV) ¹⁹ We love Him because He first loved us.

It's Tuesday

It's Tuesday of Passion Week and we have had questions coming at Jesus from every religious order there, trying to discredit him and to turn the crowd against him.

- 11:27-33, there was the question of his authority of why he does what he does and that was by the chief priests, scribes and elders.
- 12: 1-12, we see the parable of the vineyard and Jesus is showing us religion over relationship as he lays an indictment against the religious leaders which in verse 12, we're told at the end of that they want to kill him.
- 12:13-17, is the question of taxes. That's led by the Pharisees and the Herodians and Jesus gives that classic answer, "Give to Caesar what is Caesar and God to God," and as we saw, the same truth, that if you rob Caesar of his taxes, you're robbing Caesar and if you rob God of giving your whole being to Him, then you rob God.
- 12:18-27, we saw the question of the resurrection and that was led by the Sadducees who didn't believe in the resurrection or miracles or angels or anything supernatural. They just thought all that life was here and now and get what you can here and now and Jesus gives that great word in there, "You greatly mistake because you know not the scriptures nor the power of God," and that was our Easter message.

Today

In our passage today we start with, here comes a scribe with another question. But this one who comes isn't going after the throat. There appears to be a genuineness of his question and there appears at the end to be a moving of his heart on this man after Jesus answers and so there are many genuine people who will seek Jesus who are of the religious order as we'll read in the book of Acts that many of the priests and religious leaders, they started to follow Jesus after the resurrection and this very well could be one of them who will follow Jesus after the resurrection.

Acts 6:7 (NKJV) ⁷ Then the word of God spread, and the number of the disciples multiplied greatly in Jerusalem, and a great many of the priests were obedient to the faith.

Outline Mark 12:28-44:

- The Scribes Ask Which is the Greatest Commandment (12:28-34)
 - We are to Love God with Our Whole Being
- Jesus Says the Christ is the Son of David (12:35-37)
 - Jesus Declares His Deity, God Goes to the Cross
- Beware of the Scribes (12:38-40)
 - Religion Robs

- The Widow's Two Mites (12:41-44)
 - Relationship Releases

Prayer – Boldly Ask Your God

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In Every Study

- Who Is God? (How Great is He?)
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Boldly come to the throne of grace, ask God to reveal Himself in a mighty way to you, and to do I might work in you, and through you.

Hebrews 4:16 (NKJV) ¹⁶ Let us therefore come boldly to the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy and find grace to help in time of need.

The Scribes Ask Which is the Greatest Commandment (12:28-34)

We are to Love God with Our Whole Being

Mark 12:28 Then one of the scribes came, and having heard them reasoning together, perceiving that He had answered them well, asked Him, "Which is the first commandment of all?"

613 Commandments

The rabbis had determined that there were [613 commandments](#) contained in the Pentateuch, one for each letter of the Ten Commandments. Of the 613 commandments, 248 were seen as affirmative and 365 as negative. Those laws were also divided into heavy and light categories, with the heavy laws being more binding than the light ones. The scribes and rabbis, however, had been unable to agree on which were heavy and which were light. These came out of the Torah, and I might add then the Jewish leaders added thousands upon thousands more to help clarify the 613. To clarify the Sabbath keeping, they added pages upon pages of rules of how to keep the Sabbath, something like 39 categories on Sabbath keeping, such as no spitting on dirt for it could roll into mud and that would constitute plowing and that would equate to work, and God would be upset that you worked on the Sabbath. Another was a woman could not look into the mirror, for if she saw a gray hair, she would be tempted to pluck it out, and that would constitute harvesting, and that would mean working on the Sabbath.

Jesus Doesn't Cast Away Based on Affiliation

So this man comes and he appears to come with a genuineness of heart and notice that Jesus by no means casts him out, just as He promises that if any man would come to Him, He would by no means cast out and I'd like this as I look regardless who this scribe was affiliated with, who his associates were, Jesus doesn't cast him out based on his affiliation and association. He receives him as one and there is an obvious point. Jesus looks at the worth of the one, even in the midst of where they may be in the group and there's a word for us, as we look at the life of Jesus to get living examples for us today. May we be reminded the worth of the one as we live in the day people were picking sides and drawing boundaries and so on. We find out that they're associated with this group outside of our boundary. We want to cast the one away because of the whole representation of the whole and we see Jesus saying, "No, see beyond that. Look to the one."

But we can see it today, Democrat versus Republican, Muslim versus Christianity. You can get into Christianity and then it becomes down into what church you go to, Pentecostal versus conservative and the list goes on. It goes into sexual preferences and sexual identities and when people associate and draw camp, then everyone gets thrown into that camp. We see it today with political boundaries as people want to throw out whole nations because of who their government leaders represent and then we have the grouping of the economic statures of people who are poor, compared to people who are not poor, people who are well off, compared to people who are not well off and there's a continual ranking. But we see Jesus. He doesn't look at the group and the affiliation.

He looks at the individuals and here He is being kind and sincere with this one scribe who comes to Him even after his group of scribes came to try to destroy and discredit Him.

But may I ask each and every one of us how about us? Is this something that we can find ourselves wrapped up in and missing the one because of the group and here's what you can know for sure. If you associate people with their group and wrap them up and summarize them in that group, you'll always miss the one. But not Jesus.

John 6:35-37 (NKJV) ³⁵ And Jesus said to them, "I am the bread of life. He who comes to Me shall never hunger, and he who believes in Me shall never thirst. ³⁶ But I said to you that you have seen Me and yet do not believe. ³⁷ All that the Father gives Me will come to Me, and the one who comes to Me I will by no means cast out.

People are Listening

Verse 28. Remember this too as you talk to others at work and your campus, on the phone. People are listening in. This scribe comes after hearing all the questioning. He's been listening to all the questions coming to Jesus and therefore, he now comes to ask his own and it's real important for all of us to remember wherever we are, talking on our cell phone, work and we're talking to someone individually, your words carry over that cubicle. If you're talking to someone on the campus, your words carry around that locker or barrier in the school and parents, your kids, they're overhearing all of your conversations.

This scribe, he is listening. He is observing. He is gathering information. He is formulating thoughts and assumptions based on what he hears and so too it is with us as we speak to one person but the others who are listening in, they are hearings and gathering information and formulating assumptions. The scriptures give continual wisdom and warning on the power of the tongue.

Proverbs 18:21 (NKJV) ²¹ Death and life are in the power of the tongue, And those who love it will eat its fruit.

Proverbs 15:2 (NKJV) ² The tongue of the wise uses knowledge rightly, But the mouth of fools pours forth foolishness.

The Common Mistake of Man – Ranking Sin / People Miss Mark – God is Holy

A common mistake for everyone, all of us, people rack and stack and rank sin. This man's asking for a ranking. What is the greatest commandment? Because it was a great debate for 1500 years from the law of Moses to 2,000 years from Jesus Christ. People still argue over the commandment and which is the greatest and that's a danger and this be a warning. James chapter 2, verse 10 says if you are guilty of one, God considers you guilty of them all. Imagine ranking and stacking and maybe you ranked 612 and said number 613 doesn't matter or maybe the top nine of the 10 and you think that one doesn't matter until you read James 2:10 and you find out you were so close, yet still fail.

- But people think if I can keep these 613 or I can keep these 10 or if I can keep these and yet they pick their ones that they think are the spiritual ones above all the others and then they say, "If I can keep these, then I'm accepted. He'll be pleased with me. Aren't I a good Christian because I kept these rules?"
- The danger goes on the opposite side too for others. They think, "I've kept these. God, You owe me. I've earned it." Isaiah 64 will say your works are like filthy rags. Ephesians 2 says, "For by grace you have been saved by faith, not of works, least any man boast." There will be no boasting before the Lord.
- And then there's a whole another set of people. They pick their few. They pick their ones they think are the high-ranking ones and they keep these and then they go, "Well good. I can forget the rest." But as James 2:10 says, if you're guilty of one, God considers you guilty of them all. Imagine being perfect in nine, but number 10 is ignored and it's the one that damns you. For the Holy God cannot look upon sin, any sin, we are told throughout the scriptures, Habakkuk 1 is a very pointed one regarding that.

Sin means missing the mark and God's standard is perfection and many people miss the mark here and where it begins. They miss the mark that God is holy and holiness is perfection. God is perfect. So this man comes and he's mistaken, thinking that you can rank the sin, which is the highest and the others the lowest, missing that God considers them all equal because perfection is perfect. Perfection is 10 of 10, 100 of 100, 613 of 613.

James 2:10 (NKJV) ¹⁰ For whoever shall keep the whole law, and yet stumble in one point, he is guilty of all.

Isaiah 64:6 (NKJV) ⁶ But we are all like an unclean thing, And all our righteousnesses are like filthy rags; We all fade as a leaf, And our iniquities, like the wind, Have taken us away.

Ephesians 2:8-9 (NKJV) ⁸ For by grace you have been saved through faith, and that not of yourselves; it is the gift of God, ⁹ not of works, lest anyone should boast.

Habakkuk 1:13 (NKJV) ¹³ You are of purer eyes than to behold evil, And cannot look on wickedness. Why do You look on those who deal treacherously, And hold Your tongue when the wicked devours A person more righteous than he?

Mark 12:29 Jesus answered him, "The first of all the commandments is: 'Hear, O Israel, the LORD our God, the LORD is one.

Mark 12:30 And you shall love the LORD your God with all your heart, with all your soul, with all your mind, and with all your strength.' This is the first commandment.

Mark 12:31 And the second, like it, is this: 'You shall love your neighbor as yourself.' There is no other commandment greater than these."

Matthews Account

Matthews account, hand all the Law and the Prophets

Matthew 22:37-40 (NKJV) ³⁷ Jesus said to him, " 'You shall love the LORD your God with all your heart, with all your soul, and with all your mind.' ³⁸ This is the first and great commandment. ³⁹ And the second is like it: 'You shall love your neighbor as yourself.' ⁴⁰ On these two commandments hang all the Law and the Prophets."

Shema

Jesus answered with the Shema (which means to hear), Deuteronomy 6:4, the verse the orthodox Jew quotes many times each day and wears inside the phylactery on his forehead and wrist. Every synagogue service began with the reading of this passage.

Deuteronomy 6:4-5 (NKJV) ⁴ "Hear, O Israel: The LORD our God, the LORD is one! ⁵ You shall love the LORD your God with all your heart, with all your soul, and with all your strength.

Not Commandments of God – But God of the Commandments

Jesus isn't ranking them for the very reason we had just stated. Holiness cannot look upon any sin. Habakkuk chapter 1. Jesus is summarizing the commandments and He's making a very clear distinction. It's not the commandment of God, but the God of the commandment and there's a heart and there's an intent behind these commandments and Jesus is declaring the God of the commandment His heart, His desire, His being. His heart is a heart of love. His desire is that man may have life and that more abundant and the things that He says, "Thou shalt do and thou shalt not do," is for our good, for our protection. But God, His very being is holiness and anything that's not good and anything that's does harm is not of the Father and that's why He calls it sin.

Jesus is speaking this word to this man as a calling to live as created. God created us for this abundant life in Him, with Him. The book of Revelation says He created us for His good pleasure and there's a purpose and so the commandments are living as we were made to live and created and then loving others as they are creating and loving our Creator. So Jesus summarized into these two, which really, as only God can do, rank them and stack them all as one and all being number one.

Revelation 4:11 (KJV 1900) ¹¹ Thou art worthy, O Lord, to receive glory and honour and power: for thou hast created all things, and for thy pleasure they are and were created.

God's commands were/are to protect and provide for man; as sin robs and destroys, but holiness gives life and that more abundant.

John 10:10 (NKJV) ¹⁰ The thief does not come except to steal, and to kill, and to destroy. I have come that they may have life, and that they may have it more abundantly.

Love with Whole Being

The most important commandment is to love God with all your heart, soul, mind, and strength; it's the calling whole being, not just part of it.

Love Him with all you've got!

- With all your heart - make Him your supreme desire.
- With all your soul - make Him the object of your affections.

- With all your mind - revolve your thoughts around Him.
- And with all your strength - make the Lord your greatest pursuit and passion.

The Command to Love

Verse 31 can be kind of tough when we read it as it's written, thou shall. It's a command to love the Lord thy God. And right from the start that can make some people very upset from the one aspect of I don't want to be forced into a love relationship. Doesn't sound like love to me if you say you will love me as a commandment. But for others it could come as a struggle in that you go I want to Lord, but I'm not exactly sure what that means. It can seem so complex and complicated until we just step back and look at it in its simplest form as God intended it. Here's the first and foremost. We're told that we love God because he first loved us. So there's an initiating, that God's always the initiator. He's trying to woo us. He's trying to draw us to himself for this love relationship. God wants a relationship with every person in this room. The Bible says he created you for his good pleasure. He wants to have relationship with you,

1 John 4:10 (NKJV) ¹⁰ In this is love, not that we loved God, but that He loved us and sent His Son to be the propitiation for our sins.

1 John 4:19 (NKJV) ¹⁹ We love Him because He first loved us.

But this relationship, God continually summarizes with the analogy of marriage. One of the reasons God designed marriage is so that we can see how he wants his relationship with us. So we see how God established marriage in the book of Genesis. Then he uses it as an illustration, an analogy of his love for us.

I just look at the relationship I have with my wife. There was something that drew me to her and as I was drawn to her, then I got to know her. And as I got to know her, I saw beauty beyond the depths of just the physical beauty. I saw this inward, internal beauty and it simply captivated my heart and drew me to her to such a point that I never wanted to be apart from her. I wanted to spend the rest of my life with her. Even now, after 17 years, I still find myself being drawn even deeper, as we become even closer and we share life together and we have this unity together, it makes me even more so love her. I can say without a hesitation that I do love her more today than I did when we first got married. And the love that I had for her was enough that I was willing to forsake all. I counted it as great gain. I found myself anything else would pale compared to this relationship with her.

But as with her, as with the Lord, there are definitely things that if I don't continually be on guard of that, that if I find don't continually protect, if I don't continually cultivate, it will distract, diminish, could even destroy the love that we have together.

- Love the Lord your God with all of your heart. I can't give my heart to anyone else in that manner of husband and wife.
- Love the Lord your God with all of your mind. I can't have my mind thinking of all these things that distract and take me away and give her little mind time where she becomes an afterthought or a secondary thought. If I want to cultivate and develop and deepen my love and relationship with her, I have to continually be cultivating that thought of her.
- As I spend time with her and we grow deeper and we have experiences together and we walk together, I get even more to think about regarding her as I see more of her heart and more of her beauty and in terms of her heart, as I see her love for me and for others and her tenderness and her compassion, as I think on those things, I'm drawn even more to her.

And so we see that example with the Lord. The more I understand him and I will never exhaust that as I read his word, as I worship him, as I walk with him, the more I understand him, the more I'm going to love him with all of my heart and with all of my mind. And with all of my soul, the soul being the seed of emotion. It's the makeup of who we are, our interest and our likes. And if my soul is elsewhere, if other activities and other hobbies and other projects or more so important to me as they can consume my mind, they can even take away my heart, it diminishes the relationship that I have with my wife.

And so you see the example in the analogy of that relationship with the Lord. If I'm busy with all these other activities, as well as they may be, and he doesn't get my all my first, my foremost, he's secondary, we can see how

the relationship will suffer. But when I do give him my first and my foremost and make him my all, and all, giving my whole being, oh, the beauty and the depths of our love as it grows deeper and deeper with the Lord. And fourthly, with all thy strength, strength is an energy that's spent. It's used up. And I can use that strength in many areas of my life that are apart from my wife.

I'll be honest, as I can get busy and I can be pouring my strength to build this and to create that and whatever it may be. For some it's making a name for themselves. It's building their house or working to get their stuff and their spouse goes on the back burner, the marriage, the love, that relationship is diminished. I can honestly admit and hence know the need to be on guard about taking your spouse for granted. We can do that with the Lord. We can take him for granted. We can always say he'll be there when I get back. All I got to do is finish this one thing off, and how many times have you said it? Once I get past this, once I accomplish that, once I do all these things, then I can give my all to the Lord because these things are said established. I built them. And the Lord says no, love me with all your heart, with all your mind, with all your soul and with all your strength. Then what does he say in Matthew 6:33? And all these things will be added onto you. I'll take care of all those things, because you know what? The Lord says I'll go build those things and take care of those things.

So when we step back and we see the command to love the Lord, it's an invitation to intimacy and it's an invitation to a promise of the abundant life, a life that this world can offer. But there is a place that we do have a role because man has free will and man gets to choose. Because any marriage, any relationship that doesn't have free will is not love. Love must, it requires free will for it to be love.

And he says to love thy neighbor as thyself. No one has a problem with loving themselves. We think of ourselves first week, take care of ourselves first. And that's all he's saying, is as you take care of yourself and as you think of yourself, I need you to think about others. I need you to take care of others. It can't be all about you. And as we like to say, that acronym for JOY, Jesus first, others second and yourself last. And you can say that sounds pretty binding, but you'll find it's beautiful. You will find joy.

Two-Dimensional

In verse 31, we so often get things confused because we look at it only from one dimension, and our relationship with the Lord is way more than one dimension of the Gospel for the forgiveness of sin. There's a Gospel for the invitation to intimacy and love. It's two dimensions and more.

- The first dimension is what we consider and call the positional, our position with him as sons and daughters, from the marriage standpoint as brides. Then, there's the relational, and that's the part of the intimacy and love and the communion and the fellowship, but you never have the relational aspect as we walk with him daily without the positional. We have to become brides of Christ first because we can ever become this relational place that we have, and there's the cross. There's the positional, up and down, as we're in Christ.
- Then, there's the cross being the horizontal of the oneness and the relationship that we have on a daily basis. Some people, they just look at the cross as sin and the price for sin, and that's all they see and that's how they apply all the Scriptures, missing out that God's calling us to the relationship and these things that are "thou shall" and "thou shalt not". They can become burdensome when you put it into that category, but then they become so clear when you put it into the relational category of "Hey, these things will destroy my relationship, diminish it," at the least, but of course, possibly at most destroy.

I likened it to when Jesus comes to us, because he's the initiator. When he gets down to propose to us, and boy did he come way down as he left heaven and came to earth, he proposes to us for the marriage first, the wedding ring that, if you would, is shaped like a cross, and it's through the cross that we come into the positional relationship because our sin must be separated. He can only marry a perfect, spotless, pure bride. He can do that, and he does that through the cross by washing our sins away by his very own blood. When we say, "I do," and we receive him, then the Gospel becomes the second dimension also. Positionally said never to be undone, and then relationally to be enjoyed and to be walked out on a daily basis. Hence, why Jesus says, "Love the Lord with all your heart, mind and soul, and love God. Love your neighbor as yourself."

The doing part, and the not doing part, I might just add it just comes naturally in love. When you're loving somebody, those things just start to come natural of what pleases them, and you'll find that what pleases them pleases you. You'll find with the Lord, what pleases you will please him, when you're seeking first the Kingdom of God, and you'll do these things together. When you do that together, the doing part becomes natural.

The doing part becomes natural and not a burden, not a list that you have to go look up. It's just a freedom to walk, to seek him, and as you draw near, he'll draw near to you, and the doing will be so natural and not burdensome. But here, these Jewish religious leaders, they've turned it into a list, a to-do list, and they struggle with the to-do list. On top of these 613 lists here that you find in the tour, they went and added what some have counted up to be another 30,000 details of the 613. Who can keep track of all that? Who can keep track of the 613? Who can name the 10 Commandments? But is it not easy to summarize the two as Jesus has just done for us.

Jesus Ties the 2 Together

No Jew would debate that this was the greatest commandment, but what was so provocative is what Jesus says next... He quotes Leviticus 19:18... "And the second, like it, is this: 'You shall love your neighbor as yourself.' There is no other commandment greater than these." This must've stung the conscience of the listening Jews. They all claimed to love God with all their heart, soul, mind, and strength - but they were void of love for their brother. And Jesus is saying you don't have one without the other. Love for God and love for your brother go arm in arm (1 John 4:20):

Leviticus 19:17–18 (NKJV) ¹⁷ *'You shall not hate your brother in your heart. You shall surely rebuke your neighbor, and not bear sin because of him. ¹⁸ You shall not take vengeance, nor bear any grudge against the children of your people, but you shall love your neighbor as yourself: I am the LORD.*

1 John 4:20–21 (NKJV) ²⁰ *If someone says, "I love God," and hates his brother, he is a liar; for he who does not love his brother whom he has seen, how can he love God whom he has not seen? ²¹ And this commandment we have from Him: that he who loves God must love his brother also.*

The 2 Tables

In Jesus's summation, we have the first table, tablet, that was man's relationship with God. Then the second table is man's relationship with one another. So we see in the first the love the Lord, to have no other God, to honor the Sabbath. Then the second table, we see the things such as relating to man with each other, as in not to steal, not to kill, to honor the mother and father. So here we see Jesus summarizing the two tables of the 10 Commandments.

I Love Myself (Take of Myself)

Verse 31. As I love myself, I'm to love others and how do I love myself? I think of myself. I take care of myself. I spend my time, my energy on myself. That's what the Lord's calling us to do for our neighbor. As we take care of our self, as we look out for our self, as we feed our self, as we protect our self, that's what the calling is for our neighbor, to love them, to feed them, to protect them, to watch out for them and who's my neighbor? I remind you of the story of the Good Samaritan.

Luke 10:36–37 (NKJV) ³⁶ *So which of these three do you think was neighbor to him who fell among the thieves?" ³⁷ And he said, "He who showed mercy on him." Then Jesus said to him, "Go and do likewise."*

My prayer for all of us today is that we would fall in love with people, and pour ourselves into people. Some people are perishing, may we love them enough to care that they are, and then do something about it. Some people are persecuted, may we stand beside the persecuted church. Some people are hungry, some are hurting, some are lonely, some are overwhelmed, and may we fall in love with people, and live and love them and Jesus did.

BTW – Teach them to Your Kids

And by the way, the next verse tells all Israel to teach this to their kids, and so it applies to us. Teach them in word, and teach them in deed, teach them beyond what is spoken, and teach them in demonstration. Put them on the

doorpost of your home, not just so people outside know, but that you are reminded every time you step into your home how to live out your life with your (spouse, children, and parents).

Deuteronomy 6:4–5 (NKJV) ⁴ “Hear, O Israel: The LORD our God, the LORD is one! ⁵ You shall love the LORD your God with all your heart, with all your soul, and with all your strength.

Deuteronomy 6:6–9 (NKJV) ⁶ “And these words which I command you today shall be in your heart. ⁷ You shall teach them diligently to your children, and shall talk of them when you sit in your house, when you walk by the way, when you lie down, and when you rise up. ⁸ You shall bind them as a sign on your hand, and they shall be as frontlets between your eyes. ⁹ You shall write them on the doorposts of your house and on your gates.

Mark 12:32 So the scribe said to Him, “Well said, Teacher. You have spoken the truth, for there is one God, and there is no other but He.

Mark 12:33 And to love Him with all the heart, with all the understanding, with all the soul, and with all the strength, and to love one’s neighbor as oneself, is more than all the whole burnt offerings and sacrifices.”

Scribe Confirms

The scribe here in the story confirms his agreement with Jesus.

Burnt Offerings – Religion of Rules and Rituals

Burnt offerings – this scribe realized that was all his relationship with the Lord was, a bunch of rules and rituals. Love Lord and people is more than rituals and rules. The scribe confirms that all the sacrifices don't matter. It's about loving the Lord and loving people.

Mark 12:34 Now when Jesus saw that he answered wisely, He said to him, “You are not far from the kingdom of God.” But after that no one dared question Him.

Genuine / Pride Always Robs Wisdom

Verse 34. I think this man is genuine because here in verse 34, Jesus even says that this man answered wisely. This man says that Jesus answered wisely. If he was prideful, He wouldn't have answered wisely and He would have never been credited with answering wisely because you know why? Pride always will rob and quench wisdom and there's plenty of scriptures that say just such a thing.

Proverbs 11:2 (NKJV) ² When pride comes, then comes shame; But with the humble is wisdom.

Proverbs 16:18–19 (NKJV) ¹⁸ Pride goes before destruction, And a haughty spirit before a fall. ¹⁹ Better to be of a humble spirit with the lowly, Than to divide the spoil with the proud.

Earn Way to Heaven

So they're trying to keep all the laws as a way to earn their way to heaven and the right before God, missing how greatly they failed and their need for a savior and here the savior is standing before them to set them free. And so many people try to keep the law and earn their way to God rather than simply coming to the savior and being set free. As we looked on our Easter Sunday, not just the forgiveness of sin, but then the resurrection power to overcome sin and live the victorious Christian life.

Now these 613 laws are all found in the Torah, but they're not all moral laws. Some of them are ceremonial laws. Some of them are national laws for the nation of Israel. And very specific ceremonial and national laws, commandments, were so that Israel would be set apart from all the other nations. They wouldn't live like other nations. As other nations would look upon Israel, they would say there's something different about that nation. What makes them different? We still see it today, that people know the difference is the God of the Jews and the way they live is why they're different from the other nations.

But sadly, as then is mostly as now and it's just become a rule book instead of a relationship book on how to enter in and have a personal relationship with God

Not Far – But Not There / But No Asked Again

Verse 34. Jesus says you're not far. But He's also saying, "But you're still not there, for the Kingdom of God is where the King is," and this scribe doesn't fully know where the King is in His kingdom.

No one dared ask a question again, even the scribe, to which I wonder, why didn't he ask? If someone said you're close, but you're not there, wouldn't you say, "Well, while I got you, can I ask you more? What am I missing? Where am I short?" This scribe had the right answer, but still doesn't have the right heart.

But he doesn't and to whom it may apply, some questions you pursue until you are sure that you're sure that you have the answer and the question is for any and all, Lord, what must I do to be saved? Acts 16:30

Acts 16:29–31 (NKJV) ²⁹ Then he called for a light, ran in, and fell down trembling before Paul and Silas. ³⁰ And he brought them out and said, "Sirs, what must I do to be saved?" ³¹ So they said, "Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and you will be saved, you and your household."

Gospel / Hand God Your Heart

It's not a question for tomorrow. 2 Corinthians 6:1 says today is the day of eternity, today is the day of salvation. Your eternity is at stake today, for no man knows what tomorrow brings. Today must be the day. What must I do to be saved? And the word of God will say, "Repent therefore and be converted." Converted, changed, that your sins may be blotted out and times of refreshing may come from the presence of the Lord.

The Gospel is as simple as ABC,

- all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God.
- And we are to believe on the Lord Jesus Christ and him only and we shall be saved. Jesus would say, "I am the way, the truth, and the life." And all those in their sentence structure are, "I am the only the way. I am the only truth. I am the only life." And there's a calling to repentance, that means to turn. And here we see a man described, he's like a rich young ruler, he turns and walks away and we don't know where he went. What we do know from the story, that moment, is we know that he didn't turn and follow. Repentance means to turn and follow. Repentance, conversion. It says taking our heart, putting in our hands and lifting to the Lord and say, "Here, I give you my heart. Take it, all of it. I want you to have it." When you can picture it in your heart, it's in your mind, it's you lifting your heart to the Lord. Saying, "Here, I love you with all my heart, my mind, my soul, my strength. Take all of me, my whole being. I give it to you." And that's what's being said here, that's what repentance mean. So turn and follow is to life a heart and give all, not some, not part, but all.
- Then you call to Him, confess to Him, and then He comes to you and cleanses your sin, and forgives you of your sin (past-present-future).

2 Corinthians 6:1–2 (NKJV) ¹ We then, as workers together with Him also plead with you not to receive the grace of God in vain. ² For He says: "In an acceptable time I have heard you, And in the day of salvation I have helped you." Behold, now is the accepted time; behold, now is the day of salvation.

Acts 3:19 (NKJV) ¹⁹ Repent therefore and be converted, that your sins may be blotted out, so that times of refreshing may come from the presence of the Lord,

John 14:6 (NKJV) ⁶ Jesus said to him, "I am the way, the truth, and the life. No one comes to the Father except through Me.

Romans 3:23 (NKJV) ²³ for all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God,

Romans 10:9–10 (NKJV) ⁹ that if you confess with your mouth the Lord Jesus and believe in your heart that God has raised Him from the dead, you will be saved. ¹⁰ For with the heart one believes unto righteousness, and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation.

Prayer – Boldly Ask Your God

The Word of God is Living and Powerful, and is ready, and will do a mighty work in our lives.

Hebrews 4:12 (NKJV) ¹² For the word of God is living and powerful, and sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing even to the division of soul and spirit, and of joints and marrow, and is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart.

In Every Study

- Who Is God? (How Great is He?)
- What Does He Think of Me? (How Wonderful Are His Thoughts Towards Me?)

- What Does He Want Me to Do?
- What Can I Boldly Request of Him?
- What Do I Need to Be on Guard of When I Leave Here Today?

Boldly come to the throne of grace, ask God to reveal Himself in a mighty way to you, and to do I might work in you, and through you.

Hebrews 4:16 (NKJV) ¹⁶ Let us therefore come boldly to the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy and find grace to help in time of need.

There is a Prayer Team Available to Pray with and for You

End of Study

Mark 12:35-44

Today's Passage

Mark 12:28-34 (NKJV) ²⁸ Then one of the scribes came, and having heard them reasoning together, perceiving that He had answered them well, asked Him, "Which is the first commandment of all?" ²⁹ Jesus answered him, "The first of all the commandments is: 'Hear, O Israel, the LORD our God, the LORD is one.' ³⁰ And you shall love the LORD your God with all your heart, with all your soul, with all your mind, and with all your strength.' This is the first commandment. ³¹ And the second, like it, is this: 'You shall love your neighbor as yourself.' There is no other commandment greater than these." ³² So the scribe said to Him, "Well said, Teacher. You have spoken the truth, for there is one God, and there is no other but He. ³³ And to love Him with all the heart, with all the understanding, with all the soul, and with all the strength, and to love one's neighbor as oneself, is more than all the whole burnt offerings and sacrifices." ³⁴ Now when Jesus saw that he answered wisely, He said to him, "You are not far from the kingdom of God." But after that no one dared question Him.

What do You Suppose Jesus' Tone Was?

So how would you suppose Jesus' tone was when He said this? Do you think it was a demanding and commanding, LOVE GOD (or else)? Or do you think it was in the tone of His nature, love? So, let's keep that tone, His nature, His love in the context of our passage today. And before I even begin, can I say, and may you hear, God loves you!

Each and every one of you, regardless of where you have been, and what you have done, He loves you!

1 John 4:8 (NKJV) ⁸ He who does not love does not know God, for God is love.

1 John 4:19 (NKJV) ¹⁹ We love Him because He first loved us.

It's Tuesday

It's Tuesday of Passion Week and we have had questions coming at Jesus from every religious order there, trying to discredit him and to turn the crowd against him.

- 11:27-33, there was the question of his authority of why he does what he does and that was by the chief priests, scribes and elders.
- 12: 1-12, we see the parable of the vineyard and Jesus is showing us religion over relationship as he lays an indictment against the religious leaders which in verse 12, we're told at the end of that they want to kill him.
- 12:13-17, is the question of taxes. That's led by the Pharisees and the Herodians and Jesus gives that classic answer, "Give to Caesar what is Caesar and God to God," and as we saw, the same truth, that if you rob Caesar of his taxes, you're robbing Caesar and if you rob God of giving your whole being to Him, then you rob God.
- 12:18-27, we saw the question of the resurrection and that was led by the Sadducees who didn't believe in the resurrection or miracles or angels or anything supernatural. They just thought all that life was here and now and get what you can here and now and Jesus gives that great word in there, "You greatly mistake because you know not the scriptures nor the power of God," and that was our Easter message.

Outline Mark 12:28-44:

- The Scribes Ask Which is the Greatest Commandment (12:28-34)
 - We are to Love God with Our Whole Being
- Jesus Says the Christ is the Son of David (12:35-37)
 - Jesus Declares His Deity, God Goes to the Cross
- Beware of the Scribes (12:38-40)
 - Religion Robs
- The Widow's Two Mites (12:41-44)
 - Relationship Releases

Prayer – Boldly Ask Your God

The Word of God is Living and Powerful, and is ready, and will do a mighty work in our lives.

Hebrews 4:12 (NKJV) ¹² For the word of God is living and powerful, and sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing even to the division of soul and spirit, and of joints and marrow, and is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart.

In Every Study

- Who Is God? (How Great is He?)
- What Does He Think of Me? (How Wonderful Are His Thoughts Towards Me?)
- What Does He Want Me to Do?
- What Can I Boldly Request of Him?
- What Do I Need to Be on Guard of When I Leave Here Today?

Boldly come to the throne of grace, ask God to reveal Himself in a mighty way to you, and to do I might work in you, and through you.

Hebrews 4:16 (NKJV) ¹⁶ *Let us therefore come boldly to the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy and find grace to help in time of need.*

Jesus Answered what 2 Greatest Commandments

So last week we studied Jesus's response of the two greatest commandments, as they (the religious leaders) had counted up 613 commands based on the first five books of the Law, and Jesus answers and He quotes the following:

Deuteronomy 6:4-5 (NKJV) ⁴ *"Hear, O Israel: The Lord our God, the Lord is one!"* ⁵ *You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, with all your soul, and with all your strength.*

Leviticus 19:17-18 (NKJV) ¹⁷ *'You shall not hate your brother in your heart. You shall surely rebuke your neighbor, and not bear sin because of him.'* ¹⁸ *You shall not take vengeance, nor bear any grudge against the children of your people, but you shall love your neighbor as yourself: I am the Lord.*

So now tying the rest of the chapter together as this (Mark 12:28-44) is one woven and integrated message.

Jesus Says the Christ is the Son of David (12:35-37)

Jesus Declares His Deity, God Goes to the Cross

Mark 12:35 Then Jesus answered and said, while He taught in the temple, "How is it that the scribes say that the Christ is the Son of David?"

Jesus Answered

Then Jesus answered – Jesus is still answering the last question of which is the greatest commandment. So this section of scripture is connected to verses 12:28-34.

Scribes Agree

The scribes were the lawyers, the experts of the Law, it was their job to rightly divide the word. Jesus now uses the very words they confirmed and taught, that the Christ (which is the word used for Messiah) is the Son of David.

Mark 12:36 For David himself said by the Holy Spirit: 'The LORD said to my Lord, "Sit at My right hand, Till I make Your enemies Your footstool."'

Inspired Word

Verse 36, it says that David spoke by the Holy Spirit. So, two things there is that it gives David the prophetic ministry that God speaks through him, but it also, as David being an author and one of the Bible writers, we see that all scripture is given by inspiration of God.

2 Timothy 3:16-17 (NKJV) ¹⁶ *All Scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness,* ¹⁷ *that the man of God may be complete, thoroughly equipped for every good work.*

Jesus Teaches – When He Loves People

Verse 35, once again, we see Jesus teaches. Preaching challenges, the mind, teaching changes the heart.

Verse 38, Jesus teaches. Jesus teaches. That's what he does when he loves people, he teaches. And there's a word for us, as a church that we teach, not entertain. There's a word for us as parents, we teach, not supply entertainment to appease. We teach them the word of God and the ways of life. So if Jesus teaches, that makes us students, and we need therefore to study to show ourselves approved. Workmen who need not be ashamed,

rightly dividing the word of God, as 2 Timothy says. The Word is inspired, and thus we need to be inspired. God will speak to you, every day of your life, if you will simply sit, and say “speak to me Lord” as you read this Word. [2 Timothy 2:15 \(KJV 1900\)](#) ¹⁵ *Study to shew thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth.*

Mark 12:37 Therefore David himself calls Him ‘Lord’; how is He then his Son?” And the common people heard Him gladly.

Common People had No Bias / Bias & Prejudice Prevent Hearing Word

With no bias the common people could recognize His wisdom. But the Pharisees were blinded by their own prejudice. So many people come at God with a bias (they don’t come “to” God, they come “at” God), a prejudice, calling Him God of wrath, unloving, distant, uncaring..... and their bias prevents them from hearing Him, His word, His heart, His calling, His care..... gladly!

Psalm 110

The OT predicted the Messiah would be David’s son or heir, but in Psalm 110 he refers to Messiah as “my Lord” ... “The LORD” or Yahweh says to “my Lord...” How can this possibly be? David was king, and the only person ranking higher than the king is God. How can Messiah be God and man - human and divine? The Jews thought of Messiah in strictly human terms. They didn’t realize the Messiah was also God. The Jews had stopped questioning Jesus, but now He tries to get them to question their own assumptions. Later they’ll reject Jesus because He claims to be God, but here He’s trying to get them to see that their own Scriptures require Messiah to be both man and God.

[Psalm 110 \(NKJV\)](#) *A Psalm of David. ¹ The LORD said to my Lord, “Sit at My right hand, Till I make Your enemies Your footstool.” ² The LORD shall send the rod of Your strength out of Zion. Rule in the midst of Your enemies! ³ Your people shall be volunteers In the day of Your power; In the beauties of holiness, from the womb of the morning, You have the dew of Your youth. ⁴ The LORD has sworn And will not relent, “You are a priest forever According to the order of Melchizedek.” ⁵ The Lord is at Your right hand; He shall execute kings in the day of His wrath. ⁶ He shall judge among the nations, He shall fill the places with dead bodies, He shall execute the heads of many countries. ⁷ He shall drink of the brook by the wayside; Therefore He shall lift up the head.*

Scribes Taught Messiah in Lineage of David

The scribes had always taught that the Messiah would be a lineal descendant of David. Though true, this was not the whole truth. So the Lord Jesus now posed a problem to those gathered around Him in the temple court. In Psalm 110:1, David spoke of the coming Messiah as his Lord. How could this be? How could the Messiah be David’s Son and his Lord at the same time? To us the answer is clear. The Messiah would be both Man and God. As David’s Son, He would be human. As David’s Lord, He would be divine.

David himself calls Him ‘Lord’; how is He then his Son? Jesus is not only the Son of David but also the Lord of David. As Revelation 22:16 says, He is both the root and offspring of David. With this question Jesus challenged the religious leaders, asking them “do you understand this truth about the Messiah?”

[Revelation 22:16 \(NKJV\)](#) ¹⁶ *“I, Jesus, have sent My angel to testify to you these things in the churches. I am the Root and the Offspring of David, the Bright and Morning Star.”*

Shema – Trinity / Atlantic Ocean

The Hebrew word translated “one” is echod, which refers to a compound unity. Echod is used in Genesis 2:24 with regard to Adam and Eve as well as in Exodus 26 to describe the curtains and coverings in the tabernacle. The Hebrew word translated “God” is Elohim, also a compound unity. El is singular. Elo is used for two. Elohim refers to three or more. “Hear, O Israel, the Lord your God, Elohim, is one compound unity.” Listen carefully to the Shema, and you’ll hear the Trinity.

[Deuteronomy 6:4–5 \(NKJV\)](#) ⁴ *“Hear, O Israel: The LORD our God, the LORD is one! ⁵ You shall love the LORD your God with all your heart, with all your soul, and with all your strength.*

[Genesis 2:24 \(NKJV\)](#) ²⁴ *Therefore a man shall leave his father and mother and be joined to his wife, and they shall become one flesh.*

I like what Augustine (Augustine was one of the early church fathers) said, trying to describe the Trinity is like trying to pour the Atlantic Ocean into a bucket.

I often get asked, and I love the question, how do I explain the Trinity to a non-believer? We know some people like to use the egg (shell, yoke, white), three in one. Some like the three-leaf clover, three leaves, one clover. Some like water (liquid, steam, ice), three forms yet all still water (H₂O). Like Augustine said, these examples fall way to short for me, in trying to explain the Triune God. To which I remind myself, to which I ask you, how did you come to accept the Trinity? By faith, it all came down to faith. A God who spoke the Atlantic Ocean into existence, which is a small fraction of the universe, we believe by faith is infinite, and we try to discover fully with these finite minds. My faith has to start in Genesis 1:1, in the beginning God....., created the heavens and the earth. That is a huge God.

Genesis 1:1 (NKJV) ¹ In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth.

But as huge as He is, He is still discoverable and intimate enough to be known. I wasn't drawn to Him because He can speak a universe into existence with words, I was drawn to Him for who He is, His love, gentleness, kindness, and forgiveness. So when you are asked to explain the Trinity, I think the best answer to the unbeliever is, "to be honest, there is a vastness of God that I feel I am only scratching the depths of, and I like what an early church father said, trying to explain the Trinity is like trying to pour the Atlantic Ocean into a bucket."

And then go on to say, but let me tell you about Him, One God in three Persons (Father, Son, Holy Spirit). Remember Christian, if you can explain it fully, then it is not supernatural, and if it is not supernatural what is going on at that moment as you speak to that person, then nothing is going to change for that person. But if the Father is drawing them, and we know He wishes none should perish but all seek repentance, then we are standing there on supernatural holy ground.

I say to them, let me tell you about the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. I take them from the mind challenge (as Jesus is doing here) and reaching their heart. Tell them God (there is your singular noun), loves you. God (bring them the compound God) the:

- *Father* – is a father who is gentle, kind, protective, nurturing, love in and giving. He is unlike any earthly father (or mother), His love is endless. He demonstrated His love for us but giving His Only Son to die for our sin. He is a Father who invites us into an intimate personal relationship with Him.
- *Son* – and the Son (Jesus) is loving, demonstrating the price He was willing to pay to have us, to call us His own.
- *Holy Spirit* – is a person, God, who calls us and draws us to God. Speaks to us, God's love is for us, because God is love. Without the Spirit of God speaking to us, we could never hear God. If your heart is being moved right now, it is because God is speaking to you, calling out to you

All three, the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit equals = LOVE. All three are calling us to come unto Him, to enter in and have a personal and intimate relationship with Him. With the promise to never leave you nor forsake you, regardless of what you have done, with an everlasting promise to take your sin, wash it away, and make you white as snow.

1 John 4:8 (NKJV) ⁸ He who does not love does not know God, for God is love.

1 John 4:10 (NKJV) ¹⁰ In this is love, not that we loved God, but that He loved us and sent His Son to be the propitiation for our sins.

1 John 4:19 (NKJV) ¹⁹ We love Him because He first loved us.

Jesus Tying Back to Love Lord / It is God on the Cross

Verse 35, Jesus is tying back to the previous section, "Love the Lord your God," and he's now making very clear that He is God, as He quotes Psalm 110. Jesus is only two days from the cross, but he's letting everyone know that he is God and that it will be God who is on the cross for their sin, so that man might become right before him.

And we can question love the Lord your God with all your heart, mind, soul, and strength, but just consider for a moment how Jesus Christ loved you with all of his heart, all of his mind, all of his soul, all of his strength. What little strength he had left after the beating and the scourging, he still carried your cross beam up that hill. So as we look at the calling for us to love the Lord our God with all of our heart, mind, and soul, put it into the picture of how he loved you with all of his heart, with all his mind, all of his soul, and all of his strength.

Mark 15:29–32 (NKJV) ²⁹ And those who passed by blasphemed Him, wagging their heads and saying, "Aha! You who destroy the temple and build it in three days, ³⁰ save Yourself, and come down from the cross!" ³¹ Likewise the chief priests also, mocking among themselves with the scribes, said, "He saved others; Himself He cannot save. ³² Let the Christ, the King of Israel, descend now from the cross, that we may see and believe." Even those who were crucified with Him reviled Him.

For the joy, God says for the joy, you are my joy, and I went to the cross for you!

Hebrews 12:2 (NKJV) ² looking unto Jesus, the author and finisher of our faith, who for the joy that was set before Him endured the cross, despising the shame, and has sat down at the right hand of the throne of God.

Beware of the Scribes (12:38-40)

Religion Robs

Mark 12:38 Then He said to them in His teaching, "Beware of the scribes, who desire to go around in long robes, love greetings in the marketplaces,

Mark 12:39 the best seats in the synagogues, and the best places at feasts,

Mark 12:40 who devour widows' houses, and for a pretense make long prayers. These will receive greater condemnation."

Here I am – There You Are

Verse 40, pretense means to pretend, to put on a cloak. And so they play on and they manipulate like they're holy.

Verse 39, here are these religious scribes, they love walking in and getting all the attention of man, all the best seat and the first in line. They will always be first in line at the potluck and they don't have no care how many other people are behind them, because you know what? There are some people who walk into the room and say, "Here I am." And then there are some people who walk in the room and see you and go, "There you are." He who loves his brother/sister/neighbor, says "there you are".

1 John 4:20–21 (NKJV) ²⁰ If someone says, "I love God," and hates his brother, he is a liar; for he who does not love his brother whom he has seen, how can he love God whom he has not seen? ²¹ And this commandment we have from Him: that he who loves God must love his brother also.

Jesus Condemns the Hypocrite

For 3.5 years Jesus preached mercy. Now in the face of Judaism's rejection of Messiah, He pronounces judgment on the hypocritical Jewish leaders. They dress in religious garb, and spout religious lingo. They exalt themselves, while stealing from poor widows. It always amazes me, Jesus reserved His harshest words not for the prostitutes and thieves, but for the religious leaders. Jesus had nothing but kindness and mercy for the sinner, but He condemns the hypocrite.

How Religious – When See God Was on Cross

The greatest question, maybe the greatest question, for a world and a church is how can man be religious when they see that it is God who went and was on the cross? The God who left Heaven and came to Earth, went to the cross and then to the grave. How can man be religious when we come to that realization? I find my life and my walk just flows naturally) or better said – supernaturally) when I keep it in the simplicity of, "God' went to the cross for me. I find religion (trying to keep the rules) burdensome, but God loves me as I was as a wretched sinner, I am free, and in my freedom, I am free to follow Him, adore Him, love Him, knowing that I am accepted and loved. Commandments are no longer rules, but pathways to protect and provide for this love relationship that I am in.

The cross brings us to God, it is at the cross my sins are washed away. The cross is not "God did this", now here is the things you need to do to be right with Him.

If there was something that was up to me regarding having a personal relationship with God, something I had to do to be right with Him, and the cross is where is began, then I would have to be on the cross too. But Jesus, God, went to the cross, did it all, so I wouldn't have to do anything except say "I do" to His marriage proposal to me.

Tough Words

Verse 40, wow, that seems like such a shift in gears as he lays out and says, "Beware of these scribes." But let's read on and see how it ties together with this widow and her two mites.

The Widow's Two Mites (12:41-44) Relationship Releases

Mark 12:41 Now Jesus sat opposite the treasury and saw how the people put money into the treasury. And many who were rich put in much.

Lord Sees our Giving

The Lord sees our giving.

Solomon's Porch

It was most likely between the columns on Solomon's porch that thirteen chests called "trumpets" were located in which people placed money to help the poor. Jesus was not as interested in what people gave as He was in how they gave. The whole Temple Precinct is about 25 acres, so you can fit upwards of 15,000 people, women, just in the court of the women.

Mark 12:42 Then one poor widow came and threw in two mites, which make a quadrans.

Mites – to Peel

The "mite" was a Jewish "lepta." The word means "to peel." It referred to "something very thin."

This poor widow gave two paper thin coins that were worth a fraction of a penny. Two tiny lepta were all this woman had, but what she had she gave it to God. This word for "poor" referring to this widow is below poverty, it's a pauper.

i. Mark tells us that two mites make one quadrans. Matthew Poole says that we can calculate the value of a mite based on the value of a denarius, which was the going rate of one day's labor for a working man. According to Poole's calculations, a denarius equals six meahs; one meah equals two pondions; one pondion equals two issarines; one issarine equals eight mites. When you figure it all out, two mites are 1% of a denarius. A mite was pretty small—perhaps our equivalent of putting \$1 in the collection plate.

ii. A quadrans was a Roman coin. Mark helped his Roman readers to understand how much a mite was worth. It wasn't worth much.

iii. The ancient Greek word lepton literally means "a tiny thing," and so in the Old English was translated mite, which comes from the word for a "crumb" or "very small morsel."

[Guzik, D. \(2013\). Mark \(Mk 12:41-42\). Santa Barbara, CA: David Guzik.](#)

Mark 12:43 So He called His disciples to Himself and said to them, "Assuredly, I say to you that this poor widow has put in more than all those who have given to the treasury;

Mark 12:44 for they all put in out of their abundance, but she out of her poverty put in all that she had, her whole livelihood."

Widows to be Taken Care of (Israel failed her) / Scribes Execute the Will

Verse 41, it's Passover, people pay temple tax. People were giving offerings that had been saving up as special love offering to the Lord. And here this widow comes, she's supposed to be taken of by the nation of Israel. The amount of money she has in her hand kind of tells us that Israel hasn't been taking care of their widows. In fact, we see from the last section that the people who were supposed to be taking care of them, these religious leaders, they're taking advantage of them, devouring their inheritance.

[Deuteronomy 26:12-13 \(NKJV\)](#) ¹² "When you have finished laying aside all the tithe of your increase in the third year—the year of tithing—and have given it to the Levite, the stranger, the fatherless, and the widow, so that they may eat within your gates and be filled, ¹³ then you shall say before the LORD your God: 'I have removed the holy *tithe* from my house, and also have given them to the Levite, the stranger, the fatherless,

and the widow, according to all Your commandments which You have commanded me; I have not transgressed Your commandments, nor have I forgotten *them*.

A scribe was a lawyer, and when a widow became a widow after her husband passed away, the will would be executed, and that will would declare how the money was to be spent. And so, as a widow, she would come and present the will, the husband saying, "This is for my widow and this is for my sons. The land is through the tribe and lineage of, etc." But these scribes would come and they would not do it as a love offering, they would take a huge cut of the will, the inheritance, to cover the legal expense of executing the will. And then they would also take a portion of the inheritance and say that it was for the temple. And here this woman is taken advantage of, mistreated by these religious leaders, those who were supposed to be taking care of her. But she gives out of poverty. And we see the scribes take out of greed. And here is a key word for us today, where your treasures are is where your heart will be. Now who is loving the Lord more, with their heart, mind, soul, and strength? Is it the scribe or is it the widow?

She is not Bitter at God

Here, this widow is who has lost her husband, her provision, her love, and yet she still loves the Lord. She still gives, and gives her whole being, her whole livelihood onto the Lord. She's not basing her circumstances on her relationship, nor her love, as we see her where your treasures are, there your heart would be. She's giving all of her heart onto the Lord.

Matthew 6:19–21 (NKJV) ¹⁹ "Do not lay up for yourselves treasures on earth, where moth and rust destroy and where thieves break in and steal; ²⁰ but lay up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where neither moth nor rust destroys and where thieves do not break in and steal. ²¹ For where your treasure is, there your heart will be also.

The Temple is what we would equate to church, and here this woman who's lost it all and has nothing still comes to church to worship the God of her life. We see a woman who is loving the Lord her God with all of her heart, with all of her mind, with all of her soul, and with all of her strength. She's giving because she loves her neighbor, as her giving would supply blessings unto her neighbor.

Hebrews 10:25 (NKJV) ²⁵ not forsaking the assembling of ourselves together, as is the manner of some, but exhorting one another, and so much the more as you see the Day approaching.

Lavish Love / Had 2 – Could have Kept back One

Regarding this widow, the money represents way more than money. It represents her heart; it represents her whole being as she pours out from within. I love you, Lord, with all my heart, with all of my soul, with all of my mind and all of my strength. It's what I call lavish love. A love that just wants to give of itself.

It doesn't have to be money. It's not the point. What we see here is truly a sacrificial love, and that is a deep love being poured out from this widow unto the Lord.

The scripture lets us know that she only had two, so that we would know that she could've kept one if she wanted to. But she gave all her livelihood. She held nothing back of herself.

Believe is a Verb

Believe is not a noun, it is a verb. And it is an action, and here we see what this woman truly believes.

Jesus Always Finds a Friend

After dealing with the questions of His foes, Jesus finds a friend. The foes of Jesus will always raise questions. And the "foe" within me does so as well whenever I am cynical or critical. How I long for the day when that part of my nature is removed completely.

Jesus' friend, however, is presented in complete contrast to the religious bigwigs of the day who chose to criticize and question rather than to give. May God help us to be like this faithful woman, and to show Him our love as we give of our money, energy, time, and heart in His Name.

**Courson, J. (2003). Jon Courson's Application Commentary (p. 274). Nashville, TN: Thomas Nelson.*

Mark 12:28–34 (NKJV) ²⁸ Then one of the scribes came, and having heard them reasoning together, perceiving that He had answered them well, asked Him, "Which is the first commandment of all?" ²⁹ Jesus answered him, "The first of all the commandments is: 'Hear, O Israel, the LORD our God, the LORD is one.' ³⁰ And you shall love the LORD your God with all your heart, with all your soul, with all your mind, and with all your strength.' This is the first commandment. ³¹ And the second, like it, is this: 'You shall love your neighbor as yourself.' There is no other commandment greater than these." ³² So the scribe said to Him, "Well said, Teacher. You have spoken the truth, for there is one God, and there is no other but He. ³³ And to love Him with all the heart, with all the understanding, with all the soul, and with all the strength, and to love one's neighbor as oneself, is more than all the whole burnt offerings and sacrifices." ³⁴ Now when Jesus saw that he answered wisely, He said to him, "You are not far from the kingdom of God." But after that no one dared question Him.

Lessons from the Widow

Lessons from the Widow; how do we love the Lord with our whole being as she is the example shown before us of doing just that, of loving the Lord with all our heart, with all our soul, with all our mind, and with all our strength.

Lessons from the Widow:

- She doesn't carry the bitterness of the world with her.
 - She isn't bitter because of her situation, she is not bitter because of her husband (not providing a rich inheritance), she is not bitter at the Temple (Church) because they have failed her by not providing for her, nor the religious leaders (Pastors/Servants) because they didn't minister to her. And above all she is not bitter at God, over her circumstances.
- She continually comes to the Temple (Church);
 - for the Word and Worship still went up from the Temple. The Word was still the word, regardless who was giving it.
- She Doesn't Allow the Cares of the World to Grip Her
 - She gives, even when she has nothing. Giving is designed to separate the world and materialize from controlling us, and as we give their grip is loosed from upon us.
- And here we see her greatest lesson, she trusts the Lord with her Whole Being.
 - Lord here are my last two mites, but I trust You to provide for me my needs (food, clothing, housing, protection). And here is the greatest take away, and that is that we will never love the Lord with our whole being, if we don't trust the Lord for your whole being.

1 John 4:8 (NKJV) ⁸ He who does not love does not know God, for God is love.

1 John 4:10 (NKJV) ¹⁰ In this is love, not that we loved God, but that He loved us and sent His Son to be the propitiation for our sins.

1 John 4:19 (NKJV) ¹⁹ We love Him because He first loved us.

She gives it all away, but she is still poor! Is she? Who is the poor one in this story?

Proverbs 3:5–6 (NKJV) ⁵ Trust in the LORD with all your heart, And lean not on your own understanding; ⁶ In all your ways acknowledge Him, And He shall direct your paths.

Trust (in Lord) – means to be secure, confident, to be safe, to be careless, to be bold (in the Lord).

Lean (not on own understanding) – to lean on, to support oneself on/upon (our own understanding)

Acknowledge (Him) – to have knowledge of, to reveal, to know (Him).

Direct (Path) – to be right, to make straight, to lead, to approve, to show what is right, to approve (your path).

Prayer – Boldly Ask Your God

The Word of God is Living and Powerful, and is ready, and will do a mighty work in our lives.

Hebrews 4:12 (NKJV) ¹² For the word of God is living and powerful, and sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing even to the division of soul and spirit, and of joints and marrow, and is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart.

In Every Study

- Who Is God? (How Great is He?)
- What Does He Think of Me? (How Wonderful Are His Thoughts Towards Me?)
- What Does He Want Me to Do?
- What Can I Boldly Request of Him?
- What Do I Need to Be on Guard of When I Leave Here Today?

Boldly come to the throne of grace, ask God to reveal Himself in a mighty way to you, and to do I might work in you, and through you.

Hebrews 4:16 (NKJV) ¹⁶ Let us therefore come boldly to the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy and find grace to help in time of need.

There is a Prayer Team Available to Pray with and for You

End of Study

Special Study – Trauma Is Not a Life Sentence

Introduction

A few weeks ago, we had a time of sharing, and the testimonies were brutally honest of pain and torment that persons suffered. And since that time, many people in the fellowship have had past traumatic memories resurface or amplify themselves. I praise God for that, as He designed those testimonies for that time, so that those things would be stirred, so He can address them with you. The title of today's message is, "Trauma Is Not A Life Sentence", as many people are still living in the past of those things, that are keeping them from moving into the abundant life God has for them today.

Psalm 23 A Psalm of David.

Psalm 23:1 The LORD is my shepherd; I shall not want.

Psalm 23:2 He makes me to lie down in green pastures; He leads me beside the still waters.

Psalm 23:3 He restores my soul; He leads me in the paths of righteousness For His name's sake.

Psalm 23:4 Yea, though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil; For You are with me; Your rod and Your staff, they comfort me.

Psalm 23:5 You prepare a table before me in the presence of my enemies; You anoint my head with oil; My cup runs over.

Psalm 23:6 Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me All the days of my life; And I will dwell in the house of the LORD Forever.

"Though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death," King David would say, and we see the death was only a shadow of something looming. It was not actually death upon him. And there are many who suffer trauma and experience the post-traumatic stress of a trauma as if it was real, but in all actuality, it's only a shadow. It's not the actual trauma again, just a shadow of it.

Who this Message is For

This message is for:

- Those struggling with past traumatic events, and to start and/or progress healing
- Those who have loved ones who are struggling with past traumatic events, and you don't fully understand what is before them
- Those who want to help and minister to those who are facing past traumatic events

Today's Goal

My goal today, through the Word of God, that is living and powerful and sharper than a two-edge sword, is to share with you what God's Word, therefore God's heart, says about trauma. I pray the Word of God will break chains in your life, or at least begin the breaking, and start healing. I do not believe that wounds heal without scars,

I will not be making long points today, but precise points, and I pray that each point is like the tip of an arrow, hitting it's mark.

I start with where I will end; I know your trauma hurts, you are wounded, you may be struggling to piece it all together, you may feel your life is in pieces, broken, maybe even shattered.

I come to you with the heart of God. This is a message given to me of which I believe came straight from His heart. It's a message from Him, saying "I can restore you. I can put the pieces together. I will restore your soul (and notice He wants to do it as much for you, as for Himself, for His name's sake, His glory comes by restoring your soul).

Psalm 23:3 (NKJV) ³ He restores my soul; He leads me in the paths of righteousness For His name's sake.

Outline – Trauma is Not a Life Sentence:

About Trauma

- What is Trauma?
- Statistics on Traumatic Events for Individuals
- Some Signs of Post-Traumatic Stress
- They are shadows
- The Bible is honest about these things, and can relate to them
- God Himself experienced trauma

Reacting as Designed

- Responding to how you are created (Psalm 139)
- It is not a Disorder
- God equips us for the fallen world
- You are not alone

The Great Question – Where was God?

- Where was God?
- The Fallen World and Fallen Man
- God remembers all evil
- God was there weeping over every evil that came upon you in your trauma.
- Forgive and leave justice to God
- Don't let root of bitterness control your life
- The world, and the church, errors saying this is a mental health issue
- There is a Devil involved; always wants to twist and pervert God's design
- There is a spiritual war going on

Who You Are

- You are not broken
- You are valued
- This isn't your life or destiny of future
- John 10:10 is still true
- It does not define you / Your identity is not in that traumatic event. Your identity is in Christ.

You Can be Free

- Do you want to be made well?
- You still get to choose
- Same Power that rose Jesus from grave is available to you today
- Dealing with triggers and flashbacks
- Take every thought captive
- You are safe
- Claim and Memorize the Promises of God – especially “Do Not Fear”
- The compounding strings of trauma
- Though You slay me, yet will I praise You (Trust You)
- Don't go it alone
- Talk to God
- Talk to trusted others
- Pain divided – you have purpose when carry others pain
- Spouses, parents, family, friends are hurting too / Talk about it with your family

How you can help them

- The prayers of the saints are needed for your brothers and sisters
- Listen to their stories – but just listen
- Everybody has a book you should read – just listen
- Be there for them

Prayer – Boldly Ask Your God

The Word of God is Living and Powerful, and is ready, and will do a mighty work in our lives.

Hebrews 4:12 (NKJV) ¹² For the word of God is living and powerful, and sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing even to the division of soul and spirit, and of joints and marrow, and is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart.

In Every Study

- Who Is God? (How Great is He?)
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Boldly come to the throne of grace, ask God to reveal Himself in a mighty way to you, and to do I might work in you, and through you.

Hebrews 4:16 (NKJV) ¹⁶ Let us therefore come boldly to the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy and find grace to help in time of need.

What is Trauma?

Post-Traumatic Stress is something that some people develop after experiencing or witnessing a life-threatening event, like combat, a natural disaster, a car accident, a sexual assault, a violent attack, or a string of abuses that make a theme of abuse.

Statistics on Traumatic Events for Individuals

- 70% of adults in the U.S. have experienced some type of traumatic event at least once in their lives. This equates to approximately 223.4 million people
- Up to 20% of these people go on to develop PTSD. As of today, that equates to approximately 44.7 million people who were or are struggling with PTSD.
- An estimated 8% of Americans – 24.4 million people – have PTSD at any given time. That is equal to the total population of Texas.
- An estimated one out of every nine women develops PTSD, making them about twice as likely as men.
- On average, 22 of our County's service man/woman commit suicide every day. More die on American soil, than by the bullets and bombs of the enemy they fought on foreign soil

Some Signs of Post-Traumatic Stress

Some may or may not recognize they are dealing with Trauma, but here are some signs a person is:

- Re-experiencing: Trouble sleeping because thinking about it, or nightmares, or flashbacks (triggered seemingly out of nowhere, or triggered by sight, or smell, or sound).
- Avoidance: Trying to avoid the thought by focusing on work, or numbing with alcohol, or avoiding any situation that could resemble the original traumatic event
- Feeling worse about yourself or the world: The feeling of guilt, or unhappiness, depression, feeling of no purpose, distant and unattached
- Hyper arousal: The feeling of anxiousness, irritable, jittery, always on alert, being on edge, defense mode, anger, hypervigilance,

It is a shadow

"Though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death," King David would say, and we see the death was only a shadow of something looming. It was not actually death upon him. And there are many who suffer trauma and experience the post-traumatic stress of a trauma as if it was real, but in all actuality, it's only a shadow. It's not the actual trauma again, just a shadow of it.

Psalms 23:4 Yea, though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil; For You are with me; Your rod and Your staff, they comfort me.

The Bible is honest about such events; therefore, the Bible can relate to such events

The narratives in the Old Testament are awkwardly full of details. Like peering at surveillance footage, God inspired the authors to exposit the events with brutal accuracy. Judah and Tamar (Genesis 38). A Levite and his concubine

(Judges 19). Amnon and Tamar (2 Samuel 13). These are ugly, awful stories about traumatic experiences among God's faithful ones. God didn't intervene to prevent the abuse. God didn't micromanage the suffering, or give the victims a clean and quick "recovery story." And yet he still put them on stage in his redemptive story.

Judah and Tamar interrupt the Joseph narrative. The Levite and his concubine interrupt the final cycle of Judges. Judah and Tamar interrupt David's saga with Bathsheba and Absalom. God interrupts the stories of redemption with short stories of lives interrupted by trauma, some that are never resolved for us.

Anyone who can sustain reading the Bible beyond the first chapter of Genesis will notice that there are difficult passages. The Bible's stories are forged out of murder (Gn 4), rape (Gn 34), dismemberment (Jgs 19; 1 Sam 18), kidnapping and forced marriages (Jgs 21), forced migration and infanticide (Ps 137), slavery (Ex 21; Lv 25; Dt 15), genocide (Jos 1-12), cannibalism (2 Kgs 6-7), political corruption (1-2 Kgs) and social desolation (the Prophets). The metanarrative of salvation history is laced with loss.

The life of David is such an example of such things. David took men into harm's way continually for the sake and freedom of Israel. War, death, killing, blood, and loss were continual events in the life of David and his men and people. Stories of his life relate to today. Also, David caused much pain because of his failures, his poor choices, his selfish decisions. Stories of his life relate to today, especially the part that a person can feel guilty for failing others, making decisions that cost others their lives, or just the place that we couldn't save them.

God Himself experienced trauma

Jesus suffered trauma, extreme, excruciating trauma, with scars and wounds that, even into eternity, we are told He will still bear. But we see Jesus overcome the trauma because He knows that He is safe in the Father's arms. And therefore, our example for us, the safety and security in the Father's arms.

Some will say to others you cannot minister to me because you have not been through what I have been through, you don't know my pain, you don't have the same wounds and scars that I have..... To which I would say that may be true but don't miss the ministering angels God sends to you, but regardless God will show you His hands, and you will see His scars that say I can relate, fully. And He will say come walk with Me, and as you do, you will see nail scarred feet that say I have walked where you have walked, I understand. Those nail scarred hands will extend to you with His Word, the Holy Scriptures, and say let me minister to you healing.

Revelation 5:6 (NKJV) ⁶ And I looked, and behold, in the midst of the throne and of the four living creatures, and in the midst of the elders, stood a Lamb as though it had been slain, having seven horns and seven eyes, which are the seven Spirits of God sent out into all the earth.

Isaiah 52:14 (NKJV) ¹⁴ Just as many were astonished at you, So His visage was marred more than any man, And His form more than the sons of men;

Matthew 27:46 (NKJV) ⁴⁶ And about the ninth hour Jesus cried out with a loud voice, saying, "Eli, Eli, lama sabachthani?" that is, "My God, My God, why have You forsaken Me?"

Luke 22:44 (NKJV) ⁴⁴ And being in agony, He prayed more earnestly. Then His sweat became like great drops of blood falling down to the ground.

Reacting as Designed

Responding to how you are created (Psalm 139)

You are wonderfully made by God. Every detail of you. God has created our brains as such that when we suffer a traumatic event, the brain stores the memory so it can be recalled immediately for use in a future event. This is one of God's fail-safes in our design. The traumatic event is stored regardless of our conscious recollection of it, and our body is prepared to respond to protect itself based on anything that triggers that response. Those triggers could be based on any of the senses: sight, smell, feel, touch, taste. If triggered, our body immediately goes back to the settings of that day: heart rate, adrenaline, vision, audio exclusion, hyper-vigilance, etc. These stored responses, are now trained responses.

Psalm 139:14 (NKJV) ¹⁴ I will praise You, for I am fearfully and wonderfully made; Marvelous are Your works, And that my soul knows very well.

It is not a Disorder

It is not a disorder; it is exactly how you were designed. The world loves to put labels on people. The world does not know, or believe, that man is body, soul, and spirit, and therefore tries to explain things without the full information. It is not a disorder, you are not broken, you are responding exactly how designed.

1 Thessalonians 5:23 (NKJV) ²³ Now may the God of peace Himself sanctify you completely; and may your whole spirit, soul, and body be preserved blameless at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ.

Even the VA (Veterans Affairs) National Center for PTSD starts their discussion on this topic with the statement, (Normal Reactions to Abnormal Situations) and go on in the discussion of how normal man's reactions are in such abnormal situations.

You are not broken; you are responding the way you were designed

God equips us for the fallen world

In fact, your response is how God equips us to live in this fallen world. You are not broken, you are responding as designed to guard against and prepare for trauma that comes in this fallen world.

You are not alone

And again, you are not alone. The Devil wants to isolate you, for when you are isolated with your thoughts, and his demonic thoughts, then he has you all to himself. You are not alone as the statistics have shown us, and the Lord has declared to you.

Psalm 23:4 (NKJV) ⁴ Yea, though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil; For You are with me; Your rod and Your staff, they comfort me.

The Great Question – Where was God?

Where was God?

God wants you to ask. For by involving Him, he will be involved, and His ministry to you can be blessed and prosperous.

Fallen World and Fallen Man

We live in a fallen world, that is populated by fallen man. The world is fallen because of sin, and the ills (whether acts of man or acts of nature) of the world are because of sin. The only way to eliminate the fall, is to eliminate sin, and that would mean God would have to remove all sinners from the earth, and thus the Day of Judgment. But the Lord is not willing that any should perish but all seek repentance, He continues the fallen world, which I am thankful that He patiently waited for me to come to repentance, the chief of sinners, saved by His grace.

James 4:1–3 (NKJV) ¹ Where do wars and fights come from among you? Do they not come from your desires for pleasure that war in your members? ² You lust and do not have. You murder and covet and cannot obtain. You fight and war. Yet you do not have because you do not ask. ³ You ask and do not receive, because you ask amiss, that you may spend it on your pleasures.

2 Peter 3:9 (NKJV) ⁹ The Lord is not slack concerning His promise, as some count slackness, but is longsuffering toward us, not willing that any should perish but that all should come to repentance.

Remember, this isn't the world God intended it to be, the Adam-Bomb (sin of Adam) destroyed that, and every man (for Adam means man) has carried on its destruction. This world is a war zone, and it is not our home, we are passing through it with much tribulation until we make our eternal home in heaven with the Lord.

Romans 5:12 (NKJV) ¹² Therefore, just as through one man sin entered the world, and death through sin, and thus death spread to all men, because all sinned—

1 Peter 2:11–12 (NKJV) ¹¹ Beloved, I beg you as sojourners and pilgrims, abstain from fleshly lusts which war against the soul, ¹² having your conduct honorable among the Gentiles, that when they speak against you as evildoers, they may, by your good works which they observe, glorify God in the day of visitation.

Hebrews 11:8–10 (NKJV) ⁸ By faith Abraham obeyed when he was called to go out to the place which he would receive as an inheritance. And he went out, not knowing where he was going. ⁹ By faith he dwelt in the land of promise as in a foreign country, dwelling in tents with Isaac and Jacob, the heirs with him of the same promise; ¹⁰ for he waited for the city which has foundations, whose builder and maker is God.

God remembers all evil

God remembers evil, and there will come a day that all evil will be judged. God's justice will be served.

Exodus 34:6-7 (NKJV) ⁶ And the LORD passed before him and proclaimed, "The LORD, the LORD God, merciful and gracious, longsuffering, and abounding in goodness and truth, ⁷ keeping mercy for thousands, forgiving iniquity and transgression and sin, by no means clearing the guilty, visiting the iniquity of the fathers upon the children and the children's children to the third and the fourth generation."

Proverbs 11:21 (NKJV) ²¹ Though they join forces, the wicked will not go unpunished; But the posterity of the righteous will be delivered.

Nahum 1:3 (NKJV) ³ The LORD is slow to anger and great in power, And will not at all acquit the wicked. The LORD has His way In the whirlwind and in the storm, And the clouds are the dust of His feet.

Jeremiah 50:25 (NKJV) ²⁵ The LORD has opened His armory, And has brought out the weapons of His indignation; For this is the work of the Lord GOD of hosts In the land of the Chaldeans.

God was there weeping over every evil that came upon you in your trauma.

The fallen world, with free-will, brings great consequences upon this world. But where was God when all this pain and suffering happened? Weeping. Sovereign God knew, yes. Yet in some depth we do not know, He was there weeping tears, while at the same time catching yours. When Lazarus died as part of a fallen world, although He could have intervened, He did not, He wept. When He came upon Jerusalem knowing the destruction to come because their free-will choice, although He could have intervened, He did not, He wept.

John 11:33-36 (NKJV) ³³ Therefore, when Jesus saw her weeping, and the Jews who came with her weeping, He groaned in the spirit and was troubled. ³⁴ And He said, "Where have you laid him?" They said to Him, "Lord, come and see." ³⁵ Jesus wept. ³⁶ Then the Jews said, "See how He loved him!"

Luke 19:41-44 (NKJV) ⁴¹ Now as He drew near, He saw the city and wept over it, ⁴² saying, "If you had known, even you, especially in this your day, the things that make for your peace! But now they are hidden from your eyes. ⁴³ For days will come upon you when your enemies will build an embankment around you, surround you and close you in on every side, ⁴⁴ and level you, and your children within you, to the ground; and they will not leave in you one stone upon another, because you did not know the time of your visitation."

Psalms 56:8 (NKJV) ⁸ You number my wanderings; Put my tears into Your bottle; Are they not in Your book?

Forgive and leave justice to God

Beloved, I know they hurt you, but leave the judgment and justice to the Lord. Forgiveness means to "send away". Send it away my brother, my sister. You mean let them get away with it? No, let it get away from you. They will not get away with it, God will judge all evil. What if they are a believer who hurt you? God in His righteousness will deal with them. Trust God, and leave the judging up to Him, and be free of vengeance.

Hebrews 10:30-31 (NKJV) ³⁰ For we know Him who said, "Vengeance is Mine, I will repay," says the Lord. And again, "The LORD will judge His people." ³¹ It is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God.

Romans 12:17-21 (NKJV) ¹⁷ Repay no one evil for evil. Have regard for good things in the sight of all men. ¹⁸ If it is possible, as much as depends on you, live peaceably with all men. ¹⁹ Beloved, do not avenge yourselves, but rather give place to wrath; for it is written, "Vengeance is Mine, I will repay," says the Lord. ²⁰ Therefore "If your enemy is hungry, feed him; If he is thirsty, give him a drink; For in so doing you will heap coals of fire on his head." ²¹ Do not be overcome by evil, but overcome evil with good.

Don't let root of bitterness control your life

Don't let them have any more control over you by continually giving them the time of your life thinking about them. Don't let the root of bitterness for what they have done rob or control your life. Bitterness will choke out your life.

Hebrews 12:14-15 (NKJV) ¹⁴ Pursue peace with all people, and holiness, without which no one will see the Lord: ¹⁵ looking carefully lest anyone fall short of the grace of God; lest any root of bitterness springing up cause trouble, and by this many become defiled;

The world, and the church, errors saying this is only a mental health issue

Again, it is not a disorder; it is exactly how you were designed. The world loves to put labels on people. The world does not know, or believe, that man is body, soul, and spirit, and therefore tries to explain things without the full information. It is not a disorder, you are not broken, you are responding exactly how designed. But the Church can error and think that PTSD is something beyond the reach and ministry of the church and therefore don't address

it, or send the hurting to the world for help, rather than believing God is exceedingly able to heal and progress the beloved from their pain and torment.

1 Thessalonians 5:23 (NKJV) ²³ Now may the God of peace Himself sanctify you completely; and may your whole spirit, soul, and body be preserved blameless at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ.

There is a Devil involved; always wants to twist and pervert God's design

There is a Devil who is looking to stir and destroy. He is always taking God's perfect design, and twisting it (that is what pervert means), and taking God's design and twisting into something contrary to God's design. He takes intimacy intended for marriage for example, and turns it into something self-gratifying which then becomes cheapened and no longer sacred. He takes alcohol and turns it into drunkenness. He takes beauty and turns it into lust. And he takes your natural protection system, and twists it and perverts it.

John 10:10 (NKJV) ¹⁰ The thief does not come except to steal, and to kill, and to destroy. I have come that they may have life, and that they may have it more abundantly.

There is a spiritual war going on

Because there is a devil, there is a spiritual war going on. We have to face that warfare with the appropriate weapon, spiritual weapons. God says, "You asked me where I was, so I can tell you, and be involved in this battle you are facing."

Ephesians 6:10-13 (NKJV) ¹⁰ Finally, my brethren, be strong in the Lord and in the power of His might. ¹¹ Put on the whole armor of God, that you may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil. ¹² For we do not wrestle against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this age, against spiritual hosts of wickedness in the heavenly places. ¹³ Therefore take up the whole armor of God, that you may be able to withstand in the evil day, and having done all, to stand.

2 Corinthians 10:2-5 (NKJV) ² But I beg you that when I am present I may not be bold with that confidence by which I intend to be bold against some, who think of us as if we walked according to the flesh. ³ For though we walk in the flesh, we do not war according to the flesh. ⁴ For the weapons of our warfare are not carnal but mighty in God for pulling down strongholds, ⁵ casting down arguments and every high thing that exalts itself against the knowledge of God, bringing every thought into captivity to the obedience of Christ,

Who You Are

But before that, we must be reminded who we are, and our value. For many never can get up, because they feel they are valueless after what they have suffered.

You are not broken

Again, you are not broken, you are responding to how you were designed. If you buy into the lie of the Devil, that you are broken, you will be defeated. Which one of us can fix anything in this lost and fallen world?

You are valued

The value of something is not based on what someone says something is worth, it is always based on what someone is willing to pay. God paid with His only Begotten Son for you, that is your worth. You are priceless!

John 3:16 (NKJV) ¹⁶ For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have everlasting life.

This isn't your life or destiny of future

God has a future and hope for you, no matter the past.

Jeremiah 29:11-14 (NKJV) ¹¹ For I know the thoughts that I think toward you, says the LORD, thoughts of peace and not of evil, to give you a future and a hope. ¹² Then you will call upon Me and go and pray to Me, and I will listen to you. ¹³ And you will seek Me and find Me, when you search for Me with all your heart. ¹⁴ I will be found by you, says the LORD, and I will bring you back from your captivity; I will gather you from all the nations and from all the places where I have driven you, says the LORD, and I will bring you to the place from which I cause you to be carried away captive.

John 10:10 is still true

God's promise of abundant life is still God's promise for you

John 10:10 (NKJV) ¹⁰ The thief does not come except to steal, and to kill, and to destroy. I have come that they may have life, and that they may have it more abundantly.

It does not define you / Your identity is not in that traumatic event. Your identity is in Christ.

No single event in life defines a person, and this traumatic event does not define you. There is only one event that defines a person for life, and that is when a person receives Jesus Christ as their Lord and Savior. That is the defining event that defines them as His, a follower of His and a Christian. But these traumatic events of life and this evil in this fallen world, they do not define us. And therefore, do not let them define you and who you are.

Galatians 3:27 (NKJV) ²⁷ For as many of you as were baptized into Christ have put on Christ.

1 John 3:2 (NKJV) ² Beloved, now we are children of God; and it has not yet been revealed what we shall be, but we know that when He is revealed, we shall be like Him, for we shall see Him as He is.

Genesis 1:27 (NKJV) ²⁷ So God created man in His own image; in the image of God He created him; male and female He created them.

Colossians 1:27 (NKJV) ²⁷ To them God willed to make known what are the riches of the glory of this mystery among the Gentiles: which is Christ in you, the hope of glory.

You Can be Free

Based on who you are in Christ, and what He desires for you of the abundant Christian life, you can be free. Yes scarred, but free. Wounded but stronger.

Do you want to be made well?

The first question in all healing is this: Do you want to be made well? Two thousand years ago Jesus was walking this earth, came into Jerusalem and while coming into the city He passed a man who had been a paralytic for 38 years, and Jesus stops and asks him, "Do you want to be made well?"

John 5:1-9 (NKJV) ¹ After this there was a feast of the Jews, and Jesus went up to Jerusalem. ² Now there is in Jerusalem by the Sheep Gate a pool, which is called in Hebrew, Bethesda, having five porches. ³ In these lay a great multitude of sick people, blind, lame, paralyzed, waiting for the moving of the water. ⁴ For an angel went down at a certain time into the pool and stirred up the water; then whoever stepped in first, after the stirring of the water, was made well of whatever disease he had. ⁵ Now a certain man was there who had an infirmity thirty-eight years. ⁶ When Jesus saw him lying there, and knew that he already had been in that condition a long time, He said to him, "Do you want to be made well?" ⁷ The sick man answered Him, "Sir, I have no man to put me into the pool when the water is stirred up; but while I am coming, another steps down before me." ⁸ Jesus said to him, "Rise, take up your bed and walk." ⁹ And immediately the man was made well, took up his bed, and walked. And that day was the Sabbath.

Strange question we may ask, but not really. The first step to healing, wellness, and wholeness is the desire to be made well, and the belief that Jesus can make you well.

- But for some, the memory has become part of their daily life, they are resolved that life will never change, this post-traumatic stress is a life sentence.
- For some, it is an excuse for bad behavior, they use it as an excuse to abuse alcohol, to abuse their family and friends, to abuse drugs, to chase after illicit relationships, and the likes. They blame PTS for their bad behavior and bad decisions. But we all know the facts, bad behavior with or without trauma, will always lead to destruction.
- As odd as it may sound, there are many who have found their identity in their PTS. They don't want to heal because they don't want to lose their identity, in that they did something heroic and got hurt, or they were a victim. I don't want to minimize either of them, you still did something heroic, you still were a victim, but you have a much greater purpose than living in PTS.
- Some say they can't be healed because only a counselor who has been through such trauma can relate to them. I say Jesus Christ can relate, so talk somebody who knows the heart and mind of Jesus. Trauma comes in all forms, and while another person's trauma may not be identical to yours, another person can still relate to trauma because they lived through their own trauma.
- And for some, they don't want to be made well because their trauma causes everyone else in their lives (family, friends, children, etc) to be their caregivers, and relieves them of responsibilities.

Jesus asks today, do you want to be made well? And those who say I do, then He responds.

You still get to choose

Beloved, here is one thing that can never be taken away from you, and that is you still always get to choose. As Joshua would say, choose this day whom you will serve, but as for me and my house we choose to serve the Lord.

Free-will always give you the free-will to choose, even when someone else's or something else's free-will is trying to change that.

Joshua 24:14–15 (NKJV) ¹⁴ "Now therefore, fear the LORD, serve Him in sincerity and in truth, and put away the gods which your fathers served on the other side of the River and in Egypt. Serve the LORD! ¹⁵ And if it seems evil to you to serve the LORD, choose for yourselves this day whom you will serve, whether the gods which your fathers served that were on the other side of the River, or the gods of the Amorites, in whose land you dwell. But as for me and my house, we will serve the LORD."

Holocaust survivor Viktor Frankl reflected on his time in concentration camps, he described the moment he realized the key to survival in the camps and happiness in life, saying even though his captors could take almost everything away from him, the one thing they could not take was his ability to decide.

- "Everything can be taken from a man but one thing: the last of the human freedoms—to choose one's attitude in any given set of circumstances, to choose one's own way."

He understood that his life was not defined by what happened to him or where the circumstances outside of his control may have led. His life was defined by the decision he made every day, even in captivity, to be the very best person that he could be. When talking about how people often say that their responses to trauma are out of their control, he said simply:

- "Between stimulus and responses there is a space. In that space is our power to choose our response. In our response lies our growth and our freedom."

**Vikto Frankl, Man's Searching for Meaning (1959)*

Same Power that rose Jesus from grave is available to you today

When you choose, know that the same power that rose Jesus from the grave is not just available to you, but lives in you.

Ephesians 1:17–23 (NKJV) ¹⁷ that the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of glory, may give to you the spirit of wisdom and revelation in the knowledge of Him, ¹⁸ the eyes of your understanding being enlightened; that you may know what is the hope of His calling, what are the riches of the glory of His inheritance in the saints, ¹⁹ and what is the exceeding greatness of His power toward us who believe, according to the working of His mighty power ²⁰ which He worked in Christ when He raised Him from the dead and seated Him at His right hand in the heavenly places, ²¹ far above all principality and power and might and dominion, and every name that is named, not only in this age but also in that which is to come. ²² And He put all things under His feet, and gave Him to be head over all things to the church, ²³ which is His body, the fullness of Him who fills all in all.

Mark 12:24 (NKJV) ²⁴ Jesus answered and said to them, "Are you not therefore mistaken, because you do not know the Scriptures nor the power of God?"

Dealing with triggers and flashbacks

A "trigger" is when the past interrupts the present without apology, and often without warning. We may not even know we are being triggered until much later on (we may not ever know in this life). Have you ever felt an unexplained surge of anxiety or anger? Is that feeling consistently experienced with one person or in a particular place?

You know not when something will trigger you into a flashback, or response. But when it does happen, remember you are in a spiritual war, and you are weaponized with the greatest of weapons, which God gives for you victory. Use them, and use them skillfully.

Take every thought captive

When they come, take them captive, do not allow yourself to let them have free course. Remember the spiritual war.

2 Corinthians 10:2–5 (NKJV) ² But I beg you that when I am present I may not be bold with that confidence by which I intend to be bold against some, who think of us as if we walked according to the flesh. ³ For though we walk in the flesh, we do not war according to the flesh. ⁴ For the weapons of our warfare are not carnal but mighty in God for pulling down strongholds, ⁵ casting down arguments and every high thing that exalts itself against the knowledge of God, bringing every thought into captivity to the obedience of Christ,

You are safe

Remember and immediately tell yourself, I am safe, I am not in harms way, I am not vulnerable, this is a shadow.

Psalm 23:1–3 (NKJV) ¹ *The LORD is my shepherd; I shall not want. ² He makes me to lie down in green pastures; He leads me beside the still waters. ³ He restores my soul; He leads me in the paths of righteousness For His name's sake.*

Psalm 23:4 (NKJV) ⁴ *Yea, though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil; For You are with me; Your rod and Your staff, they comfort me.*

Psalm 23:5–6 (NKJV) ⁵ *You prepare a table before me in the presence of my enemies; You anoint my head with oil; My cup runs over. ⁶ Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me All the days of my life; And I will dwell in the house of the LORD Forever.*

Claim and Memorize the Promises of God – especially “Do Not Fear”

The Bible is loaded with specific passages that say, “Do Not Fear”. Some have said there are 366 “Do Not Fear” in the Bible, I am not sure of that, but I did find 366 passages that deal with fear. Obviously, fear is a continual theme in this fallen world, and the Bible speaks in depth in dealing with fear. Here are a few of my favorite power passages I that I have locked in my phone, and memorized in my mind:

Isaiah 41:10 (NKJV) ¹⁰ *Fear not, for I am with you; Be not dismayed, for I am your God. I will strengthen you, Yes, I will help you, I will uphold you with My righteous right hand.’*

Genesis 26:24 (NKJV) ²⁴ *And the LORD appeared to him the same night and said, “I am the God of your father Abraham; do not fear, for I am with you. I will bless you and multiply your descendants for My servant Abraham’s sake.”*

Isaiah 35:4 (NKJV) ⁴ *Say to those who are fearful-hearted, “Be strong, do not fear! Behold, your God will come with vengeance, With the recompense of God; He will come and save you.”*

Matthew 10:31 (NKJV) ³¹ *Do not fear therefore; you are of more value than many sparrows.*

Revelation 2:10 (NKJV) ¹⁰ *Do not fear any of those things which you are about to suffer. Indeed, the devil is about to throw some of you into prison, that you may be tested, and you will have tribulation ten days. Be faithful until death, and I will give you the crown of life.*

Psalm 61:3–4 (NKJV) ³ *For You have been a shelter for me, A strong tower from the enemy. ⁴ I will abide in Your tabernacle forever; I will trust in the shelter of Your wings. Selah*

Proverbs 18:10 (NKJV) ¹⁰ *The name of the LORD is a strong tower; The righteous run to it and are safe.*

Jeremiah 33:1–3 (NKJV) ¹ *Moreover the word of the LORD came to Jeremiah a second time, while he was still shut up in the court of the prison, saying, ² “Thus says the LORD who made it, the LORD who formed it to establish it (the LORD is His name): ³ ‘Call to Me, and I will answer you, and show you great and mighty things, which you do not know.’*

Psalm 139:17–18 (NKJV) ¹⁷ *How precious also are Your thoughts to me, O God! How great is the sum of them! ¹⁸ If I should count them, they would be more in number than the sand; When I awake, I am still with You.*

The compounding strings of trauma

And may I add here, that many traumas are strings of traumas that make up a common theme. Recognize them, and recognize how they fed to the “one” event, and how they can still feed afterwards. Maybe you were abused as a child, maybe you were continually failed by various people in your life who should have protected you, and when you come back into the environment of those people, or people or places connected to them, you find yourself suffering those emotions all over again. To which, you claim your promise of God, and you remind yourself, I am safe, I am not vulnerable to them anymore. But if by any chance you are unsafe because of them, then respond to how you were made, God’s warning to fight or flee, and get out of there.

Though You slay me, yet will I praise You (Trust You)

People will still fail me, this world will still be fallen, but I find true power and freedom when I come and say, though all may fail me, maybe “fall” upon me, yet I trust You. Regardless of how bad my life may be, I still “choose” to trust You Lord. I will surrender to none, but the ONE! That ONE, is Jesus Christ!

Job 13:15 (NKJV) ¹⁵ *Though He slay me, yet will I trust Him. Even so, I will defend my own ways before Him.*

Hebrews 13:5 (NKJV) ⁵ *Let your conduct be without covetousness; be content with such things as you have. For He Himself has said, “I will never leave you nor forsake you.”*

Don't go it alone

Beloved don't go it alone. The Devil wants to isolate you, so he has you all by himself.

Talk to God

Talk to God, David did. Notice in Psalm 23 how David first talked about God (verses 1-3), then He talked to God (verses 4-6).

Psalm 23:1-6 (NKJV) ¹ The LORD is my shepherd; I shall not want. ² He makes me to lie down in green pastures; He leads me beside the still waters. ³ He restores my soul; He leads me in the paths of righteousness For His name's sake. ⁴ Yea, though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil; For You are with me; Your rod and Your staff, they comfort me. ⁵ You prepare a table before me in the presence of my enemies; You anoint my head with oil; My cup runs over. ⁶ Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me All the days of my life; And I will dwell in the house of the LORD Forever.

Talk to trusted others

Talk to others. It has been rightly said, "pain shared, is pain divided".

Pain divided – you have purpose when carry others pain

Many who have suffered trauma lose a purpose in life. God gives you a purpose when you start to carry your brothers/sisters' burdens. You are fulfilling the "law of Christ" when you love your neighbor.

Galatians 6:2 (NKJV) ² Bear one another's burdens, and so fulfill the law of Christ.

Mark 12:29-31 (NKJV) ²⁹ Jesus answered him, "The first of all the commandments is: 'Hear, O Israel, the LORD our God, the LORD is one. ³⁰ And you shall love the LORD your God with all your heart, with all your soul, with all your mind, and with all your strength.' This is the first commandment. ³¹ And the second, like it, is this: 'You shall love your neighbor as yourself.' There is no other commandment greater than these."

Spouses, parents, family, friends are hurting too / Talk about it with your family

And it is so important to know, realize, remember..... you don't hurt alone, as your family hurts and are part of this with you. Don't go it alone, and don't make it something all your own. Your family is part of this too because they are part of you. Talk to them, be open and put it out there so you can discuss and progress together.

How you can help them

The prayers of the saints are needed for your brothers and sisters

If you have a loved one who is suffering PTS, love them, be patient with them, and pray. Hell and fire is coming after them, pray like hell and fire is coming at them.

James 5:16 (NKJV) ¹⁶ Confess your trespasses to one another, and pray for one another, that you may be healed. The effective, fervent prayer of a righteous man avails much.

Colossians 1:9 (NKJV) ⁹ For this reason we also, since the day we heard it, do not cease to pray for you, and to ask that you may be filled with the knowledge of His will in all wisdom and spiritual understanding;

Ephesians 1:15-23 (NKJV) ¹⁵ Therefore I also, after I heard of your faith in the Lord Jesus and your love for all the saints, ¹⁶ do not cease to give thanks for you, making mention of you in my prayers: ¹⁷ that the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of glory, may give to you the spirit of wisdom and revelation in the knowledge of Him, ¹⁸ the eyes of your understanding being enlightened; that you may know what is the hope of His calling, what are the riches of the glory of His inheritance in the saints, ¹⁹ and what is the exceeding greatness of His power toward us who believe, according to the working of His mighty power ²⁰ which He worked in Christ when He raised Him from the dead and seated Him at His right hand in the heavenly places, ²¹ far above all principality and power and might and dominion, and every name that is named, not only in this age but also in that which is to come. ²² And He put all things under His feet, and gave Him to be head over all things to the church, ²³ which is His body, the fullness of Him who fills all in all.

Listen to their stories – but just listen

Listen to them, don't judge them, speak only when you are sure God is giving you a word to speak.

Everybody has a book you should read – just listen

Everybody always has a book they should read. Give that book only if you confirm with the Lord that it is His will. But listen to them, walk this out with them, for it will not heal and pass in a day, or a session, or a book, but it is a road, it is a journey, and they need someone to simply walk it out with them.

Be there for them

Simply be there for them, and be there when they are not around, go to them, call them, and check in on them. Sometimes the greatest ministry is the ministry of presence, simply being there with them and for them, even when not a word is being said, but they know they are not alone.

Ecclesiastes 4:9–12 (NKJV) ⁹ Two are better than one, Because they have a good reward for their labor. ¹⁰ For if they fall, one will lift up his companion. But woe to him who is alone when he falls, For he has no one to help him up. ¹¹ Again, if two lie down together, they will keep warm; But how can one be warm alone? ¹² Though one may be overpowered by another, two can withstand him. And a threefold cord is not quickly broken.

Conclusion

The Good Shepherd..... lets hear His heart again before we close

Psalm 23 A Psalm of David.

Psalm 23:1 The LORD is my shepherd; I shall not want.

Psalm 23:2 He makes me to lie down in green pastures; He leads me beside the still waters.

Psalm 23:3 He restores my soul; He leads me in the paths of righteousness For His name's sake.

Psalm 23:4 Yea, though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil; For You are with me; Your rod and Your staff, they comfort me.

Psalm 23:5 You prepare a table before me in the presence of my enemies; You anoint my head with oil; My cup runs over.

Psalm 23:6 Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me All the days of my life; And I will dwell in the house of the LORD Forever.

Do You Know the Good Shepherd?

Do you know the Good Shepherd personally? It's as easy as A-B-C we like to say, for He makes coming to Him real simple, because He simply loves us.

And here's the A, B, C of the gospel.

- A is for all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God. We've all missed the mark, we've all missed God's standards, his holy law (Thou shall not steal, thou shall not lie, thou will honor thy Lord thy God). And our sin separates us from the holy God. Because he is perfect and pure. But he did not leave us in this state of separation, hopeless and helpless. He came to help. We couldn't help ourselves so he came to help. And he sent his only begotten Son, Jesus Christ. We need to **admit** our need for a Savior.
- The B. "For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son that whoever should **believe** in him shall not perish but have everlasting life." John 3:16. And we need his help. Because Romans 6:23 is clear without a shadow of a doubt, "The wages of sin is death," and that death is eternal separation from God. And eternal separation from God is a place called Hell and it's real. But he goes on to say, because there was a cross, that "the gift of God is eternal life."
- The C - What's our role? If we **confess** with our mouth the Lord Jesus Christ, believe in our heart that God raised him from the dead, we shall be saved. And believe means to believe that we needed a Savior, to recognize the need. And secondly, it's a calling to turn and follow. Believe comes with a turn from our sin and follow, it's called repentance. And then there's the receiving; we pray and ask him into our hearts. Romans 10:9-10. If we believe in our heart that God raised him from the dead you too shall be saved." And there's the power of the gospel, it's the resurrection life.

Admit

Romans 3:23 (NKJV) ²³ for all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God,

Romans 6:23 (NKJV) ²³ For the wages of sin is death, but the gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord.

Believe

John 3:16–17 (NKJV) ¹⁶ For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have everlasting life. ¹⁷ For God did not send His Son into the world to condemn the world, but that the world through Him might be saved.

Confess

Romans 10:9–10 (NKJV) ⁹ that if you confess with your mouth the Lord Jesus and believe in your heart that God has raised Him from the dead, you will be saved. ¹⁰ For with the heart one believes unto righteousness, and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation.

Disciple

Matthew 16:24–26 (NKJV) ²⁴ Then Jesus said to His disciples, “If anyone desires to come after Me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross, and follow Me. ²⁵ For whoever desires to save his life will lose it, but whoever loses his life for My sake will find it. ²⁶ For what profit is it to a man if he gains the whole world, and loses his own soul? Or what will a man give in exchange for his soul?

Prayer – Boldly Ask Your God

The Word of God is Living and Powerful, and is ready, and will do a mighty work in our lives.

Hebrews 4:12 (NKJV) ¹² For the word of God is living and powerful, and sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing even to the division of soul and spirit, and of joints and marrow, and is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart.

In Every Study

- Who Is God? (How Great is He?)
- What Does He Think of Me? (How Wonderful Are His Thoughts Towards Me?)
- What Does He Want Me to Do?
- What Can I Boldly Request of Him?
- What Do I Need to Be on Guard of When I Leave Here Today?

Boldly come to the throne of grace, ask God to reveal Himself in a mighty way to you, and to do I might work in you, and through you.

Hebrews 4:16 (NKJV) ¹⁶ Let us therefore come boldly to the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy and find grace to help in time of need.

End of Study

Mark 13
Mark 13:1-8

The War is Over

Romans 5:1 (NKJV) ¹ *Therefore, having been justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ,*

By embracing the simple fact that Jesus died for our sins and rose again, we have peace with God. Why then do so many Christians still fight Him?

It was in 1972 that the last Imperial Japanese soldier was discovered on a South Sea island. Because he was living in complete isolation, he hadn't heard the news that the war was over. So there he was—still building fortifications, ready to hold off the American invasion of his little atoll.

'What a waste,' you say. 'He could have been enjoying the Japanese economic boom, but instead he was stuck on an island, fighting malaria—all because he didn't hear that a peace treaty had been signed.'

Yet it's amazing how many of us do the same thing. 'I hope the Lord doesn't come down on me for this or get mad at me for that,' we think. 'He must be really upset with me. I better hide here in the jungle.'

We don't get it! The war is over! We have peace with God. The sin which separated us from God is forgiven and forgotten completely because of what Jesus Christ did for us.

Gang, whether you've prayed for three hours today or you haven't prayed in three months, the war is still over. If you are a believer in what God the Father did for you in sending Jesus Christ to die in place of you, then you are righteous—justified by faith. We have a tendency to fall back into thinking we have to earn something or prove something to the Father. Not so. We can relax in our relationship with Him, talk to Him freely, and fellowship with Him continually because we have peace with Him eternally.

**Courson, J. (2003). A Day's Journey: 365 Daily Meditations from the Word. Santa Ana, CA: Calvary Chapel Publishing.*

You Can Have New Life Today

If you have never given your life to Christ, came to Him for the forgiveness of sin (Forgiveness means to send away), you can ask God to send your sin away that separates you from Him, and He will do that through "the substitution", where Jesus on the cross took your sin and punishment for sin, and if you accept the trade, you get to become a son/daughter of God. It's the best deal you will ever get in this universe. The Bible says, that He (Jesus) who knew no sin (He was perfect), became sin for us (the substitution), so that we might become the righteousness of God (being right with God – because our sins are washed away before the perfect and Holy God). What an offer, what a deal..... and you can receive that offer today simply by asking!

2 Corinthians 5:21 (NKJV) ²¹ *For He made Him who knew no sin to be sin for us, that we might become the righteousness of God in Him.*

God Says Come

Today we come and are gifted this Word from God Himself, His very heart opened before us, the calling to come near, be drawn to Him.

Matthew 11:28 (NKJV) ²⁸ *Come to Me, all you who labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest.*

The Word of God is Living and Powerful, and is ready, and will do a mighty work in our lives.

Hebrews 4:12 (NKJV) ¹² *For the word of God is living and powerful, and sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing even to the division of soul and spirit, and of joints and marrow, and is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart.*

In Every Study

- Who Is God? (How Great is He?)
- What Does He Think of Me? (How Wonderful Are His Thoughts Towards Me?)
- What Does He Want Me to Do?

- [What Can I Boldly Request of Him?](#)
- [What Do I Need to Be on Guard of When I Leave Here Today?](#)

Boldly come to the throne of grace, ask God to reveal Himself in a mighty way to you, and to do I might work in you, and through you.

Hebrews 4:16 (NKJV) ¹⁶ Let us therefore come boldly to the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy and find grace to help in time of need.

There is a Prayer Team Available to Pray with and for You

It's Tuesday

It's Tuesday of Passion Week and we have had questions coming at Jesus from every religious order there, trying to discredit him and to turn the crowd against him.

- 11:27-33, there was the question of his authority of why he does what he does and that was by the chief priests, scribes and elders.
- 12: 1-12, we see the parable of the vineyard and Jesus is showing us religion over relationship as he lays an indictment against the religious leaders which in verse 12, we're told at the end of that they want to kill him.
- 12:13-17, is the question of taxes. That's led by the Pharisees and the Herodians and Jesus gives that classic answer, "Give to Caesar what is Caesar and God to God," and as we saw, the same truth, that if you rob Caesar of his taxes, you're robbing Caesar and if you rob God of giving your whole being to Him, then you rob God.
- 12:18-27, we saw the question of the resurrection and that was led by the Sadducees who didn't believe in the resurrection or miracles or angels or anything supernatural. They just thought all that life was here and now and get what you can here and now and Jesus gives that great word in there, "You greatly mistake because you know not the scriptures nor the power of God," and that was our Easter message
- 12:28-34, Then came the question from a scribe, which of all the commandments is the greatest commandment, to which Jesus said, "love the Lord your God with all your heart, with all your soul, with all your mind, and with all your strength, and you shall love your neighbor as yourself".
- 12:25-44, Jesus then questions the religious leaders to make the point to them, that the Messiah would be the Son of David, and the Messiah would be God, and thus clearly declaring the He is God, standing before them, and for us the impact is that in 2 days it will be God who goes to the cross to deliver man from their sin.
- 12:38-44, we finished the chapter with Jesus saying watch out for those scribes, these haughty religious leaders who put on a religious show but have nothing in their heart for the love of God or the love of their neighbor. But then the beauty of the story of the widow with two mites was preserved for us, to show us true worship, true faith, and true freedom in simply loving the Lord our God with all our heart, all our soul, all our mind, and with all our strength! Simply..... loving the Lord with our whole being, and beauty and joy that comes with that.

We Start a Series on the Last Days here in Chapter 13:

- Jesus Predicts the Destruction of the Temple (13:1-2)
- Jesus Tells of the Signs of the Last Days (13:3-13)
- Jesus Tells of the Great Tribulation (13:14-23)
- The Second Coming of Christ (13:24-27)
- The Parable of the Fig Tree (13:28-31)
- No One Knows the Day or Hour (13:32-37)

Jesus Predicts the Destruction of the Temple (13:1-2)

Mark 13:1 Then as He went out of the temple, one of His disciples said to Him, “Teacher, see what manner of stones and what buildings are here!”

Leaving Jerusalem – Heading to Bethany

So they are going out of the temple, and heading to Bethany where Jesus would stay. Once again, a sweet picture, after challenge and challenge and challenge some more, Jesus is walking with His boys. He is with friends (minus one – Judas), and heading to Bethany and will be with more friends, like family and closer than family. I believe the Spirit of God, God, is always moving upon the earth, looking to where He will be invited into and to fellowship with. Luke 19, Zacchaeus come down from there, today I MUST stay at your house! Zacchaeus leaped with joy, I’m on my way. I don’t think anything changed today, as the Lord God moves upon the face of the earth, looking where He may be invited into, desiring for fellowship and intimacy, where ever He may be received; but as He moves upon the earth, many will say get out, stay out, don’t come back here no more, you are not welcomed here..... and He respects every man’s free-will, not forcing Himself upon anyone, not pushing His way in anywhere. But then He comes to places like here (CCAAC), where He says today, I must stay with you, and we jump for joy, and open our heart and our home and say come Jesus come. Come let us adore You, oh come you are welcomed here, and may You make this Your home.

Genesis 1:2 (NKJV) ² The earth was without form, and void; and darkness was on the face of the deep. And the Spirit of God was hovering over the face of the waters.

Luke 19:5–6 (NKJV) ⁵ And when Jesus came to the place, He looked up and saw him, and said to him, “Zacchaeus, make haste and come down, for today I must stay at your house.” ⁶ So he made haste and came down, and received Him joyfully.

Look at This Awesome Building

The disciples are saying to the Lord, look at this awesome temple, look at the massive stones are it’s foundation, and it’s building. We tend to think the temple was just one building, which it was, but there was a whole temple complex consisting of the temple, hence why the plural use of “buildings”. The whole complex was about 36 acres, about 500 yards by 400 yards, it was sprawling and massive to say the least.

The temple was to Israel its identity. The temple was the pride of Israel. So spectacular was this temple that history records people traveling from far corners of the world just to see it. The temple itself was some 18 stories tall, overlaid in gold at the top. It has been estimated that the temple today would cost 1 billion dollars to build (I’ve read other estimates that say 1 trillion, which when you add all the contents, that may be more accurate). To give you a glimpse of what we are talking, the cost to build for the Dallas Cowboys stadium was about 1 billion dollars.

This temple was originally rebuilt by Zerubbabel and Ezra (Ezra 6:15) but greatly expanded and improved by Herod. It was the center of Jewish life for almost 1,000 years—so much so, that it was customary to swear by the temple (Matthew 23:16) and speaking against the temple could be considered blasphemy (Acts 6:13).

ii. After Herod’s work, the temple was huge—nearly 500 yards long and 400 yards wide. Herod’s rebuilding started in 19 B.C., and was not completed until 63 A.D., taking more than 80 years. The magnificent temple compound was finished only seven years before it was destroyed.

iii. The beauty of the ancient temple is well documented. The Jewish historian Josephus says that the temple was covered on the outside with gold plates that were so brilliant that when the sun shone it was blinding. Where there wasn’t gold, there were blocks of marble of such a pure white that from a distance strangers thought there was snow on the temple.

Guzik, D. (2013). Mark (Mk 13:1–2). Santa Barbara, CA: David Guzik.

Even Herod’s enemies could not restrain their praise for the temple buildings. The rabbis declared that whoever had not seen Herod’s building “has never seen a beautiful building in his life” (B. Bat. 4a). The Talmud remembers the Jewish teachers who observed that “it is very beautiful to behold, for it is like the waves of the sea” (b.Sukkah 51b). When Roman historians mentioned Jerusalem, their praise went first to the temple. Tacitus (AD 56–ca. 120) spoke of the “temple of immense wealth” (Hist. 5.8) and Pliny the Elder (AD 23–79) considered Jerusalem to be “by far the most famous city, not of Judea only, but of the East,” no doubt because of the presence of Herod’s temple

(Nat. 5.15.70). Philo (ca. 15 BC–ca. AD 50) reports on the visit of Marcus Agrippa, son-in-law of Emperor Augustus, who was so “delighted with the spectacle of the building” that “he could talk of nothing else to his companions but the magnificence of the temple and everything connected with it” (Embassy 294–96).

Scholars who study the Temple Mount today confirm the words of the ancient historians. Ehud Netzer, an archaeologist who excavated at most of Herod’s building projects in Israel, considers the temple to be “one of Herod’s greatest building feats.” Steven Notley observes that the Herod’s temenos (sacred precinct) was the largest known in the world at that time. The Jerusalem temple was “far larger and even more magnificent” than the temple of Artemis in Ephesus, one of the seven wonders of the ancient world. What Herod accomplished was more than an engineering masterpiece: he “brilliantly used every architectural device to create a heightened feeling of religious community and invest the worshippers’ religious experience with a sense of grandeur and focused intensity.”

Bolen, T. (2016). Magnificent Stones and Wonderful Buildings of the Temple Complex. In B. J. Beitzel & K. A. Lyle (Eds.), Lexham Geographic Commentary on the Gospels (Mt 24:1–Lk 21:6). Bellingham, WA: Lexham Press.

Christians Can be Like the Temple

Christians can do this all the time. They can be impressed with church buildings, all the great outward appearances, but inwardly..... Like Israel they are under occupation. Israel bragged and bragged and was so proud of their temple, a claim to pride, but all the while they were not truly free, they were under Roman occupation, they were under the power of another. So many Christians can be just like that, all this beautiful outward appearances like all is well, declaring great spirituality with their mouths, but inside, where no one can see, they are under occupation, under the power of pills, or drugs, or alcohol, or lust, or anger, or fear, or depression, or anxiety..... But like Israel (right before their captivity into Babylon for 70 years), saying the temple of the Lord, the temple of the Lord, like all was well. Oh Christian, be free, by being honest with the Lord and saying it isn’t well, all [Jeremiah 7:1–4 \(NKJV\)](#) ¹ The word that came to Jeremiah from the LORD, saying, ² “Stand in the gate of the LORD’s house, and proclaim there this word, and say, ‘Hear the word of the LORD, all you of Judah who enter in at these gates to worship the LORD!’ ” ³ Thus says the LORD of hosts, the God of Israel: “Amend your ways and your doings, and I will cause you to dwell in this place. ⁴ Do not trust in these lying words, saying, ‘The temple of the LORD, the temple of the LORD, the temple of the LORD are these.’

Mark 13:2 And Jesus answered and said to him, “Do you see these great buildings? Not one stone shall be left upon another, that shall not be thrown down.”

Great – Megas

The word in the Greek for “great” used here is “megas”. Do you see these mega-stones Jesus is asking.

Mind Boggling

Those stones that were thrown off of the temple, since Israel came back into the land in 1948 and excavation and archeological digs began, they uncovered all the dirt that blew over them after 2000 years, and they got down to the original stones. They are in the exact same place as they were cast down by Titus and the tenth Roman legion 2000 years ago. And underneath the stones are the cracked pavement of the original stone painting of the temple mount. 2000 years, they're standing before us as the stones cry out and speak to us, the word of God is perfect and pure. Exactly as Jesus said it would be, so it was some 40 years after making this statement in 70 AD.

When we go to Israel, they'll take us ... It's called the Rabbi's Tunnel, and it's excavation underneath the ground, it takes us alongside of the original temple mount. And what you'll find there is the retaining wall that was built just to retain the foundation around the temple itself. So it's huge stones down there, and again it's just a retaining wall. And some of these stones are 40 feet long. Mind, you, they're all cut by hand. They were quarried out of Golgotha, Mount Mariah as we know it. That's where they were cut from. And then they were brought down to the temple mount area to be laid as the foundation. 40-foot-long, 12 feet wide, and eight feet thick, weighing to be estimated 600 tons each.

This is a mind-boggling statement by Jesus to these disciples because, as you recall, the temple was being updated by Herod, and it was 46 years in the making. And the thought of the temple being destroyed and overturned in a flash, as Jesus would say, would just boggle their mind. These stones that are being talked about here, they've

uncovered some of them that weigh 100 tons. That's mind-boggling, that those stones could be thrown down, and yet they were.

Thrown Down

The word used here for "thrown down" means "to loosen one by one," like a gradual demolition, not a wrecking ball type destruction. Which you would say, "What in the world and why in the world would someone do that?" But that's exactly what was done when, after the siege by the tenth legion of the Roman army, they came in and they took Jerusalem.

And the temple was overlaid with gold, and just one of the magnificent wonders of the whole world at the time. But through a soldier misdirected, he shot an arrow, a flaming arrow, into the temple and caught the temple on fire, which had wood inside of it, the paneling that we have studied in times past. And the whole temple catches on fire and the gold melts into the stone. So, one by one after fire, one by one, they would throw the stone down. And as it would crash down, the gold would break apart and off of the stone that it had melted into, exactly as Jesus said that it would be.

All This after a Dreadful Siege

But that siege that was laid was a dreadful siege. I mean, the Jews began to kill each other because of the lack of food, and starvation had set in. And it was just a horrible, slow death that was happening. And that's what Rome would do, and that was a battle plan of that day, to just lay a siege and let the people die from within, or to the point where they would be too weak to fight. And then when you broke the wall down and you came into the city, they would be easy prey. And this is exactly what happened, hence, Jesus would weep knowing what was coming to the nation of Israel, if only they would have known their day, and that Jesus Christ came to save them. But their rejection of him led into the destruction of themselves.

Matthew 23:37-39 (NKJV) ³⁷ "O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, the one who kills the prophets and stones those who are sent to her! How often I wanted to gather your children together, as a hen gathers her chicks under her wings, but you were not willing! ³⁸ See! Your house is left to you desolate; ³⁹ for I say to you, you shall see Me no more till you say, 'Blessed is He who comes in the name of the LORD!' "

Only One Thing Endures Forever – The Word of God

So, Jesus speaks these words. And they're astonishing words, as they stood before this magnificent temple that was a wonder of the world. And that the size and the building of it, with these foundations and these stones, it looked like something that would last forever. And yet, what we find as we will always find, there's only one thing that endures and lasts forever. It's the word of God. And the word of Jesus outlived these stones. And every word of God is pure, and he is a shield to those who put their trust in him. And that's Proverbs 30, verse 5. And in that word, it becomes synonymous that the word is him, and the trust in the word is trust in him. And the trust in the word is a shield and a trust in Jesus is a shield.

Mark 13:31 (NKJV) ³¹ Heaven and earth will pass away, but My words will by no means pass away.

Proverbs 30:5 (NKJV) ⁵ Every word of God is pure; He is a shield to those who put their trust in Him.

Maybe What was Unshakable and Sure to You – Has or Is Coming Down

Maybe you're here today, and you thought you were in an unshakable place. Your life was solid and sure, but something's happened, and your foundation has been shaken, turned over. Maybe it's a marriage. Maybe it's a relationship. Maybe it's health. Maybe it's a job or finances, and you find yourself shaken. You're wondering where you turn. You're wondering how you stabilize your world that is shaking and wobbling around you. It's the place where Jesus is, his word and his enduring eternal promises that are sure and true and will never be shaken, and will never be thrown down. He says to you, "Come, let me give you a word." I believe and pray the word you hear today is immovable, the solid foundation, Jesus Christ, Him crucified.

Jesus said, "Heaven and earth will pass away. But my word will never pass away." And just like that temple, so will it be just like this world.

So there's a foundation on which to build on your life. And as Jesus says, it will withstand the storms of life. And that is on the bedrock-solid foundation of faith in Jesus Christ and the words that he speaks. And no storm will be

able to wash that away or destroy your life. And I pray that you will be on fire and passionate about Jesus Christ and him only.

Jesus Weeps When Man Rejects

And Jesus weeps when man rejects him as he wept over Jerusalem, he weeps because he knows what's coming to Jerusalem. Even though it would be 40 years later, from his time of riding and weeping over Jerusalem but knowing what was to come 40 years later, of the utter destruction. Not only was the temple burned in A.D. 70, but also, by the end of the 143-day siege, over one million Jews were killed. Of those who survived, many were taken prisoner, leaving the rest to scatter throughout the world. They wandered as a people without a homeland until May 14, 1948, when Israel became a nation once again.

Matthew 23:37-39 (NKJV) ³⁷ "O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, the one who kills the prophets and stones those who are sent to her! How often I wanted to gather your children together, as a hen gathers her chicks under her wings, but you were not willing! ³⁸ See! Your house is left to you desolate; ³⁹ for I say to you, you shall see Me no more till you say, 'Blessed is He who comes in the name of the LORD!'"

And I believe the Lord is weeping over you today, who have rejected him, because he knows what will come to you. He knows the destruction that will come to you, he knows the emptiness that comes to you, and the despair. And for those of you who reject him to the end and refuse to receive him, he knows the destiny that is before you, of eternal separation for him. And so he weeps, and his heart breaks.

Jesus Tells of the Signs of the Last Days (13:3-13)

Mark 13:3 Now as He sat on the Mount of Olives opposite the temple, Peter, James, John, and Andrew asked Him privately,

150 Feet Above

This would be quite a sight, as the Mount of Olives sits about 150 higher than the temple mount, and to behold the massive temple, with the sun setting for it is the end of the day, it would be specular in view, and troubling in thought to visualize the whole temple complex laid in a ruinous heap.

Mark 13:4 "Tell us, when will these things be? And what will be the sign when all these things will be fulfilled?"

Mark 13:5 And Jesus, answering them, began to say: "Take heed that no one deceives you.

Longest Answer

Here in the scriptures is the longest answer to a question posed to Jesus. It is what is known as the "Olivet Discourse", because it came while they rested on the Mount of Olives. The longest sermon in the scriptures was the Sermon on the Mount (Matthew 5-7). Interestingly, the theme of the Sermon on the Mount was the Kingdom of God, and here the second longest sermon in the scriptures is about the Coming King.

The Disciples Believed Jesus Prophecy

Note here, very important, that these disciples believed the words of Jesus, they questioned not as an impossibility, but ask not n "if" but a "when". These disciples believed in prophecy, the forthtelling of God of things that would happen in the future. Great wisdom of the disciples, to be looking forward to the signs of prophecy. Something that many churches, and many Christians, are skipping, and even challenging those who do, and that is the study of prophecy.

These Men Did Not Prepare the People

Now the religious leaders, they did not prepare the people for the first coming of Jesus Christ. They wanted to live off the tithes and offering and have a comfortable life. They didn't want to upset the people and challenge them with their sin and the call to repentance. They didn't want to be John the Baptist. How sad. Only one John the Baptist. All the religious leaders, all the scribes, all the Pharisees, all the priests, and only one John the Baptist preparing the way. Because they didn't want to disrupt this great, comfortable system they had. And so the nation wasn't prepared for the first coming of Christ. And the argument can be made of sovereignty and man's free will. All we see is there was a responsibility upon them to prepare the people, to which they did not, and therefore the

people were not prepared. And there's many pastors and churches today who are not preparing the people for the second coming.

And I want to talk about it, even if it upsets the people. Even though there's a calling for pastors and the people who call upon the name of the Lord to prepare the way of the Lord, to tell people he's coming, that he's coming soon. A lot of churches don't speak and teach on prophecy; therefore the church is not aware of prophecy, and therefore the second coming, once again, will be very much like the first coming. People will not be prepared because the watchman on the wall didn't make the call and say, "I see the dawn arising." But not here. We will hold the course, and we will continually declare he's coming in the clouds, and he's coming soon. And very soon.

2 Thessalonians 2, it's a great debate among Bible teachers and scholars. And the debate is that some believe that when the rapture happens, if you have heard the gospel and you reject it, then you cannot be saved. They say that you've rejected it and you've judged yourself. I personally do not believe that. I believe that God's wish is that none should perish, that all should seek repentance. There will be people who get saved after the rapture, and I think it's more than just people who had never heard the gospel, but even people who had heard the gospel. Because I do not believe that missing the rapture is the unpardonable sin. The unpardonable sin is the rejection of the Spirit testifying that Jesus Christ is Lord and that you need a Savior. But here's what I do strongly see. It says there will be a strong delusion sent by God. I believe that strong delusion is none other than the antichrist, who will come with lies. And as we see in other parts, signs and wonders.

2 Thessalonians 2:9-12 (NKJV) ⁹ *The coming of the lawless one is according to the working of Satan, with all power, signs, and lying wonders, ¹⁰ and with all unrighteous deception among those who perish, because they did not receive the love of the truth, that they might be saved. ¹¹ And for this reason God will send them strong delusion, that they should believe the lie, ¹² that they all may be condemned who did not believe the truth but had pleasure in unrighteousness.*

And I believe that the people who did hear the gospel and rejected it over and over before the rapture, that most, their heart had become so hardened that it would be very easy and most probable that they will buy the lie. It's not that they can't get saved. They just won't, because their heart has been so hardened. And in the book of Hebrews it said, "Be careful of rejecting this gospel so many times that your heart becomes hardened." So I speak to you today. Today, while you have ears to hear, the opportunity is before you to receive Jesus Christ. Should the rapture happen and you miss it, you may not be thinking as clearly as this moment because the whole world will be in chaos, and you may find yourself deceived by the lie. And so the scripture will say today is the day of salvation. You can't risk it and wait. Today is the day.

Hebrews 4:6-7 (NKJV) ⁶ *Since therefore it remains that some must enter it, and those to whom it was first preached did not enter because of disobedience, ⁷ again He designates a certain day, saying in David, "Today," after such a long time, as it has been said: "Today, if you will hear His voice, Do not harden your hearts."*

The prophet Hosea, who was one of the prophets who was rejected, fits into this parable. He didn't say the people perished because of lack of religious ritual; he says the perished because of lack of knowledge. And that is our day. And the word of God in Amos speaks and says that there is a famine in the land. Not of food, but of the word of God. And we can see that sign here today. 1 Timothy says that in the last days, people will heap for themselves teacher who will simply tickle their ear. Today's the day.

Hosea 4:6 (NKJV) ⁶ *My people are destroyed for lack of knowledge. Because you have rejected knowledge, I also will reject you from being priest for Me; Because you have forgotten the law of your God, I also will forget your children.*

Amos 8:11 (NKJV) ¹¹ *"Behold, the days are coming," says the Lord God, "That I will send a famine on the land, Not a famine of bread, Nor a thirst for water, But of hearing the words of the LORD.*

Responsibility Put Upon Us

Jesus says make sure that you're not deceived. He puts that responsibility onto you. He's not putting the responsibility on himself, saying, "I'll make sure you're not deceived." He's telling you it's possible to be deceived, and it's up to you to make sure that you're not deceived. It's your responsibility. The only way you're going to know the difference is to know the difference, the truth. And you don't need to spend your whole life researching the counterfeits. All's you got to do is make sure that you know the genuine. And when you know the genuine, counterfeit is going to jump out at you and you'll know it immediately. Invest in the genuine, the one, the true, the word of God.

Mark 13:6 For many will come in My name, saying, 'I am He,' and will deceive many.

I am

Notice these false messiahs will say "I am", the very words Jesus uses to declare Himself God throughout the Scriptures. I am literally means, "the Becoming One" as God is saying I will become to you all you need. And so will these false Christs come and say, I am the becoming one, and will do all these great things for you, follow me. *John 8:58 (NKJV)* ⁵⁸ Jesus said to them, "Most assuredly, I say to you, before Abraham was, I AM."

Exodus 3:14 (NKJV) ¹⁴ And God said to Moses, "I AM WHO I AM." And He said, "Thus you shall say to the children of Israel, 'I AM has sent me to you.'"

They Build Upon His Name

Jesus says, "They'll build upon my name. They'll come in my name," and what's the word and the language here is they're going to come upon in my name. They're going to build upon my name. See when someone comes, and he says, "I'm Joe Religion and here's my religion." You might find a few people that follow along, but most people are going to just say, "You're a nutcase." But what people will do is they come, and they say they've been sent, or they come in the name of Jesus. They take the name of Jesus and they build upon it, but they don't build upon this word or this truth. They build upon it with their slant and their twist on it, which always is a work of the flesh.

Again, once the rapture happens, we see it amplified even more of people being deceived, by the strong delusion.

Mark 13:7 But when you hear of wars and rumors of wars, do not be troubled; for such things must happen, but the end is not yet.

Not a Day of Peace / 23 million since WW2

There has been a war going on somewhere on this earth every day of the week since WW1. World War 2 was suppose to the war that ended all wars as it was called (82 million lives lost – 32 million in war, 25 million civilians, 25 million in concentration camps), but since the end of the war just 70+ years ago, there have been 23 million people killed by war. Today there is 40 tons of TNT per person living on the planet, and there is more destruction capability in just one of our warships then all the weaponry that was expended in WW2, which included the use of 2 atomic bombs.

Rumors of War

How interesting in Matthew 24 Jesus said "rumors of war". Do you know the most expensive war ever fought, and not bullet was fired? It was the Cold War, which was rumor of war. Now, the rumor of war is "terrorism" as you know there is a war out there somewhere, but you can't see the enemy because they have no country, no uniform, and no base.....they live among the people they fight, they go to our schools, they fly on our planes, they eat in our restaurants, we pass them on the streets, and then one day unleash their fury and disappear into the crowds again. That is rumor of war, and it is on the increase.

Mark 13:8 For nation will rise against nation, and kingdom against kingdom. And there will be earthquakes in various places, and there will be famines and troubles. These are the beginnings of sorrows.

Ethnos Against Ethnos

"Nation will rise up against nation." And we see that continually amongst us, but most specific and very specific is for us, 2600 years ago, God prophesied exactly how nation would rise up against nation. And he speaks of how nations will come against Israel personally there, in the middle east. And we read of that in Ezekiel 38 and 39.

And the word there for "nations" means "ethnic". So there's going to be ethnic hatred, and much of the ethnic hatred is based on religion, and that ties back to the false prophets also, but very specifically to the false religions.

Wars Produce Famine / 1 Day Military Spending feed the Whole World

Wars and military spending are the greatest producer of famines in the world today. Take our military spending for just 1 day and we could feed the whole world for a year. One tomahawk missile could feed a whole elementary school for 5 years.

Aids, Ebola, Bird Flu / Bubonic Plague

Troubles in the context of the other Gospels means "pestilence". Today we deal with AIDS, Ebola, Avian Bird Flu, not to mention things like the bubonic plague in the past.

Aids Statistics (from World Health Organization)

People living with HIV/AIDS - 39.5 million

People newly infected with HIV per year - 4.3 million

More than 40 million people have died of AIDS since 1981.

Africa has 12 million AIDS orphans.

Americans living with AIDS – 1 million (that is 1 in 300 people)

Aids Survive 7 days dry Blood / Univ Pitt – 48hrs in Sewage / Condoms

A study I read said that the AIDS virus can survive up to 7 days, even after the blood has dried. University of Pittsburgh study said that the AIDS virus has the ability to live 48 hours waste water (sewage). They concluded by encouraging all the workers who had to work with raw sewage to wear 2 pairs of surgical gloves under their work gloves to protect themselves from the AIDS virus. But our government and health professionals are telling the teenagers and others to make sure that they wear a condom and practice safe sex, even though they swage worker is encouraged to ware double surgical gloves. God says abstained because He knows.....He is not a kill-joy, but joy-producer, and when you do things God's way, your life will avoid these self-inflicted pains.

Earthquake Statistics

14th century – 147 major

15 century – 174

16 century – 253

17 century – 378

18 century - 640

19 century – 2119

This century – over 5,000, resulting in over 500, 000 deaths.

US Geological Survey Reports

(Number of Killer Earthquakes – Ratings 6.0 magnitude or greater)

1890-1899 – 1

1900 – 1910 - 3

1910 – 1920 - 2

1920 – 1930 - 2

1930 – 1940 – 5

1940 – 1950 - 4

1950 – 1960 – 9

1960 – 1970 – 13

1970 – 1980 – 51

1980 – 1990 – 86

1990 – 2000 – 100

Could be Underground Testing / Oil Sucking

Could it be our underground testing of nukes that has caused the raise, is it the sucking of the oil out of the ground? Something is causing the increase.

Beginning of Birth Pangs / New Life – A New Thing

Verse eight Jesus says, "These are the beginning of the sorrows." The word here for sorrows is the word that was used for "birth pains", and once the beginning of birth pains we know the baby's coming. There's a long period of birth pains, but eventually there's going to be a birth. It's going to be a new life. That's what's being said here. There's a new life that's coming. It's a new day that's coming. It's going to be birthed. As the birth pains, contraction, quicken and get closer then we know that the birth of what is coming is ever so near.

Jesus is Preparing Us for What is to Come

Jesus, and the point of the scriptures that are being told here, is so that we might be prepared, that we might know this is what's coming. We won't have fear. It will be exactly as he says that it is. It will quicken us to the purpose of why we study prophecy and why the importance of it. We won't be shaken. Our foundation will stay secure knowing it's exactly as Jesus said it would be.

6 Reasons Why We Should Study Prophecy

Here are 6 reasons why we should study prophecy:

Control - (God is in Control for He Knows the End from the Beginning)

Isaiah 46:9–10 (NKJV) ⁹ Remember the former things of old, For I am God, and there is no other; I am God, and there is none like Me, ¹⁰ Declaring the end from the beginning, And from ancient times things that are not yet done, Saying, 'My counsel shall stand, And I will do all My pleasure,'

Comfort - (We can take Comfort knowing God is in Control, and none of these things Surprise Him)

1 Thessalonians 4:16–18 (NKJV) ¹⁶ For the Lord Himself will descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of an archangel, and with the trumpet of God. And the dead in Christ will rise first. ¹⁷ Then we who are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air. And thus we shall always be with the Lord. ¹⁸ Therefore comfort one another with these words.

Persevere - (We are to continue to Persevere, for He is Worth It)

(Revelation 3:10 NKJV) "Because you have kept My command to persevere, I also will keep you from the hour of trial which shall come upon the whole world, to test those who dwell on the earth.

Purity - (Everyone who has this Hope Purifies themselves – to Give Themselves to Him the Spotless Bride)

1 John 3:2–3 (NKJV) ² Beloved, now we are children of God; and it has not yet been revealed what we shall be, but we know that when He is revealed, we shall be like Him, for we shall see Him as He is. ³ And everyone who has this hope in Him purifies himself, just as He is pure.

Priority - (Make our Priorities to What Matters Most considering we are going to See the King soon and very soon)

Matthew 6:33 (NKJV) ³³ But seek first the kingdom of God and His righteousness, and all these things shall be added to you.

Preparation - (There is a Lost and Dying World who is not Prepared to Meet Him)

John 3:16–17 (NKJV) ¹⁶ For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have everlasting life. ¹⁷ For God did not send His Son into the world to condemn the world, but that the world through Him might be saved.

He is Coming Back for His Bride

I just came back from a three-day conference, and it's always the same thing, even if it's only three days. I am always literally as I'm pulling out and driving away, I already begin to miss my family, my wife, my children. And the further I drive away the more my heart misses them. Because it's therefore that means it's going to be some distance to get back to them. And the longer I'm away the more I long for them to be with them. Because they're my family. She's my bride. They're my sons. And when Jesus speaks about these things, he's speaking with the heart of a husband longing for his bride, missing his bride, and waiting for his bride to be brought back, to be brought home, to be brought to him. So there's a heart behind these words and it's longing heart. God wishes none should perish. And his grace extends, and as his grace extends that means time extends. And here we are, we're still here because he's extending his grace to others, to come, to be received become part of his family. And so as he speaks to us here in Mark 13, there's a heart here and there's a depths of a heart of husband missing his wife, missing his family.

Prayer – Boldly Ask Your God

The Word of God is Living and Powerful, and is ready, and will do a mighty work in our lives.

Hebrews 4:12 (NKJV) ¹² For the word of God is living and powerful, and sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing even to the division of soul and spirit, and of joints and marrow, and is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart.

In Every Study

- Who Is God? (How Great is He?)
- What Does He Think of Me? (How Wonderful Are His Thoughts Towards Me?)
- What Does He Want Me to Do?
- What Can I Boldly Request of Him?
- What Do I Need to Be on Guard of When I Leave Here Today?

Boldly come to the throne of grace, ask God to reveal Himself in a mighty way to you, and to do I might work in you, and through you.

Hebrews 4:16 (NKJV) ¹⁶ Let us therefore come boldly to the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy and find grace to help in time of need.

There is a Prayer Team Available to Pray with and for You

End of Study

Mark 13:9-27

Intro/Recap

It's Tuesday, we are two days from the crucifixion, where the Lamb of God will take away the sin of the world, for any who will put their trust in Him for salvation. The religious leaders have laid challenge after challenge against Him, the day is far spent, He and His disciples are heading to Bethany for the night. And as they were leaving Jerusalem, leaving the temple, the disciples say to Jesus look at how awesome this temple is, to which Jesus says the days are coming it will be utterly destroyed, every stone of the temple will be toppled. And, thus starts the conversation of the signs of the Last Days. We left off in verse 8 last week, but let's read 13:1-8 to stay in the context of the passage.

*John 1:29 (NKJV)*²⁹ The next day John saw Jesus coming toward him, and said, "Behold! The Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world!"

Mark 13:1–8 (NKJV)¹ Then as He went out of the temple, one of His disciples said to Him, "Teacher, see what manner of stones and what buildings *are here!*"² And Jesus answered and said to him, "Do you see these great buildings? Not *one* stone shall be left upon another, that shall not be thrown down."³ Now as He sat on the Mount of Olives opposite the temple, Peter, James, John, and Andrew asked Him privately,⁴ "Tell us, when will these things be? And what *will be* the sign when all these things will be fulfilled?"⁵ And Jesus, answering them, began to say: "Take heed that no one deceives you.⁶ For many will come in My name, saying, 'I am *He,*' and will deceive many."⁷ But when you hear of wars and rumors of wars, do not be troubled; for *such things* must happen, but the end *is not yet.*⁸ For nation will rise against nation, and kingdom against kingdom. And there will be earthquakes in various places, and there will be famines and troubles. These *are* the beginnings of sorrows.

Steeped in Doctrine of Last Days

Introduction, I actually struggle with this passage because I said, "How do I keep this fresh?" Because I know so many of you are so well versed in eschatology, to which after just a minute or two of the struggle I praised the Lord and I says, "You're wonderful and amazing Lord, that this church, these people have and are so steeped in these last days things, the eschatology we call them." But I will continue to teach because we're still to be called to remember and to be reminded. Just as we say going to Israel makes the Bible come alive, so too, reading the news headlines make the Bible come alive.

So if you are just learning these things, blessings will come for being diligent in studying the Word of God, and we will discuss that more in just a few minutes; and if these things are common to you, then I encourage you to still approach them as God has something new for you in your understanding, desires to take you even deeper in the knowledge of these things, and..... watching last days before our very eyes, confirms this Bible is the VERY WORD OF GOD, and all His promises to me, regardless of life situations and circumstances, are sure and true. God loves me, and He is coming back for me, He is waiting for me! Jesus is coming for me, for you, why? Because He said so! Regardless of how well I am doing, regardless how poorly I am doing, He is coming regardless of me, but because He said so, because Jesus on the cross has made it a regardless of me, and all about Him, His Word, His Work!

We Start a Series on the Last Days here in Chapter 13:

- Jesus Predicts the Destruction of the Temple (13:1-2)
- Jesus Tells of the Signs of the Last Days (13:3-13)
- Jesus Tells of the Great Tribulation (13:14-23)
- The Second Coming of Christ (13:24-27)
- The Parable of the Fig Tree (13:28-31)
- No One Knows the Day or Hour (13:32-37)

God Says Come

Today we come and are gifted this Word from God Himself, His very heart opened before us, the calling to come near, be drawn to Him.

*Matthew 11:28 (NKJV)*²⁸ Come to Me, all *you* who labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest.

The Word of God is Living and Powerful, and is ready, and will do a mighty work in our lives.

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Jesus Tells of the Signs of the Last Days (13:3-13)

Mark 13:9 “But watch out for yourselves, for they will deliver you up to councils, and you will be beaten in the synagogues. You will be brought before rulers and kings for My sake, for a testimony to them.

Persecution – Signs of Last Day

Verse nine through 13, a sign of the last days is very often overshadowed or forgotten that it's a sign of persecution. It will be last last days specific of the nation of Israel, because the beatings in the synagogues (as we have churches), but it started with these disciples that Jesus is speaking about. It started with them upon Jesus' ascension in 32 A.D. And they were beaten, they were taken to the synagogue, they were taken before rulers. Paul, the Apostle, was taken before kings and we see that it began in 32 A.D. but it will continue for all, so it's still a present near term prophecy of being persecuted as a Christian, but it will increase even more so in the last days and it will continue on until and through the tribulation.

Persecution Stats

70 million Christians' martyred for their faith since Jesus walked the earth

**Christianity Today, 2014*

Open Doors Ministry – 2019 World Watch List Report

The 2019 World Watch List report is based on comprehensive and investigative research of 150 countries where Christians are persecuted for their faith. Each year, our research reveals telling numbers and statistics that give us a glimpse at the depth, prevalence and widespread reach of the persecution believers endure.

Below, we share a quick glance at the numbers during the 2019 reporting period (from Oct. 31, 2017, to November 1, 2018). But by no means do the numbers tell the full story. Each fact and figure represent real people with real lives, families, jobs, churches—fathers, mothers, husbands, wives, sons, daughters—who every day make the dangerous choice to believe in and trust Jesus.

IN A YEAR

- 245 Million: In the top 50 World Watch List countries alone, 245 million Christians in the world experience high levels of persecution for their choice to follow Christ.
- 1 in 9: Christians worldwide experience high levels of persecution
- 14%: The rise in the number of Christians in the top 50 countries on the 2019 World Watch List (WWL) who experience high levels of persecution. (from the 2018 reporting period to 2019's)
- 4,136: Christians killed for faith-related reasons in the top 50 WWL countries.
- 2,625: Christians detained without trial, arrested, sentenced and imprisoned in the top 50 WWL countries.
- 1,266: churches or Christian buildings attacked in the top 50 WWL countries.

- 7 out of 9: In seven of the countries in the World Watch List's top 10, the primary cause of persecution is Islamic oppression.
- 11: countries scoring in the "extreme" level for their persecution of Christians. Five years ago, North Korea was the only one.
- 18: Consecutive years North Korea has ranked No. 1 as the world's most dangerous place for Christians.

EVERY MONTH

- 105: churches attacked, burned or vandalized each month, in the top 50 WWL countries

EVERY DAY

- 11: Christians killed every day for their faith, in the top 50 WWL countries.

BY THE CONTINENT

- 1 out of 6: Christians in Africa that experience high levels of persecution.
- 1 out of 3: Christians in Asia that experience high levels of persecution.
- 1 out of 21: Christians in South America who experience high levels of persecution.

Signs to Keep Us Ready

And these signs that we follow through all this teaching, they are signs to keep every generation ready.

3 Charges

We're given three charges here in verses 9 through 13. We're to watch in verse nine, we are to not worry, verse 11 and we are to endure, verse 13. So the charge is given to us to watch, to be mindful, to know the signs around us and we are not to worry when we see these signs unfolding, as troubling as they may be, God has us and He is holding us in His hand regardless of the extremity of the circumstances. And we're to give that call to finish well, to endure to the end.

Jesus is Preparing Us for What is to Come

Verse 9 - But watch out for yourselves - Jesus, and the point of the scriptures that are being told here, is so that we might be prepared, that we might know this is what's coming. We won't have fear. It will be exactly as he says that it is. It will quicken us to the purpose of why we study prophecy and why the importance of it. We won't be shaken. Our foundation will stay secure knowing it's exactly as Jesus said it would be.

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Weather App

Jesus said you can read the signs of the weather; well you should know how to read the signs of His Coming.

Matthew 16:1–4 (NKJV) ¹ Then the Pharisees and Sadducees came, and testing Him asked that He would show them a sign from heaven. ² He answered and said to them, "When it is evening you say, 'It will be fair weather, for the sky is red'; ³ and in the morning, 'It will be foul weather today, for the sky is red and threatening.' Hypocrites! You know how to discern the face of the sky, but you cannot discern the signs of the times. ⁴ A wicked and adulterous generation seeks after a sign, and no sign shall be given to it except the sign of the prophet Jonah." And He left them and departed.

Thursday I was in a meeting with a few other people, and the whole table started to vibrate. What it was, is that everyone's phone where on the table, and a weather alert came in saying "tornado warning right now take action". So, my action was to stay inside until the possible tornados passed. If I was to leave at that moment, been caught in a tornado, let's say survive it, but lost my vehicle, suffered physical injury, would not everyone had said to me..... You were giving the warning, the signs, how did you still get caught in the tornado?

If we believe in the imminent rapture of the church, the Tribulation Period, and the Second Coming of Christ..... because we see all the signs, then our actions and behaviors should follow accordingly.

Mark 13:10 And the gospel must first be preached to all the nations.

Verse 9 – The Testimony is in the Persecution

Verse nine, it's a testimony to them. Your persecution is a witness to them.

Mark 13:9 "But watch out for yourselves, for they will deliver you up to councils, and you will be beaten in the synagogues. You will be brought before rulers and kings *for My sake, for a testimony to them.*

Notice Emphasis on Gospel / Not a Social Gospel

Notice the continual emphasis is on the Gospel, it's on the testimony, it's on the witness. It's not on social justice. It's not on building orphanages as much as they are needed. It's not on feeding the poor as much as that is needed. It is not on universal health care as much as that is needed. It's not on all these social justice agendas. As many confuse today is the Gospel. **The Gospel is about saving souls that are perishing into everlasting hell.**

This social gospel has been rising and rising year after year and many will find their good works in it, but do not be deceived, do not be deceived, for by grace you have saved through faith, not in works, least any man should boast. Good works will not save you, only Jesus Christ. Good works will follow salvation, but good works will not save, very important you know the difference. If you are putting your trust of salvation into good works, you deceive yourself.

Ephesians 2:8–10 (NKJV) ⁸ For by grace you have been saved through faith, and that not of yourselves; it is the gift of God, ⁹ not of works, lest anyone should boast. ¹⁰ For we are His workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand that we should walk in them.

Gospel Has Been Preached to Whole World – And Will Again / 144K – Sealed & Last Days

Verse 10 was fulfilled by Paul. The gospel has been preached to the whole world. There is nothing more to wait on, as many say the gospel has to be preached to the whole world. This was already fulfilled. It does not prevent the rapture as some people errantly assume.

Colossians 1:21–23 (NKJV) ²¹ And you, who once were alienated and enemies in your mind by wicked works, yet now He has reconciled ²² in the body of His flesh through death, to present you holy, and blameless, and above reproach in His sight—²³ if indeed you continue in the faith, grounded and steadfast, and are not moved away from the hope of the gospel which you heard, which was preached to every creature under heaven, of which I, Paul, became a minister.

But during the tribulation period, the gospel will be preached to the whole world. There's going to be two prophets at the Wailing Wall. They're prophets who will speak the Word of Christ. There's going to be an angel in the heaven (sky), we're told in Revelation, preaching the everlasting Gospel. Imagine that sign, and yet some people still won't believe. And it's always been said those 144 000 that were sealed, these Jewish believers, from each tribe of the 12 twelve tribes of Israel, some say they're super-evangelist, 144, 000 Billy Grahams. I just make the point, nowhere does the Scripture say that, but I would easily be able to agree they're going to be bold because they're going to know who their Messiah is and they're going to preach him and preach of his redeeming grace that comes through the sacrifice. And to which I say, "Why should they be any different than me?" I pray for myself and I pray for you that we will just rise up and be bold in our witness for Christ as we have breath in these last days.

Revelation 14:1–5 (NKJV) ¹ Then I looked, and behold, a Lamb standing on Mount Zion, and with Him one hundred *and* forty-four thousand, having His Father's name written on their foreheads. ² And I heard a voice from heaven, like the voice of many waters, and like the voice of loud thunder. And I heard the sound of harpists playing their harps. ³ They sang as it were a new song before the throne, before the four living creatures, and the elders; and no one could learn that song except the hundred *and* forty-four thousand who were redeemed from the earth. ⁴ These are the ones who were not defiled with women, for they are virgins. These are the ones who follow the Lamb wherever He goes. These were redeemed from *among* men, *being* firstfruits to God and to the Lamb. ⁵ And in their mouth was found no deceit, for they are without fault before the throne of God.

Revelation 14:6–7 (NKJV) ⁶ Then I saw another angel flying in the midst of heaven, having the everlasting gospel to preach to those who dwell on the earth—to every nation, tribe, tongue, and people—⁷ saying with a loud voice, "Fear God and give glory to Him, for the hour of His judgment has come; and worship Him who made heaven and earth, the sea and springs of water."

Mark 13:11 But when they arrest you and deliver you up, do not worry beforehand, or premeditate what you will speak. But whatever is given you in that hour, speak that; for it is not you who speak, but the Holy Spirit.

Imagine the "When They Arrest You" Altar Call

Verse 11, notice it says, "When they arrest you." How many people would respond to an altar call today if they knew this was their future? But it let it be noted and seen, these disciples believed they lived in the last days. They're hearing the prophetic word that this would be their future. But these men, minus one (sadly there is always a one who says I don't want this, or this isn't working out the way I think it should, or I am my own person I don't need Jesus, and they miss salvation before them – anyone here today, don't be that one), but these 11 disciples they thought it all worth it and they still responded to the altar call of Jesus Christ and gave their lives to him.

Holy Spirit Utterance

Verse 11. The Holy Spirit will give you words of utterance, but I believe based on the whole council of God, that we are still yet to study to show ourselves approved, a workman who need not be ashamed, rightly dividing the truth. I believe based on the whole council of God, that we should be ready to give an answer of why we believe what we believe. I believe based on the whole council of God, that we should be ready in season and out of season. I believe that when we are scheduled to teach, whether it's from the pulpit or Sunday school or whatever place God gives us that we should study, and seek the Lord, what is the message that I give? What is your heart on this passage? What's the application for the here, today?

1 Peter 3:15–16 (NKJV) ¹⁵ But sanctify the Lord God in your hearts, and always be ready to give a defense to everyone who asks you a reason for the hope that is in you, with meekness and fear; ¹⁶ having a good conscience, that when they defame you as evildoers, those who revile your good conduct in Christ may be ashamed.

2 Timothy 2:15 (NKJV) ¹⁵ Be diligent to present yourself approved to God, a worker who does not need to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth.

2 Timothy 4:1–2 (NKJV) ¹ I charge you therefore before God and the Lord Jesus Christ, who will judge the living and the dead at His appearing and His kingdom: ² Preach the word! Be ready in season and out of season. Convince, rebuke, exhort, with all longsuffering and teaching.

But there's this place that we have to trust, that when we haven't prepared our message and God opens a divine appointment, that we trust that he will give us his word. Now we have to have the word soaked and saturated within us in order for it to flow back out of us, and hence we must study to be prepared for the divine appointment. But we may not and most likely will not, get to deliver our prepared message.

And just this week, I had prayed in corporate prayer, Lord to open up a divine appointment the following day, and the Lord did so for me. And it was the divine appointment that I had been praying for a specific person that I would get to share Christ with, and I had somewhat prepared. I thought that we were most likely going down the avenue of the discussion that would start with this person saying, that there is no God. And therefore, I had prepared in my mind, points on creation vs evolution, I even kept a book nearby that I could give to him afterwards. We weren't three seconds into our conversation of the divine appointment that The Lord opened, that this person says to me, "I absolutely believe there is a higher power." And so everything I had prepared was of no use at that point. But the Holy Spirit did take over and there were some things that I spoke, that came out of my mouth, that I said this is purely and surely the Holy Spirit giving utterance. And so too, we should be ready, and so too should we be trusting, that the Lord will do what he promises. And we need not fear ever being "unprepared" and thus skipping opportunities because we don't feel prepared.

I've told the story before, but worth repeating, that there was a woman who would street preach and all she would say was John 3:16. And there was a man who everyday would walk the same route home and pass her preaching, continually just saying John 3:16. He would say day after day to himself, is that all she can say? Finally one day he could take it no more and he stopped to berate her, and he says is that all you know, is that all you can say, to which she said, "yes". To which he said you are a fool. Leaving her he went home, irritated about her, and saying what a fool. But that night as he laid in bed, all he heard was John 3:16 ringing in his head, and realizing the truth of those words, his sin before the holy God, and sacrifice made for him, he slid out of bed on to his knees and prayed to Jesus for salvation. So Beloved, don't worry what you are going to say, just trust the Lord He will give you the words to say by the inspiration of the Holy Spirit. Remember, we study prophecy, because there is a lost and dying world that is unprepared to meet Him, and they still live in their sin, and the penalty of their sin before the Holy God.

John 3:16 (NKJV) ¹⁶ For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have everlasting life.

Mark 13:12 Now brother will betray brother to death, and a father his child; and children will rise up against parents and cause them to be put to death.

Mark 13:13 And you will be hated by all for My name's sake. But he who endures to the end shall be saved.

Think About That Betrayal – But Already Happening Today

Verse 12, betrayed by family. Think about that. A parent that could turn against a child, a child that could turn against the parent to the point of death. Not because of abuse, not because of non-support, not because they took away their game station, but because they were believers. Imagine what that world environment would be. And we're watching it today, in our day.

He Who Endures Until End

The Word says what the Word says. If we endure to the end, we shall be saved ... So there's a calling there to not retreat, to not recant, to not quit when the pressure is heavy upon us. Jesus would say in Matthew 10:32, "If you confess me before men, I will confess you before my Father in Heaven, but if you deny me before men, I will deny you before my Father in Heaven." And many people say if they were given that ultimatum to recant Jesus or not and they say, "It's just words. Why not recant?" Even though you don't mean it in your heart, I think there's a place that if it's in your heart it will be impossible for you with your lips to say anything else.

Matthew 10:32–33 (NKJV) ³² "Therefore whoever confesses Me before men, him I will also confess before My Father who is in heaven. ³³ But whoever denies Me before men, him I will also deny before My Father who is in heaven.

Jesus Tells of the Great Tribulation (13:14-23)

Mark 13:14 “So when you see the ‘abomination of desolation,’ spoken of by Daniel the prophet, standing where it ought not” (let the reader understand), “then let those who are in Judea flee to the mountains.

Daniel Chapter 9

Daniel chapter nine is probably one of the most prophetic keys of the whole Scriptures and we're told of the 70 sevens of Daniel. And those seven represent 70, 7-year periods, so that equals 490 years. And as we have studied, to the day, as it was prophesied, 483 years (173,880 days – based on the calendar of that time being 360 day years) from the time of the prophecy Jesus, His first coming, rode into Jerusalem and was heralded the Messiah. But that leaves us one more seven-year period to get to the 490 years, and that last seven-year period is what is known as the tribulation period. And at the end of that seven-year period, right on the 490-year mark, will be the second coming of Christ to set up the millennial kingdom. This gap between the First Coming and the Second Coming, is what is known as the dispensation (period) of Grace, as God is giving opportunity for man to receive His grace, before the great dreadful Tribulation Period.

Daniel 9:24–27 (NKJV) ²⁴ “Seventy weeks are determined For your people and for your holy city, To finish the transgression, To make an end of sins, To make reconciliation for iniquity, To bring in everlasting righteousness, To seal up vision and prophecy, And to anoint the Most Holy. ²⁵ “Know therefore and understand, *That* from the going forth of the command To restore and build Jerusalem Until Messiah the Prince, *There shall be* seven weeks and sixty-two weeks; The street shall be built again, and the wall, Even in troublesome times. ²⁶ “And after the sixty-two weeks Messiah shall be cut off, but not for Himself; And the people of the prince who is to come Shall destroy the city and the sanctuary. The end of it *shall be* with a flood, And till the end of the war desolations are determined. ²⁷ Then he shall confirm a covenant with many for one week; But in the middle of the week He shall bring an end to sacrifice and offering. And on the wing of abominations shall be one who makes desolate, Even until the consummation, which is determined, Is poured out on the desolate.”

The Rapture

Now the rapture of the church is when God comes and takes out the church, His bride, before the tribulation period happens.

And it is often questioned and challenged, saying, nowhere will you find the word rapture in the Bible. To which this is true, but you also will not find the word Trinity. But we clearly have seen it clearly taught, God the Father and God the Son and God the Holy Spirit, the Trinity, though it's never spoken directly called the Trinity. And I might say, before the flood came it had never rained before, and no one knew what rain meant. And if you want to go just a step further by the way, you will not find the word Bible in the Bible.

We get this rapture from First Thessalonians chapter four and it says that we will be caught up, and that word means to be seized up violently, in the sense of the way we're snatched so quickly. And the word there, in the Greek word is [harpazo], but in Latin, [rapturo] is where we get the word rapture, and Latin was one of the most translated languages of the Bible. But if we wanted to just stay on the originally Greek, maybe we can start a movement (haha) where we say we are going to get “harpazo’d” soon. If the harpazo doesn’t happen today, it’s going to happen tomorrow, and if doesn’t happen today, ask me tomorrow and I will say the same thing.

1 Thessalonians 4:13–18 (NKJV) ¹³ *But I do not want you to be ignorant, brethren, concerning those who have fallen asleep, lest you sorrow as others who have no hope.* ¹⁴ *For if we believe that Jesus died and rose again, even so God will bring with Him those who sleep in Jesus.* ¹⁵ *For this we say to you by the word of the Lord, that we who are alive and remain until the coming of the Lord will by no means precede those who are asleep.* ¹⁶ *For the Lord Himself will descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of an archangel, and with the trumpet of God. And the dead in Christ will rise first.* ¹⁷ *Then we who are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air. And thus we shall always be with the Lord.* ¹⁸ *Therefore comfort one another with these words.*

Difference Between Rapture and 2nd Coming

So it should be clarified the difference between the rapture and the second coming of Christ, for many people confuse the two, that the rapture is the second coming of Christ, but that is not so. When we say the coming of Christ, you have three parts to it.

- And it's first, the first coming of Christ. Jesus put his feet on this earth when he came and was born of the virgin birth and that was the first coming (and lasted about 33 years), and exactly as prophesied in Daniel chapter nine, was the day He rode into Jerusalem and was heralded the Messiah (173,880 days).
- The second coming will be when he comes and puts his feet on the dirt of this earth again. And as we said, that will be at the end of the tribulation.

- But somewhere in between that is what we call the rapture, where he doesn't actually put his feet on the earth, he meets us in the clouds, and he calls us up. We're raptured out of this earth, we meet him in the heavenlies and then we enter into this seven-year marriage supper of the Lamb, which coincides while we're in marriage bliss in Heaven, there'll be a seven-year period of hell here on earth.

Revelation 19:7–8 (NKJV) ⁷ Let us be glad and rejoice and give Him glory, for the marriage of the Lamb has come, and His wife has made herself ready." ⁸ And to her it was granted to be arrayed in fine linen, clean and bright, for the fine linen is the righteous acts of the saints.

Tribulation – God’s Wrath Upon Christ Rejecting World

The Tribulation is God’s wrath on a Christ rejecting world. New Believers will be caught in the middle of the war between Good and Evil.

Revelation 6:15–17 (NKJV) ¹⁵ And the kings of the earth, the great men, the rich men, the commanders, the mighty men, every slave and every free man, hid themselves in the caves and in the rocks of the mountains, ¹⁶ and said to the mountains and rocks, "Fall on us and hide us from the face of Him who sits on the throne and from the wrath of the Lamb!" ¹⁷ For the great day of His wrath has come, and who is able to stand?"

Dan 12 / 1,290 Days

Verse 14, Jesus speaks very clearly that you will know, you can mark it, etch it in stone, when you see the abomination of desolation as spoken of by the prophet Daniel in chapter nine, know that the second coming of Jesus is coming imminently. So specific is Daniel's prophecy in Daniel chapter 12, that once we see the abomination of desolation, we're told to count 1,290 days until Jesus' second coming. So the abomination of desolation is literally the sign of the second coming. And 1,290 is just about three and a half years.

Daniel 9:27 (NKJV) ²⁷ Then he shall confirm a covenant with many for one week; But in the middle of the week He shall bring an end to sacrifice and offering. And on the wing of abominations shall be one who makes desolate, Even until the consummation, which is determined, Is poured out on the desolate."

Daniel 12:8–12 (NKJV) ⁸ Although I heard, I did not understand. Then I said, "My lord, what shall be the end of these things?" ⁹ And he said, "Go your way, Daniel, for the words are closed up and sealed till the time of the end. ¹⁰ Many shall be purified, made white, and refined, but the wicked shall do wickedly; and none of the wicked shall understand, but the wise shall understand. ¹¹ "And from the time that the daily sacrifice is taken away, and the abomination of desolation is set up, there shall be one thousand two hundred and ninety days. ¹² Blessed is he who waits, and comes to the one thousand three hundred and thirty-five days.

At 3.5 Year Mark / Abomination Desolation

And what happens at the three-and-a-half-year mark? What is the abomination of desolation is, this man of peace who comes on the earth (the anti-christ), and imagine this man of peace who can fix this broken world, as messed up as it is, because when the rapture happens and Christians are taken out and billions of people are missing on the planet, the world's going to be in chaos. And then will begin the rise of this antichrist. He will come on with charisma and persuasion and the world will be looking for a man with answers. And he will be a man who brings the answers. He will broker a seven-year peace treaty in Israel, which no-one has ever done or will be able to. And sorry to say President Trump, your deal of the century will fail just like every other great deal for Middle-East peace. But this man of peace is going to come and he's going to help broker this peace agreement. But these continual peace treaty attempts are all signs of the last days, as the world knows, the Middle-East needs peace.

And many believe, myself including, that one of the things he'll do (the anti-christ), is he's going to help Israel rebuild the temple. Because the temple will be rebuilt in its entirety obviously for him to go in and desecrate it. And there's the problem that's always said, "How can you rebuild the temple when the Muslim Dome of the Rock, their third most holy site, sits on top of the temple?" That's what's going to make this man of peace so charismatic and dynamic is, he'll be able to do it. And I believe that the exact location of where the temple is, is beside the Dome of the Rock. So the Dome of the Rock will not be removed because there will never be, as far as I can see, the Dome of the Rock being removed to make peace. The Muslims will not allow it.

But this temple has to be rebuilt because the antichrist is going to go in at the halfway point, three and a half years of the seven year peace and the seven year tribulation, another coinciding seven years and at that mid-point he's going to go into the temple and declare himself to be God. So when he comes on the scene he's not going to be totally clear that he is the Messiah. But at the three-and-a-half-year mark, he will call himself the Messiah.

When he does, Jesus tells the Jews to run to the wilderness, which we believe is the rock city Petra there in Jordan (but that is not for certain in any scriptures I read, just a speculation). And they will be tucked away, Revelation 12 tells us, and be protected. And then at this time, the antichrist can't stand it that he lost that battle. So then he's going to go and pour out every piece of wrath that he has on the believers, those who will not receive him and acknowledge him as the Christ, who follow the true Christ. And so he will be coming after them with a vengeance and it will be a horrendous time on earth to be a Christian. Hence why if you have not given your life to Jesus Christ, today is the day. Now is the acceptable time to give your life to Christ because you don't want to go through the tribulation, you don't want to miss the rapture and it's very possible that if you miss the rapture and enter the tribulation you won't even be able to receive Christ anyway because you'll be deceived by the delusion of the antichrist.

Now the seven-year period is God dealing primarily with the nation Israel. God had offered the nation of Israel to have Him be their King at his first coming, but he was rejected. He turned and opened this glorious gospel up to all the Gentiles and here we are. And we know that, for the most part, the Jewish people are still rejecting Jesus as the Messiah. But we are seeing, amazingly, in this day that we live, an amazing increase in Jewish people getting saved and calling upon Jesus as their Lord and Savior. So in that seven year period, God will be dealing with the nation of Israel specifically to redeem them. And we're told in Romans 11 that all of Israel will be saved, which is amazing. They will all come and recognize that Jesus is the Messiah. But Zechariah tells us, but during this horrendous tribulation period, these first three and a half years, or somewhere over these seven years, two thirds of the nation of Israel, the people of Israel, Jewish decent, will be slaughtered and killed. But when they see the anti-christ for who he is, they will also see Jesus Christ for who He is, and all Israel will be saved.

Romans 11:25–26 (NKJV) ²⁵ For I do not desire, brethren, that you should be ignorant of this mystery, lest you should be wise in your own opinion, that blindness in part has happened to Israel until the fullness of the Gentiles has come in. ²⁶ And so all Israel will be saved, as it is written: "The Deliverer will come out of Zion, And He will turn away ungodliness from Jacob;

Zechariah 13:8–9 (NKJV) ⁸ And it shall come to pass in all the land," Says the LORD, "That two-thirds in it shall be cut off and die, But one-third shall be left in it: ⁹ I will bring the one-third through the fire, Will refine them as silver is refined, And test them as gold is tested. They will call on My name, And I will answer them. I will say, 'This is My people'; And each one will say, 'The LORD is my God.' "

Revelation 12 Foretold

Revelation chapter 12 foretold here when the Jews recognize the antichrist for who he is, they will flee to the mountains and be preserved for the last half of the tribulation period.

Revelation 12:3–6 (NKJV) ³ And another sign appeared in heaven: behold, a great, fiery red dragon having seven heads and ten horns, and seven diadems on his heads. ⁴ His tail drew a third of the stars of heaven and threw them to the earth. And the dragon stood before the woman who was ready to give birth, to devour her Child as soon as it was born. ⁵ She bore a male Child who was to rule all nations with a rod of iron. And her Child was caught up to God and His throne. ⁶ Then the woman fled into the wilderness, where she has a place prepared by God, that they should feed her there one thousand two hundred and sixty days.

If Tribulation Near – Rapture Nearer

So the signs point to the tribulation is near and that means that the rapture is even nearer.

Mark 13:15 Let him who is on the housetop not go down into the house, nor enter to take anything out of his house.

Mark 13:16 And let him who is in the field not go back to get his clothes.

Mark 13:17 But woe to those who are pregnant and to those who are nursing babies in those days!

Mark 13:18 And pray that your flight may not be in winter.

Don't Look Back

Jesus says when you see it, get out:

- Field - The field represents work. If you're at work, take off, it doesn't matter about getting your paycheck, it means get out while the getting out is good.
- Pregnant or Baby - Imagine being with child, trying to do double time. You talk about soldiers carrying 80-pound backpacks and gear. Here's a woman carrying child. That would be horrible.
- Winter - Pray doesn't happen in the winter because you try to get out anywhere in the midst of a snow storm, you know how bound up you are. When we get a snowstorm what do we do, we shut down

church, work, etc and we bunker down in our houses. I was in Jerusalem in February many years ago and it started to snow and I could still remember nobody knew what to do and snow in the Middle East. We ended up having to leave eight hours early from Jerusalem to get to Tel Aviv airport, which should have been no more than two hours.

I take great detail in the teaching of my eschatology because I believe it's possible that these digital sermons will still be preserved in the last days and someone may come upon them and hear them and say, this is exactly what was said and here's what they say to do, get out!

Sermons Preserved / If You been Left Behind - Flee

If you miss the rapture, if somehow, you're still here during this horrendous hell on earth, the tribulation period, flee, get to the mountains, or as Jesus is saying, get to the wilderness. Don't stand around looking at the world's goods. Don't go back for the world's goods because they're going to do you no good where you're going. You'll need to do two things. Trust in the Lord with all your heart. Lean not on your own understanding in all these ways acknowledge Him, and He shall direct your path. You need to trust him for your salvation and then you need to trust him for your personal welfare during this time and be willing to surrender all. Surrender to none, but the One (Jesus Christ).

Proverbs 3:5-6 (NKJV) ⁵ Trust in the LORD with all your heart, And lean not on your own understanding; ⁶ In all your ways acknowledge Him, And He shall direct your paths.

Mark 13:19 For in those days there will be tribulation, such as has not been since the beginning of the creation which God created until this time, nor ever shall be.

Mark 13:20 And unless the Lord had shortened those days, no flesh would be saved; but for the elect's sake, whom He chose, He shortened the days.

Not Since Time Began – That Includes Day of Noah

Consider this, this statement and has not been since time began. I want you to consider what happened since time began, because this judgment will be worse than anything ever seen. Worse than Sodom and Gomorrah, because that was a very isolated, pinpoint destruction.

But this will be, if we can imagine it, even worse than the Noah flood. My mind can't comprehend what that means other than Jesus said if he didn't cut it short, no flesh would be left on the earth. But I think what is being said more so than the death toll, which at the time of the Noah flood, the world was estimated based on the age that people lived, and as we read through the scriptures and as we look at the lifespans and long lines of the lineages, that the world's population was around 6 billion, which we are now at 7 billion. I don't think it's the death toll summation that is being spoken of here. But the agony of the destruction is spoken of here, the flood was quick. People could have kept moving, trying to get to higher ground and higher ground, but still the maximum anyone could have survived would've been 40 days of this agony of the continual running. Who knows how many would've perished just as the upheavals would happen. They would have died from volcanic eruptions. They would've died from continual wetness, hypothermia, setting in and that would have been agonizing, but it would have been only 40 days. But here we are talking agony that will extend for seven years of cataclysmic upheavals, meteor showers, earth breaking open, war, pestilence, famine. This is why it makes the Noah flood pale in comparison period.

Mark 13:21 “Then if anyone says to you, ‘Look, here is the Christ!’ or, ‘Look, He is there!’ do not believe it.

Mark 13:22 For false christs and false prophets will rise and show signs and wonders to deceive, if possible, even the elect.

Mark 13:23 But take heed; see, I have told you all things beforehand.

False Christ and Prophets – Will be very Convincing / Plenty Today with Social Media

Verse 23. Again, the warning of false prophets and false Christ. They're going to say here I am, or many people will say there they are, but the person needs to be on guard of the true and authentic versus the counterfeit. And the only way is to always know the genuine. Study Jesus Christ, study the life of Jesus Christ, and you will never be deceived, today or tomorrow, of false prophets, a false spokesman for Christ, of every wind and doctrine, of all the

social media posts, and all these people who now have a platform on YouTube. Study the genuine and you'll be not deceived.

False prophets will rise up with signs and wonders and people were always more interested in signs and wonders, then they are the word because signs and wonder move the emotion, but the word endures forever and it's the only thing that will be standing in the end. Jesus says heaven and earth will pass away, but my word endures forever.

Mark 13:31 Heaven and earth will pass away, but My words will by no means pass away.

Signs and Wonders

The word of God must supersede anything of signs and wonders because the anti-Christ will do signs and wonders in the tribulation. That's why we must know and base everything on the word of God. And so that scary statement that people make, they say, "If God shows me a sign I'll believe." What people see, signs and wonders, many will be deceived.

The signs Jesus speaks about are the signs based on his word foretold.

But make no mistake God does and still does miracles today but all miracles will be in accordance with his word and all miracles will glorify Jesus Christ and him only. Not a man, not a movement, not a church or an organization. They all point to Jesus Christ and none of them will defy the word and none of them will appease the flesh. All of them will be pointing towards holiness and the righteousness of God.

If Possible / Don't Miss the Rapture (Strong Delusion Coming)

I praise the Lord that this verse says, "if possible" so to say it is not possible. It will be tough though, so persuasive and convincing will be the anti-christ, his false prophets, the signs and wonders, that the elect will struggle though truth and the lie, but because of the Word of God and the Spirit of God, they wont, praise the Lord.

2 Thessalonians 2, it's a great debate among Bible teachers and scholars. And the debate is that some believe that when the rapture happens, if you have heard the gospel and you reject it, then you cannot be saved. They say that you've rejected it and you've judged yourself. I personally do not believe that. I believe that God's wish is that none should perish, that all should seek repentance. There will be people who get saved after the rapture, and I think it's more than just people who had never heard the gospel, but even people who had heard the gospel. Because I do not believe that missing the rapture is the unpardonable sin. The unpardonable sin is the rejection of the Spirit testifying that Jesus Christ is Lord and that you need a Savior. But here's what I do strongly see. It says there will be a strong delusion sent by God. I believe that strong delusion is none other than the antichrist, who will come with lies. And as we see in other parts, signs and wonders.

2 Thessalonians 2:9-12 (NKJV) ⁹ The coming of the lawless one is according to the working of Satan, with all power, signs, and lying wonders, ¹⁰ and with all unrighteous deception among those who perish, because they did not receive the love of the truth, that they might be saved. ¹¹ And for this reason God will send them strong delusion, that they should believe the lie, ¹² that they all may be condemned who did not believe the truth but had pleasure in unrighteousness.

And I believe that the people who did hear the gospel and rejected it over and over before the rapture, that most, their heart had become so hardened that it would be very easy and most probable that they will buy the lie. It's not that they can't get saved. They just won't, because their heart has been so hardened. And in the book of Hebrews it said, "Be careful of rejecting this gospel so many times that your heart becomes hardened." So I speak to you today. Today, while you have ears to hear, the opportunity is before you to receive Jesus Christ. Should the rapture happen and you miss it, you may not be thinking as clearly as this moment because the whole world will be in chaos, and you may find yourself deceived by the lie. And so the scripture will say today is the day of salvation. You can't risk it and wait. Today is the day.

Hebrews 4:6-7 (NKJV) ⁶ Since therefore it remains that some must enter it, and those to whom it was first preached did not enter because of disobedience, ⁷ again He designates a certain day, saying in David, "Today," after such a long time, as it has been said: "Today, if you will hear His voice, Do not harden your hearts."

The Second Coming of Christ (13:24-27)

Mark 13:24 “But in those days, after that tribulation, the sun will be darkened, and the moon will not give its light;

Mark 13:25 the stars of heaven will fall, and the powers in the heavens will be shaken.

Mark 13:26 Then they will see the Son of Man coming in the clouds with great power and glory.

Mark 13:27 And then He will send His angels, and gather together His elect from the four winds, from the farthest part of earth to the farthest part of heaven.

Jesus Comes Back / We Are Not in 1,000 Year Reign

Verse 27 speaks of the second coming obviously, very clearly, that Jesus does not come back until the end of the tribulation period. There are some today who teach that this is the Millennial Kingdom, and if that's true, we're told in the Millennial Kingdom that Satan, we bound and is cast into the bottomless pit for 1,000 years. And so we say that if be true, then it's surely a long leash because Satan has been active in my week, and I'm sure your week, this week.

Revelation 20:1–3 (NKJV) ¹ Then I saw an angel coming down from heaven, having the key to the bottomless pit and a great chain in his hand. ² He laid hold of the dragon, that serpent of old, who is *the* Devil and Satan, and bound him for a thousand years; ³ and he cast him into the bottomless pit, and shut him up, and set a seal on him, so that he should deceive the nations no more till the thousand years were finished. But after these things he must be released for a little while.

At End – Battle Armageddon

But at the end of this seven-year tribulation period, it will culminate in what's called the Battle of Armageddon, and people say it's a battle, good versus evil. But that's misunderstanding also. It will be kings of the east who will have had enough of the antichrist, coming to meet him in battle, and they will meet in the Valley of Megiddo there in Israel. And the two will face off in battle, and it says that the blood will be so high, it will be up to the breast of a horse, whether that's a literal interpretation or figurative I don't know, but it's a lot of blood that is meant to be spoken off. And the blood will flow between these two fighting for world power.

Revelation 16:12–16 (NKJV) ¹² Then the sixth angel poured out his bowl on the great river Euphrates, and its water was dried up, so that the way of the kings from the east might be prepared. ¹³ And I saw three unclean spirits like frogs coming out of the mouth of the dragon, out of the mouth of the beast, and out of the mouth of the false prophet. ¹⁴ For they are spirits of demons, performing signs, which go out to the kings of the earth and of the whole world, to gather them to the battle of that great day of God Almighty. ¹⁵ “Behold, I am coming as a thief. Blessed is he who watches, and keeps his garments, lest he walk naked and they see his shame.” ¹⁶ And they gathered them together to the place called in Hebrew, Armageddon.

And then during that time, if the Lord had not cut it short, there would be no life left. He will come in the clouds, we will be with him, we will have finished dessert at the marriage supper of the Lamb and we will ride with him upon the clouds. And these two world armies will lay down their hatred for one another and turn it against a common hatred that they have greater than each other. Jesus Christ. And they will turn to fight him but in a word he will destroy them and it will be over, and the great tribulation will be over. And then begins the Millennium Kingdom.

Revelation 19:11–16 (NKJV) ¹¹ Now I saw heaven opened, and behold, a white horse. And He who sat on him was called Faithful and True, and in righteousness He judges and makes war. ¹² His eyes were like a flame of fire, and on His head were many crowns. He had a name written that no one knew except Himself. ¹³ He was clothed with a robe dipped in blood, and His name is called The Word of God. ¹⁴ And the armies in heaven, clothed in fine linen, white and clean, followed Him on white horses. ¹⁵ Now out of His mouth goes a sharp sword, that with it He should strike the nations. And He Himself will rule them with a rod of iron. He Himself treads the winepress of the fierceness and wrath of Almighty God. ¹⁶ And He has on His robe and on His thigh a name written: KING OF KINGS AND LORD OF LORDS

Revelation 19:19–21 (NKJV) ¹⁹ And I saw the beast, the kings of the earth, and their armies, gathered together to make war against Him who sat on the horse and against His army. ²⁰ Then the beast was captured, and with him the false prophet who worked signs in his presence, by which he deceived those who received the mark of the beast and those who worshiped his image. These two were cast alive into the lake of fire burning with brimstone. ²¹ And the rest were killed with the sword which proceeded from the mouth of Him who sat on the horse. And all the birds were filled with their flesh.

These are the signs, and all the signs are pointing Jesus is coming back. Jesus is coming back. Jesus is coming back. Are you ready church?

God Says Come

Today we come and are gifted this Word from God Himself, His very heart opened before us, the calling to come near, be drawn to Him.

Matthew 11:28 (NKJV) ²⁸ Come to Me, all you who labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest.

The Word of God is Living and Powerful, and is ready, and will do a mighty work in our lives.

Hebrews 4:12 (NKJV) ¹² For the word of God is living and powerful, and sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing even to the division of soul and spirit, and of joints and marrow, and is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart.

In Every Study

- Who Is God? (How Great is He?)
- What Does He Think of Me? (How Wonderful Are His Thoughts Towards Me?)
- What Does He Want Me to Do?
- What Can I Boldly Request of Him?
- What Do I Need to Be on Guard of When I Leave Here Today?

Boldly come to the throne of grace, ask God to reveal Himself in a mighty way to you, and to do I might work in you, and through you.

Hebrews 4:16 (NKJV) ¹⁶ Let us therefore come boldly to the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy and find grace to help in time of need.

Mark 13:28-37

Intro/Recap

It's Tuesday, we are two days from the crucifixion, where the Lamb of God will take away the sin of the world, for any who will put their trust in Him for salvation. The religious leaders have laid challenge after challenge against Him, the day is far spent, He and His disciples are heading to Bethany for the night. And as they were leaving Jerusalem, leaving the temple, the disciples say to Jesus look at how awesome this temple is, to which Jesus says the days are coming it will be utterly destroyed, every stone of the temple will be toppled. And, thus starts the conversation of the signs of the Last Days. We left off at verse 27 last week, but let's read 13:1-8 to stay in the context of the passage.

*John 1:29 (NKJV)*²⁹ *The next day John saw Jesus coming toward him, and said, "Behold! The Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world!*

Signs of the Last Days - Chapter 13:

- Jesus Predicts the Destruction of the Temple (13:1-2)
- Jesus Tells of the Signs of the Last Days (13:3-13)
- Jesus Tells of the Great Tribulation (13:14-23)
- The Second Coming of Christ (13:24-27)
- The Parable of the Fig Tree (13:28-31)
- No One Knows the Day or Hour (13:32-37)

Today's Passage

Mark 13:28–37 (NKJV)²⁸ "Now learn this parable from the fig tree: When its branch has already become tender, and puts forth leaves, you know that summer is near.²⁹ So you also, when you see these things happening, know that it is near—at the doors!³⁰ Assuredly, I say to you, this generation will by no means pass away till all these things take place.³¹ Heaven and earth will pass away, but My words will by no means pass away.³² "But of that day and hour no one knows, not even the angels in heaven, nor the Son, but only the Father.³³ Take heed, watch and pray; for you do not know when the time is.³⁴ *It is* like a man going to a far country, who left his house and gave authority to his servants, and to each his work, and commanded the doorkeeper to watch.³⁵ Watch therefore, for you do not know when the master of the house is coming—in the evening, at midnight, at the crowing of the rooster, or in the morning—³⁶ lest, coming suddenly, he find you sleeping.³⁷ And what I say to you, I say to all: Watch!"

Signs of Last Days (13:1-27)

So the disciples had asked Jesus what were some of the signs of the "Last Days", and here is what Jesus said:

- False Messiah's (13:6)
- Wars and rumors of war (13:7)
- Nation (ethnic group) against Nation (ethnic group) – (13:8)
- Kingdom against kingdom (13:8)
- Earthquakes all over the world (13:8)
- Famines (13:8)
- Troubles (pestilence) - (13:8)
- Christian persecution (13:9-13)

The Tactic of the Enemy

Now these signs are evident and obvious for us today, are they not? And today's passage as we study will make it even more evident and obvious..... to those that will see through all the clouds and smoke of all the other stuff of this world. Please follow me through on this... at Jesus' first coming, his tactic was to destroy the infant before He could grow up; [Revelation 12:4-5]. After the Lord's death and resurrection, Satan continued his direct assault by attacking the church through persecution, which lasted through the first three centuries. The tactics of the enemy were to destroy any "eyewitnesses" of God's goodness.

However, the faith continued to spread all the more in spite of the bloodshed of the saints, and when the devil realized he could not destroy the move of God physically, he switched his tactics to -- "If you can't beat them, join them!" His hatred achieved less success by direct murderous violence, so he adopted the tactics of a lawyer to win his objective.

The accuser of the brethren:

Revelation 12:10 (NKJV) ¹⁰ Then I heard a loud voice saying in heaven, "Now salvation, and strength, and the kingdom of our God, and the power of His Christ have come, for the accuser of our brethren, who accused them before our God day and night, has been cast down.

Now, when a lawyer is confronted with damaging evidence against his case, he seeks to get that evidence cast out in a pretrial procedure called "discovery." The enemy applied this principle during the dark ages. Having placed his servants into the highest offices in the church, Satan substantially removed the best evidence for the truth by suppressing the Word of God, not allowing it to be read or translated into a common language which the people could understand for themselves.

Finally, in the late 14th century the Bible was translated into a common language, by John Wycliffe, and through a handful of Christian pioneers and the invention of the printing press over the next 100 years, the Scriptures became available in the vernacular of the common people during the Reformation. Then the enemy reverted to his original tactics, destroying the saints in the "Inquisition," where anyone found with the Word of God was deemed a heretic and killed.

But in legal proceedings there is yet another tactic: when a lawyer realizes the evidence against his case cannot be suppressed in "discovery," he seeks to introduce a mountain of new information in an attempt to overwhelm the juridical process and obscure the truth by hiding it in thousands of documents. Doesn't this seem like exactly what has happened in our "Information Age"? We need to understand how Satan is working in our own time, and especially in our own culture.

So we freely have this Word of God in our hands, with all truth and knowledge to know the things of the last days, so what is Satan doing???????? He is introducing a mountain of information (the information age, the endless internet with all these so-called teachers, and wise people, anybody with a blog or a YouTube channel, or a Facebook account, somehow is wise and informative), to overload and overwhelm the truth, the signs of the Last Days. Most everybody (including the Church) is talking about everything, oh yes some very important things I agree, but talking about everything but.... The 1st Coming of Christ (to be the Lamb of God who takes away sin that separates man from God), and the 2nd Coming of Christ (the soon rapture of the Church). The Devil is behind the energizing of this overwhelming the world with information, but the world is asleep on the things that matter most, His 1st Coming and His Soon Rapture and then 2nd Coming.

6 Reasons Why We Should Study Prophecy

Here are 6 reasons why we study prophecy:

Control - (God is in Control for He Knows the End from the Beginning)

Isaiah 46:9-10 (NKJV) ⁹ Remember the former things of old, For I am God, and there is no other; I am God, and there is none like Me, ¹⁰ Declaring the end from the beginning, And from ancient times things that are not yet done, Saying, 'My counsel shall stand, And I will do all My pleasure,'

Comfort - (We can take Comfort knowing God is in Control, and none of these things Surprise Him)

1 Thessalonians 4:16-18 (NKJV) ¹⁶ For the Lord Himself will descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of an archangel, and with the trumpet of God. And the dead in Christ will rise first. ¹⁷ Then we who are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air. And thus we shall always be with the Lord. ¹⁸ Therefore comfort one another with these words.

Persevere - (We are to continue to Persevere, for He is Worth It)

(Revelation 3:10 NKJV) "Because you have kept My command to persevere, I also will keep you from the hour of trial which shall come upon the whole world, to test those who dwell on the earth.

Purity - (Everyone who has this Hope Purifies themselves – to Give Themselves to Him the Spotless Bride)

1 John 3:2–3 (NKJV) ² Beloved, now we are children of God; and it has not yet been revealed what we shall be, but we know that when He is revealed, we shall be like Him, for we shall see Him as He is. ³ And everyone who has this hope in Him purifies himself, just as He is pure.

Priority - (Make our Priorities to What Matters Most considering we are going to See the King soon and very soon)

Matthew 6:33 (NKJV) ³³ But seek first the kingdom of God and His righteousness, and all these things shall be added to you.

Preparation - (There is a Lost and Dying World who is not Prepared to Meet Him)

John 3:16–17 (NKJV) ¹⁶ For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have everlasting life. ¹⁷ For God did not send His Son into the world to condemn the world, but that the world through Him might be saved.

We will not be found asleep!

Martin Luther said he only had two days on his calendar—today and “that day.”

*Michael P. Green. (2000). 1500 illustrations for biblical preaching (p. 296). Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Books.

God Says Come

Today we come and are gifted this Word from God Himself, His very heart opened before us, the calling to come near, be drawn to Him.

Matthew 11:28 (NKJV) ²⁸ Come to Me, all you who labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest.

The Word of God is Living and Powerful, and is ready, and will do a mighty work in our lives.

Hebrews 4:12 (NKJV) ¹² For the word of God is living and powerful, and sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing even to the division of soul and spirit, and of joints and marrow, and is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart.

In Every Study

- Who Is God? (How Great is He?)
- What Does He Think of Me? (How Wonderful Are His Thoughts Towards Me?)
- What Does He Want Me to Do?
- What Can I Boldly Request of Him?
- What Do I Need to Be on Guard of When I Leave Here Today?

Boldly come to the throne of grace, ask God to reveal Himself in a mighty way to you, and to do I might work in you, and through you.

Hebrews 4:16 (NKJV) ¹⁶ Let us therefore come boldly to the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy and find grace to help in time of need

The Parable of the Fig Tree (13:28-31)

Mark 13:28 “Now learn this parable from the fig tree: When its branch has already become tender, and puts forth leaves, you know that summer is near.

Mark 13:29 So you also, when you see these things happening, know that it is near—at the doors!

Parables – Cast Story Alongside a Truth

Parables are timeless and they are to take a story and cast it alongside of a truth to amplify and exemplify that truth. So we see this story, this example of a fig tree and the agriculture things behind it with its leaves and the budding of the fruit, but also the theme that's woven through of the nation of Israel being the fig tree.

Learn the Parable – Speaking to Disciples / Sign & Parable – So We Might be Ready

Jesus says, "Learn the parable," and he's speaking to his disciples. He's not speaking to the crowd or the religious leaders but to the disciples, and he gives them the charge to learn the parable, to understand the parable. This, then, would apply to all disciples, and so the question for all of us, are we his disciples? If so, then we need to learn the parable.

Jesus has spoken these signs. He has given us these signs for the last days and by God's creative design he gives the signs so that they're timeless, that every generation would see signs, rumblings of them and be challenged by what

they're seeing to be ready to watch, to heed. So the signs are written so that every generation will think they are the generation but for us with information exposed regarding what we've been studying and reading, we see a final culmination of signs that make us the final culmination of generations that will see his soon return.

Leaves = Summer

Verse 29, "Leaves represented that summer was near," and Jesus is saying, "These signs are leaves," that summer is near. Let's recap the signs that we've read, and then we will cover them in our prophecy update in the future study.

- False Messiah's (13:6)
- Wars and rumors of war (13:7)
- Nation (ethnic group) against Nation (ethnic group) – (13:8)
- Kingdom against kingdom (13:8)
- Earthquakes all over the world (13:8)
- Famines (13:8)
- Troubles (famines) - (13:8)
- Christian persecution (13:9-13)

Door = Entry

Verse 29 says, "At the doors," and doors represent entry arrival, and he will speak of this door again in the next story illustration that he gives us.

70AD and 90AD

By the way, Matthew 24, Mark 13, Luke 21, they're literally just an outline, a summation of the last day things, enough to give us a sign but Revelation now gives us all the sub-bullets and all the deep details.

As for an understanding so there would be no misunderstanding, though a generation would be looking for Jesus's soon return and after he rose again they would think that it was now and immediate, and we see that in various places in the Scriptures. But in 70 A.D., Israel, Jerusalem specifically, is destroyed and they are scattered, dispersed throughout the land, but in 90 A.D., thereabout, 60 years after this Olivet Discourse, Jesus appears to John on the Island of Patmos and gives him the details of Revelation, so we know that timing, that book of Revelation, even all the final things of Matthew 24 were yet future after the destruction of Jerusalem in 70AD.

Mark 13:30 Assuredly, I say to you, this generation will by no means pass away till all these things take place.

The Generation who will See Second Coming

Jesus says "the generation" who sees these things will see the Tribulation Period and the Second Coming of Christ.

So let's work through a few things here, regarding the Fig Tree, and the Generation.

Fig Tree = Israel

Matthew 22:37, Jesus cries, "O, Jerusalem."

Matthew 23:37–24:2 (NKJV) ³⁷ "O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, the one who kills the prophets and stones those who are sent to her! How often I wanted to gather your children together, as a hen gathers her chicks under *her* wings, but you were not willing! ³⁸ See! Your house is left to you desolate; ³⁹ for I say to you, you shall see Me no more till you say, 'Blessed is He who comes in the name of the LORD!' " ¹ Then Jesus went out and departed from the temple, and His disciples came up to show Him the buildings of the temple. ² And Jesus said to them, "Do you not see all these things? Assuredly, I say to you, not *one* stone shall be left here upon another, that shall not be thrown down."

Jesus weeps over Jerusalem

Luke 19:41–44 (NKJV) ⁴¹ Now as He drew near, He saw the city and wept over it, ⁴² saying, "If you had known, even you, especially in this your day, the things *that make* for your peace! But now they are hidden from your eyes. ⁴³ For days will come upon you when your enemies will build an embankment around you, surround you and close you in on every side, ⁴⁴ and level you, and your children within you, to the ground; and they will not leave in you one stone upon another, because you did not know the time of your visitation."

Jesus curses a fig tree for not bearing its fruit, for not being what it was created to be, and then we see a parallel that when Jesus rides into town, comes into town the day before this day, he weeps over Jerusalem because he knows what's coming. He knows the fruitless baroness of the nation will reap its consequences for its ignorance and its arrogance. These words are timeless in themselves to every man, to every woman and to every nation.

Mark 11:12–14 (NKJV) ¹² Now the next day, when they had come out from Bethany, He was hungry. ¹³ And seeing from afar a fig tree having leaves, He went to see if perhaps He would find something on it. When He came to it, He found nothing but leaves, for it was not the season for figs. ¹⁴ In response Jesus said to it, "Let no one eat fruit from you ever again." And His disciples heard it.

As seen in the books of Jeremiah, Nahum, Isaiah, and Hosea, the fig tree is the national symbol of Israel. Therefore, it is my belief that Jesus is talking about the re-blossoming of the nation of Israel that took place in May, 1948, when the Jews returned to their land—the only time in history when a nation came back from the dead—exactly as prophesied by Isaiah, Ezekiel, and Zechariah. We cannot know the day of Jesus' return—but as seen in the fig tree, we surely know the season (1 Thessalonians 5:1).

1 Thessalonians 5:1–2 (NKJV) ¹ But concerning the times and the seasons, brethren, you have no need that I should write to you. ² For you yourselves know perfectly that the day of the Lord so comes as a thief in the night.

Israel has to be Back in Land / Temple Must be Rebuilt

Many say specifically that the fig tree is Israel. Some think that is stretching and trying to piece things together that may or may not be there, and that's fine, but here is what we do know without a doubt, whether you want to call Israel the fig tree or not. According to Jesus's prophecy, Israel must be back in the land, and so they are today, and the temple must be rebuilt so that the antichrist can go in and desecrate it. So what we have here is on May 14, 1948, Israel after 2000 years without a homeland was declared and given its independence, and now today, there are those called the Temple Mount Faithful, they're ready to rebuild the temple. So the Nation of Israel is just waiting for someone to broker a peace deal to rebuild this temple and hence the stage was set.

Ezekiel 36-37 Regathering of Israel to Land

Verse 30, the fig tree is blossoming in the sense as we see amazing prophecy being fulfilled. Ezekiel 36 and 37 speaks of a time of the regathering of Israel from the four corners of the world, and this was written when they were in the Babylonian captivity and it would look like it would've been a past fulfillment, but Jesus is talking about something yet future. Then for Israel to go into its scattering, and for 2000 years to not have a homeland, and then to be re-birthed as a nation in a day, as Zachariah would say, is truly amazing. Even the leader of Israel, Benjamin Netanyahu, he says that Israel is watching the fulfillment of Ezekiel 36 and 37.

Ezekiel 36:24 (NKJV) ²⁴ For I will take you from among the nations, gather you out of all countries, and bring you into your own land.

The Sure Word of Magog Invasion

As I say, and maybe I speak it more to remind myself more than anyone, after the regathering comes Ezekiel 38 and 39 which speaks of an invasion of Israel that's going to happen of kings of the north, Magog and Gog, which speaks of Russia, they'll be coming with Iran and a few other players such as Turkey and Libya, and they're going to come determined to destroy Israel for whatever the reason is at this time but we're told that God's going to supernaturally protect them without the help of anybody. Other countries, Sheba and Dedan we're told, that's the nations such as Saudi Arabia, Tarshish which speaks of European countries, which Spain and the likes, which we would think would be the European Union, and then it even says the young lions and America has been considered many times the young lion of Great Britain and so that could possibly be the mention of America in the last days. Just watching, not engaging, kind of like very much how it played out in World War II with Adolf Hitler coming to destroy the Jews and for the most part the world watched until it was too late. Six million Jews were killed, and Hitler killed at least another seven million of others people (such as citizens of Soviet Union, Poland, mentally disabled, homosexual) in his concentration camps, so 13 million in concentration camps by this madman, some historians say that number may be even as high as 17 million. In the beginning of Hitler, the world watched on, said nothing..... And so history will repeat itself again in Last Days against the Jews, but in other areas too such as abortion, and legalized religious discrimination against Christians.

Definition of Holocaust Victims (notice legalized social discrimination against specific groups):

- Holocaust victims were people who were targeted by the government of Nazi Germany for various discriminatory practices due to their ethnicity, religion, political beliefs, or sexual orientation. These

hip and its match over, but I would suggest to you that he overcame, prevailed, conquered (with the help of God), the old man Jacob (as God would say that Jacob overcame, prevailed, against man, and the only man in that wrestling match was Jacob! I love it when God saw Jacob thereafter it was no longer Jacob He called him (that old identification of the cheater), but Israel, the new name, for the new man, "the overcomer".

Genesis 27:36 (NKJV) ³⁶ And Esau said, "Is he not rightly named Jacob? For he has supplanted me these two times. He took away my birthright, and now look, he has taken away my blessing!" And he said, "Have you not reserved a blessing for me?"

Genesis 27:36 (ESV) ³⁶ Esau said, "Is he not rightly named Jacob? For he has cheated me these two times. He took away my birthright, and behold, now he has taken away my blessing." Then he said, "Have you not reserved a blessing for me?"

Genesis 32:22–28 (NKJV) ²² And he arose that night and took his two wives, his two female servants, and his eleven sons, and crossed over the ford of Jabbok. ²³ He took them, sent them over the brook, and sent over what he had. ²⁴ Then Jacob was left alone; and a Man wrestled with him until the breaking of day. ²⁵ Now when He saw that He did not prevail against him, He touched the socket of his hip; and the socket of Jacob's hip was out of joint as He wrestled with him. ²⁶ And He said, "Let Me go, for the day breaks." But he said, "I will not let You go unless You bless me!" ²⁷ So He said to him, "What is your name?" He said, "Jacob." ²⁸ And He said, "Your name shall no longer be called Jacob, but Israel; for you have struggled with God and with men, and have prevailed."

Beloved, with God all things are possible, and with God's help, we are more than overcomers, we are conquerors. Beloved, today, right here, right now, just settle it, "you can", and then go out and overcome, go out and conquer!

Mark 13:31 Heaven and earth will pass away, but My words will by no means pass away.

Every Word – Means "I Can"

Regarding the signs of these last days, but for you right here and right now for this moment in time in this sphere of your life, in this hour of your seat that you sit here listening to this word of God, God's word is speaking. Every word of God is true. Every word of God is pure. The world may pass away, but my word will never pass away. Every promise for you will come to pass. It will not pass away. Every promise that you have, you can claim it and you can live the life of we can instead of we can't.

Henry Ironside

Now, moving back into the context of Israel regathered. I remember reading a commentary by Henry Ironside, and in it he said if you can't see God regathering Israel, you are blind and asleep. I said ok that an easy one, May 14, 1948 checked that one off. But then I said wait a minute..... when did he write that and say that, and I check the cover to find he wrote that in 1914! This was a man who studied and knew his prophecy that he saw this unfolding some 30 years before it actually happened.

Replacement Theology / No Church after Revelation Chapter 3

Now there are some who believe what we call replacement theology, and that is taking the scriptures speaking of the last days and speaking of the nation of Israel and switching them out with the church, and then thus saying this is a passage that says Israel but it really applies to the church because Israel forfeited their position as the bride when they rejected Christ, and therefore the church is the new bride. Let me tell you the reason why, two reasons. One is anti-Semitism that people hate, but secondly, and this is the most wide reasoning, is because when Israel was without a homeland for 2,000 years man just said there's no way that this can apply to Israel because it's impossible. Rather than accepting the scriptures for the very word that they are, inspired by God, they said it must mean something else. They put man's reasoning into it and came up with what they deemed that would fit, and thus give hope, but truly, totally wrong. When it says Israel, it's Israel. When it says the church, it means the church.

When we get into the book of Revelation there's an outline that's given to us. The first chapter is the revelation of Jesus Christ. One of the most, if not the most, detailed description of Jesus Christ physically. Then secondly of that outline, chapters two and three, it's the church age. But come chapter four when it says "come up here," you won't read the word church during the whole tribulation period, but what you will begin to read is the nation of Israel. For the tribulation period is the specific seven-year period of dealing with Israel, those last seven years, the 490 years as we have studied in Daniel chapter nine. When it says church, it means church. When it says Israel, it means Israel. What's the big deal of replacement theology is that God's word is true, every last word of it.

[Revelation 1:19–20 \(NKJV\)](#) ¹⁹ Write the things which you have seen, and the things which are, and the things which will take place after this. ²⁰ The mystery of the seven stars which you saw in My right hand, and the seven golden lampstands: The seven stars are the angels of the seven churches, and the seven lampstands which you saw are the seven churches.

No One Knows the Day or Hour (13:32-37)

Mark 13:32 “But of that day and hour no one knows, not even the angels in heaven, nor the Son, but only the Father.

Signs Point Tribulation – Rapture is Nearer

So the signs point to the tribulation is near and that means that the rapture is even nearer.

Hey, speaking of the fig tree, when we see leaves budding but they say that the leaves become so full, then the fruit is born and the leaves cover it to the place that you can't see the fruit, the figs. And the point is just seeing the leaves says it's near. But then there will be time for the development of fruition so leaves definitely indicate a rapture is near and then after that the fruit will begin its development to come to the tribulation.

Jesus Didn't Know

Verse 32, "Nor the Son," it says. Even Jesus didn't know the time or the hour.

Verse 32, the Son doesn't know the hour because that was one of the limitations that Jesus put upon himself when he came as the God-man. He was fully God. It will be God who is on the throne. It will be God who is on the cross, the same God in man. Mind-blowing, yes it is indeed. But everything Jesus did when he was here on earth, he did through his connection to the Father. This is the doctrinal of kenosis” from Philippians chapter two.

[Philippians 2:5–8 \(NKJV\)](#) ⁵ Let this mind be in you which was also in Christ Jesus, ⁶ who, being in the form of God, did not consider it robbery to be equal with God, ⁷ but made Himself of no reputation, taking the form of a bondservant, and coming in the likeness of men. ⁸ And being found in appearance as a man, He humbled Himself and became obedient to the point of death, even the death of the cross.

Everything he did, he did through prayer to the Father. So, what he needed to know, he was given to know through his prayer in connection to the Father. When he needed power to do the works of God, he did not do them alone and by himself, he did them through his connection to the Father. I remember a perfect example of the feeding of the 5000 as he broke the bread and lifted it and blessed it. Then the miracle happened. Everything he did was through the connection to the Father.

I believe Jesus didn't ask in prayer when the rapture was, because Jesus was busy with his first mission, his first coming, not the second mission, not the second coming, but taking advantage of everything that's here now, right now, the ministry that was put before him for which he was faithful until the end of.

Too Many People Looking to Next – Instead of the Now

So many people are looking to the next thing instead of the now thing. They want to know what happens tomorrow in their life. They want to know what their ministry will be tomorrow. They want to know if they're going to get that job tomorrow. Some people can even get totally lopsided about even the second-coming things and the whole point is, they miss the current things. The now things are meant to impact us how we serve, impact us how we live. It's Jesus who modeled those things for us and is our example of them, of prayer connection to the Father, of the now, the immediate, and trusting and resting in the tomorrow and the next.

Jesus' Life – Was/Is Prayer

And..... Jesus has now ascended to the right hand of the throne of the Father in heaven. What is He doing? We know from John that He's preparing a place for us, waiting for our arrival. Soon the door will be open and we will be ushered in for the seven year marriage supper of the Lamb. But He also, we are told, lives to make intercession and He is continually interceding in prayer on our behalf. An amazing thought, God interceding in prayer for us. But what we see through the life of Jesus is a life of prayer. We see His life of prayer here on earth as He did nothing apart from His connection to the Father. And then we see as He ascends in to heaven that He continues that same pattern of life of prayer.

Hebrews 7:25 (NKJV) ²⁵ Therefore He is also able to save to the uttermost those who come to God through Him, since He always lives to make intercession for them.

Romans 8:34–35 (NKJV) ³⁴ Who is he who condemns? It is Christ who died, and furthermore is also risen, who is even at the right hand of God, who also makes intercession for us. ³⁵ Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? Shall tribulation, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or peril, or sword?

Prayer Turns the Gears of Heaven

We can take comfort in that, that the Lord lives to make intercession for us. Of course, many times when we say, and don't we all, I want to be like Jesus, and sometimes we don't even know what that means. It's such a big statement. I want to be like Him in gentleness, and kindness, and love, and holiness, and forgiveness. And as I say, you'll never be more like Jesus Christ than when you forgive, even your enemies. As Jesus on the cross, "Father, forgive them. They know not what they do." But we say that we want to be like Jesus. Do we? Now here is a pattern that's given as a priority of His life, and that even in the resurrected life still continues the life of prayer. The importance of prayer, the power of prayer, the promises of prayer, and for Jesus also, the passion of prayer. Prayer is the mechanical gears of heaven. Prayer is an act of faith. The two go together, but they are what turns the gears of heaven, if you would. Without prayer nothing, Jesus said in His word, book of James, "You have not because you ask not," so we ask for nothing, nothing happens. We pray about nothing, nothing happens. But when we pray and believe in the power of it by faith, and have a passion for it, prayer works and we'll be just like Jesus.

When we have a high priest, who lives to make intercession for us, who says, "Come to the throne of grace. Notice it's grace, not judgment, not condemnation, but riches and mercy and love. At the throne of grace, He says we can find help in our time of need. And says to us to boldly come with full confidence and with passion, and that confidence is in faith that we will be received and that he will intercede and do a work. And even when we are faithless, He still remains faithful to us and continues living in intercession for us. He's so good to us. What a loving God, perfect and pure.

Hebrews 4:16 (NKJV) ¹⁶ Let us therefore come boldly to the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy and find grace to help in time of need

Mark 13:33 Take heed, watch and pray; for you do not know when the time is.

David's Mighty Men – Knew the Times

I love the mighty men of David, as it says the men he had knew that the times that they were in. And God is looking for soldiers and watchmen on the wall, warriors to go forth who are awake and see the times that we live.

1 Chronicles 12:22 (NKJV) ²² For at that time they came to David day by day to help him, until it was a great army, like the army of God.

1 Chronicles 12:32 (NKJV) ³² of the sons of Issachar who had understanding of the times, to know what Israel ought to do, their chiefs were two hundred; and all their brethren were at their command;

The Rooster Sees the Sun

I love the rooster in the morning. When we stay out in the country, I love hearing the rooster in the morning with their cockadoo. If they could speak English, what the rooster would say is, "I see the light. I see the light," as they look and they see the sun rising. There's a word for us. We've seen the Son arisen, the crucified Christ, alive and well in our hearts, overcoming sin and death and condemnation and judgment. We have a calling and the blessing and the power to tell people, "I see the light. I see the light." But we also, as a church steeped in these things in the last days, as we study and become students who show ourselves approved, rightly dividing the Word, we tell people, "I see the light. I see the light. The new day. The new birth is coming. Prepare yourself for the way of the Lord."

The Churches Sleep

So many churches in the world are asleep for the most part, asleep with the cares of the world, asleep with rituals, asleep with endless debates of this and that. Asleep thinking fighting for the social gospel is the gospel. The church is asleep, and Jesus is saying, "Arise. Awake. Be watchful." And he gives us that word as we go chapter by chapter and verse by verse, that we might always stay awake and alert, so that we might give a warning as watchmen on the wall.

Three times in this dissertation he gave the warning, the word, to watch. Three times. Make sure that we got it, what he's trying to tell us. He's trying to tell us to watch.

Can't Watch without Prayer – Can't Heed without Watch

Verse 33, "Pray," he says. Luke 18 tells us, "Men ought always to pray and not faint." Paul tells us in Thessalonians to "pray without ceasing." See, you can't take heed without watching, and you can't watch without praying. For God speaks God's leads through prayer. He makes this word come to life through prayer.

Luke 18:1 (NKJV) ¹ Then He spoke a parable to them, that men always ought to pray and not lose heart,

1 Thessalonians 5:17 (NKJV) ¹⁷ pray without ceasing,

Some people who visit may say we have long sermons; sixty minutes is what the timer pretty much always comes out to. To which I say true, but I'm more than just teaching. It's way more than coming up here and opening the scriptures and teaching what the scriptures say. When I come up here to share the word, my prayer has always been as I prepared what I call 50/50. I spend 50% of the time studying the word and 50% of the time praying the word. I have four things in my quiver for every Sunday that we come together, and yes they just happen to all start with P. That's what we pastors do.

- But I pray for the people that God will prepare their hearts to receive the word.
- Secondly, I pray for the pastor, myself, to be a vessel to deliver his word in purity, power and passion.
- Thirdly, I pray for this place, that this place would be guarded, it would be surrounded from distractions, the evil one, technology, failure so that the word can go forth unimpeded.
- And I pray for the passage, the word that we're in, that God would give me revelation to it. That he'll give me the specific application word that he has for each and every one of us, for our day and our time and it will reach his heart and do what it was desired and designed to do by God.

So when I come up we pray. We open with prayer. We're preparing the place as we invite the Lord here. We're preparing our hearts to receive this word. We're preparing the pastor to give the word, calm down his nerves from the spiritual warfare that comes from such a calling and responsibility. Many times we stop in the middle of our teaching and we pray again. Then we pray again at the end when it's over because we believe in the power of pray and that God ties the things together through prayer. So we're way beyond the Bible study when we come here. We have a time of prayer in the presence of the Lord, worship before the Holy God, fellowship. In the 90 minutes that we spend here is truly a blink.

Mark 13:34 It is like a man going to a far country, who left his house and gave authority to his servants, and to each his work, and commanded the doorkeeper to watch.

Job of Doorkeeper

The role of the doorkeeper, his job was to stand at the door and keep watch for the master returning from business. And so he couldn't be hanging out back in the kitchen eating figs. He had to be at the door continually being watchful. That was his job to make sure that the house was ready for when the master came back and then he would inform the rest of the servants, "The master is coming. I can see him over the horizon. Prepare his meal, prepare his bed. Draw fresh water. Be ready for the master. Be fresh. Don't have old stuff sitting out. Bring the new stuff. Have his meal ready when he comes."

Mark 13:35 Watch therefore, for you do not know when the master of the house is coming—in the evening, at midnight, at the crowing of the rooster, or in the morning—

Mark 13:36 lest, coming suddenly, he find you sleeping.

Mark 13:37 And what I say to you, I say to all: Watch!"

House – Authority – His Work / Watch

It is like a man going to a far country: Jesus now spoke to His followers about how they should live until He comes. Jesus is like the man going to a far country, who left three things to his servants: his house, his authority, and his

work. The traveling man also appoints a doorkeeper to keep watch. He may return at any time, and does not want to find his servants sleeping. The point of it all: Watch!

i. “The Parable of the Fig Tree cautions Tribulation saints to watch and know the ‘signs of the times.’ But the Parable of the Householder warns all of us today.” (Wiersbe)

ii. Think of what Jesus has left you:

- His house: The church belongs to Jesus, but He entrusts it to each one of us.
- His authority: We are to live and serve in the authority of Jesus, and responsibility is always coupled with authority.
- His work: Each servant has his work to do. We aren’t responsible for someone else’s work, but we certainly are responsible for ours.

*Guzik, D. (2013). Mark (Mk 13:32–37). Santa Barbara, CA: David Guzik.

6 Reasons Why We Should Study Prophecy

Here are 6 reasons why we study prophecy:

Control - (God is in Control for He Knows the End from the Beginning)

Isaiah 46:9–10 (NKJV) ⁹ Remember the former things of old, For I am God, and there is no other; I am God, and there is none like Me, ¹⁰ Declaring the end from the beginning, And from ancient times things that are not yet done, Saying, ‘My counsel shall stand, And I will do all My pleasure,’

Comfort - (We can take Comfort knowing God is in Control, and none of these things Surprise Him)

1 Thessalonians 4:16–18 (NKJV) ¹⁶ For the Lord Himself will descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of an archangel, and with the trumpet of God. And the dead in Christ will rise first. ¹⁷ Then we who are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air. And thus we shall always be with the Lord. ¹⁸ Therefore comfort one another with these words.

Persevere - (We are to continue to Persevere, for He is Worth It)

(Revelation 3:10 NKJV) “Because you have kept My command to persevere, I also will keep you from the hour of trial which shall come upon the whole world, to test those who dwell on the earth.

Purity - (Everyone who has this Hope Purifies themselves – to Give Themselves to Him the Spotless Bride)

1 John 3:2–3 (NKJV) ² Beloved, now we are children of God; and it has not yet been revealed what we shall be, but we know that when He is revealed, we shall be like Him, for we shall see Him as He is. ³ And everyone who has this hope in Him purifies himself, just as He is pure.

Priority - (Make our Priorities to What Matters Most considering we are going to See the King soon and very soon)

Matthew 6:33 (NKJV) ³³ But seek first the kingdom of God and His righteousness, and all these things shall be added to you.

Preparation - (There is a Lost and Dying World who is not Prepared to Meet Him)

John 3:16–17 (NKJV) ¹⁶ For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have everlasting life. ¹⁷ For God did not send His Son into the world to condemn the world, but that the world through Him might be saved.

We will not be found asleep!

God Says Come

Today we come and are gifted this Word from God Himself, His very heart opened before us, the calling to come near, be drawn to Him.

Matthew 11:28 (NKJV) ²⁸ Come to Me, all you who labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest.

The Word of God is Living and Powerful, and is ready, and will do a mighty work in our lives.

Hebrews 4:12 (NKJV) ¹² For the word of God is living and powerful, and sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing even to the division of soul and spirit, and of joints and marrow, and is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart.

In Every Study

- Who Is God? (How Great is He?)
- What Does He Think of Me? (How Wonderful Are His Thoughts Towards Me?)

- What Does He Want Me to Do?
- What Can I Boldly Request of Him?
- What Do I Need to Be on Guard of When I Leave Here Today?

Boldly come to the throne of grace, ask God to reveal Himself in a mighty way to you, and to do I might work in you, and through you.

Hebrews 4:16 (NKJV) ¹⁶ Let us therefore come boldly to the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy and find grace to help in time of need

10 Reasons for the Pre-Tribulation Rapture of the Church

Overview/Recap

Mark 13 is known as the Olivet Discourse, for it is on the Mount of Olives that Jesus answers the disciple's questions of what will be the signs of the Last Days. In our study we have discussed the major events of the Last Days (theologically called "eschatology"), and we started with the 1st Coming of Jesus Christ (to take away the sin of the world), and then we discussed what is called the Tribulation Period (which is 7 years of a horrendous time on earth as described in Revelation 6-18), and it is God's judgment on a Christ rejecting world, as Revelation 6 says it is "the wrath of the Lamb". At the end of that 7 year Tribulation period is the 2nd Coming of Jesus Christ, where He will put His feet down upon this earth for the first time since His 1st Coming, and He will set up His Kingdom on earth for 1,000 years, which is known as the Millennial Kingdom. At the end of the 1,000 year Millennial Kingdom God will give a final judgement on the Devil, and Christ rejecting men, and He will dissolve this earth as we know it, and then make what is known as the New Heaven, and the New Earth, and that will be eternity that will have no end.

Acts 1:9–11 (NKJV) ⁹ Now when He had spoken these things, while they watched, He was taken up, and a cloud received Him out of their sight. ¹⁰ And while they looked steadfastly toward heaven as He went up, behold, two men stood by them in white apparel, ¹¹ who also said, "Men of Galilee, why do you stand gazing up into heaven? This same Jesus, who was taken up from you into heaven, will so come in like manner as you saw Him go into heaven."

Daniel 9:27 (NKJV) ²⁷ Then he shall confirm a covenant with many for one week; But in the middle of the week He shall bring an end to sacrifice and offering. And on the wing of abominations shall be one who makes desolate, Even until the consummation, which is determined, Is poured out on the desolate."

Revelation 20:1–3 (NKJV) ¹ Then I saw an angel coming down from heaven, having the key to the bottomless pit and a great chain in his hand. ² He laid hold of the dragon, that serpent of old, who is the Devil and Satan, and bound him for a thousand years; ³ and he cast him into the bottomless pit, and shut him up, and set a seal on him, so that he should deceive the nations no more till the thousand years were finished. But after these things he must be released for a little while.

Revelation 20:4 (NKJV) ⁴ And I saw thrones, and they sat on them, and judgment was committed to them. Then I saw the souls of those who had been beheaded for their witness to Jesus and for the word of God, who had not worshiped the beast or his image, and had not received his mark on their foreheads or on their hands. And they lived and reigned with Christ for a thousand years.

Revelation 20:11–15 (NKJV) ¹¹ Then I saw a great white throne and Him who sat on it, from whose face the earth and the heaven fled away. And there was found no place for them. ¹² And I saw the dead, small and great, standing before God, and books were opened. And another book was opened, which is the Book of Life. And the dead were judged according to their works, by the things which were written in the books. ¹³ The sea gave up the dead who were in it, and Death and Hades delivered up the dead who were in them. And they were judged, each one according to his works. ¹⁴ Then Death and Hades were cast into the lake of fire. This is the second death. ¹⁵ And anyone not found written in the Book of Life was cast into the lake of fire.

Revelation 21:1–5 (NKJV) ¹ Now I saw a new heaven and a new earth, for the first heaven and the first earth had passed away. Also there was no more sea. ² Then I, John, saw the holy city, New Jerusalem, coming down out of heaven from God, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband. ³ And I heard a loud voice from heaven saying, "Behold, the tabernacle of God is with men, and He will dwell with them, and they shall be His people. God Himself will be with them and be their God. ⁴ And God will wipe away every tear from their eyes; there shall be no more death, nor sorrow, nor crying. There shall be no more pain, for the former things have passed away." ⁵ Then He who sat on the throne said, "Behold, I make all things new." And He said to me, "Write, for these words are true and faithful."

No Word Rapture – Bible / Harpazo – Rapiemur / Twinkling of Eye

Now somewhere in all of this is what is called the rapture. You may say well my Bible concordance doesn't even have the word rapture in it, so yea what are you talking about. We get the word rapture from 1 Thessalonians 4, where the Lord says that we should be caught up together. The word translated "caught up" is a Greek (harpazo) is the word rendered *rapiemur* in the Latin, and is the word from which we get the English word "rapture". The word literally means to violently seize up, snatch up, suddenly catch away, as if a pair of giant hands were to grasp you by the shoulders and snatch you off the earth. This event will occur suddenly, in less than the time it takes to blink an eye; in fact, the Greek word translated "in a moment" in First Corinthians 15:52 means "an atomic moment", i.e., a moment of time so small it cannot be subdivided further. So regardless of what one may call the event - the "rapture", "being caught up", "being snatched away", it is clear that the event will occur.

1 Thessalonians 4:16–18 (NKJV) ¹⁶ For the Lord Himself will descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of an archangel, and with the trumpet of God. And the dead in Christ will rise first. ¹⁷ Then we who are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air. And thus we shall always be with the Lord. ¹⁸ Therefore comfort one another with these words.

1 Corinthians 15:51–53 (NKJV) ⁵¹ Behold, I tell you a mystery: We shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed—⁵² in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trumpet. For the trumpet will sound, and the dead will be raised incorruptible, and we shall be changed. ⁵³ For this corruptible must put on incorruption, and this mortal must put on immortality.

So we answered what is the rapture, the next logical question would be, when is the rapture?

3 Camps – Pre-Mid-Post / Your View Effect way Live

There are 3 basic camps on when the rapture will happen.

- Pre-tribulation Rapture which is before the Tribulation starts.
- Mid-Tribulation Rapture which is right at the 3 and ½ year point of the 7-year Tribulation period.
- And then the Post-Tribulation Rapture of the Church which is after the Tribulation is over.

Why get all concerned about this issue?" you might say. My answer is because I believe one's view on Bible prophecy and the timing of the Rapture will affect the way one lives out his/her faith here on earth.

Early Church / 2 Factors On-Fire / Didn't Come Back & Not Sorry

Two factors kept the early church on fire: the empowering of the Holy Ghost and the belief that Jesus would return during their lifetime. "But He didn't come back in their day," you say. And you're right—but do you think those early believers are in heaven now, saying, "We didn't get bogged down in materialism or trivial pursuits. We sought the Lord. We witnessed fervently. We lived for the kingdom. If only we knew He wasn't coming, we could have played more racquetball"? No! They're ecstatic that they chose to do what Jesus says to do in every generation—to watch, to be ready, to live for His coming, and you can be sure they heard those words, well done thy good and faithful servant. Christian, please don't let this just be a Bible Study to you, let this study change your life, let this study put life in the proper perspective.

Your Position - Won't Affect Salvation – But will Affect Way Live

Whether or not you believe in a pre-Tribulation Rapture will not affect where you'll ultimately end up. If you're a believer, you'll be in heaven no matter what position you hold. But your viewpoint concerning the Rapture very definitely affects how you live your life this side of eternity.

Daniel reading Prophecy – Lead him to Action / Not Debates – Interesting / But to Respond

We saw Daniel reading the writings of Jeremiah, and he saw that as the Lord had prophesied through Jeremiah, that Jewish captivity in Babylon would only last 70 years, and Daniel saw that the time was near, the 70 years were almost up. We see that the reading of prophecy did not just spark an interest in Daniel, it wasn't something that he had interesting conversation and debates with others over, rather it moved him to action. We can read that he was moved to prayer and fasting. We read of him seeking the Lord's will and direction for his life in light of the meaning of the prophecy revealed to him. That is what prophecy is to do, it is a primary reason God gives it to us. It is not to intrigue us, or to engage us in debates, but to change us, and to seek the Lord as to how do we respond, what are we to do in light of this information, pertaining to these last days:

Daniel 9:1–3 (NKJV) ¹ In the first year of Darius the son of Ahasuerus, of the lineage of the Medes, who was made king over the realm of the Chaldeans—² in the first year of his reign I, Daniel, understood by the books the number of the years specified by the word of the LORD through Jeremiah the prophet, that He would accomplish seventy years in the desolations of Jerusalem. ³ Then I set my face toward the Lord God to make request by prayer and supplications, with fasting, sackcloth, and ashes.

Study to Share / Written so we Might be Ready

So we are to study to show ourselves approved, and we must also be able to share this information with others. We must be able to show them in the Scriptures why it is a Pre-tribulation rapture, and why they need to be ready. Remind you, this book of Revelation was written so that we might be ready, and to have others be ready:

(2 Timothy 2:15 KJV) Study to show thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth.

2 Timothy 2:1–2 (NKJV) ¹ You therefore, my son, be strong in the grace that is in Christ Jesus. ² And the things that you have heard from me among many witnesses, commit these to faithful men who will be able to teach others also.

If Old News – Study to Make it “New News”

If this is study is “old news” to you, then I pray you study with me very hard, take these things into your heart, your soul. Your mind, your strength, and ask the Lord that you may glean these reasons so you can make it “new news” to someone who is unaware of these things of the Last Days, so they can get prepared for the Last Days which we have studied, we are living in, we are the last generation, the return of Christ is near..... if not today, tomorrow, and ask again tomorrow we will say the same thing.

God Says Come

Today we come and are gifted this Word from God Himself, His very heart opened before us, the calling to come near, be drawn to Him.

[Matthew 11:28 \(NKJV\)](#) ²⁸ Come to Me, all you who labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest.

The Word of God is Living and Powerful, and is ready, and will do a mighty work in our lives.

[Hebrews 4:12 \(NKJV\)](#) ¹² For the word of God is living and powerful, and sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing even to the division of soul and spirit, and of joints and marrow, and is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart.

In Every Study

- [Who Is God? \(How Great is He?\)](#)
- [What Does He Think of Me? \(How Wonderful Are His Thoughts Towards Me?\)](#)
- [What Does He Want Me to Do?](#)
- [What Can I Boldly Request of Him?](#)
- [What Do I Need to Be on Guard of When I Leave Here Today?](#)

Boldly come to the throne of grace, ask God to reveal Himself in a mighty way to you, and to do I might work in you, and through you.

[Hebrews 4:16 \(NKJV\)](#) ¹⁶ Let us therefore come boldly to the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy and find grace to help in time of need

10 Reason Pre-Tribulation Rapture

We will look at 10 Scriptural reasons of why it is a Pre-Tribulation Rapture of the Church:

- 1.) Plainly – Jesus said no man knows the day or hour of the Rapture
- 2.) Periphery – We are to be continually looking for Jesus
- 3.) Purity – Not knowing when the Rapture will occur produces a life of purity.
- 4.) Philadelphia – God promises the Faithful Church they will be kept from Tribulation
- 5.) Pattern – The pattern (outline) of Revelation shows a Pre-tribulation Rapture
- 6.) Peace – The promise of a Pre-tribulation Rapture is to give us Peace in our heart.
- 7.) Purpose – A Pre-tribulation Rapture fits with the Purpose of the Tribulation
- 8.) Penalty – God has not appointed us to Wrath, the Penalty has already been paid.
- 9.) Presented – As Presented in the Scriptures God removes His Righteous.
- 10.) Promised – God has Promised His Bride a Honeymoon.

1.) Plainly – Jesus said no man knows the day or hour of the Rapture

Plainly – Words in Red / Imminent – Matt 6:33

Just real plainly, real simply, we start with the Words in Red, Jesus said no one knows the day or hour. Thus it leaves the believer in the place of imminent return, since we don’t know, it could be at any moment, maybe this very moment. God planned it that way because the believer that lives with His imminent return in mind, will be a believer that is living Matthew 6:33, seeking first the Kingdom:

[Matthew 24:37–44 \(NKJV\)](#) ³⁷ But as the days of Noah were, so also will the coming of the Son of Man be. ³⁸ For as in the days before the flood, they were eating and drinking, marrying and giving in marriage, until the day that Noah entered the ark, ³⁹ and did not know until the flood came and took them all away, so also will the coming of the Son of Man be. ⁴⁰ Then two men will be in the field: one will be taken and the other left. ⁴¹ Two women will be grinding at the mill: one will be taken and the other left. ⁴² Watch therefore, for you do not know what hour your Lord is coming. ⁴³ But know this, that if the master of the house had known what hour the thief would come, he would have watched and not allowed his house to be broken into. ⁴⁴ Therefore you also be ready, for the Son of Man is coming at an hour you do not expect.

[1 Thessalonians 5:1–2 \(NKJV\)](#) ¹ But concerning the times and the seasons, brethren, you have no need that I should write to you. ² For you yourselves know perfectly that the day of the Lord so comes as a thief in the night.

Matthew 6:33 (NKJV) ³³ *But seek first the kingdom of God and His righteousness, and all these things shall be added to you.*

Pre-Trib allows Unknown Return / Post-Trib would known 3.5 years / Pre-trib Witnesses

Pre-Tribulation Rapture allows for the unknown time of the Lord's return. According to Daniel's prophecy, three and a half biblical years (a Biblical year being three hundred sixty days) from the day Antichrist enters the temple and demands worship midway through the Tribulation, the Lord will return. Consequently, if believers were on earth during the Tribulation, they would be able to predict the exact time of the Second Coming—three and a half biblical years, or forty-two months, or one thousand two hundred sixty days after Antichrist enters the temple. Even the Mid-tribulation people could get real close once they saw the 2 witnesses witnessing in Jerusalem knowing they will witness for 3.5 years. The problem for their view is plainly, 1 Thessalonians 5:2 and Matthew 24:42 make it clear that no one knows the hour of His coming.

2.) Periphery – We are to be continually looking for Jesus

Pre-Trib Eyes Focused / Mid-Post looking for Anti-Christ

A Pre-tribulation rapture of the church keeps our eyes (periphery – vision) focused on Jesus Christ, where they should be. If you do not believe in a pre-Tribulation Rapture, you cannot look for Jesus Christ because, according to your eschatological viewpoint, Antichrist must appear first. Therefore, you find yourself scanning the news, checking out current events, watching the global scene for Antichrist rather than for Jesus Christ.

Angels to Disciples – Eye on Sky / Not Europe – Temple – 2 Witnesses

The angels told the early disciples keep your eye on the sky, because as He went, so will He come. They didn't say keep an eye on the temple, or Europe, or be looking for 2 witnesses in Jerusalem, but keep looking for Him:

Acts 1:9–11 (NKJV) ⁹ *Now when He had spoken these things, while they watched, He was taken up, and a cloud received Him out of their sight. ¹⁰ And while they looked steadfastly toward heaven as He went up, behold, two men stood by them in white apparel, ¹¹ who also said, "Men of Galilee, why do you stand gazing up into heaven? This same Jesus, who was taken up from you into heaven, will so come in like manner as you saw Him go into heaven."*

Yes we Scan / Excitement – The Tachos / Keep Eyes Looking for Him – Effect our Lives

Yes we scan the newspaper and watch the world events because they give us excitement that Jesus' appearing is soon, and we know it is closer today than yesterday (the tachometer is pegging out, the engine is going to blow). But any other view has us looking for the rebuilding of the temple because the anti-christ is going to go in there and commit the abomination of desolation. We are looking at world leaders and saying who can arise out of Europe and be the anti-christ. All things that can take our eyes off of looking for Jesus Christ, and it will greatly affect the way we live.

3.) Purity – Not knowing when the Rapture will occur produces a life of purity.

Purifying Effect / 1 John 3 / I Want for You

"I want you looking for Jesus every day," John said, "because he who has the hope of the imminent, sudden appearing of Christ and the Rapture of the church purifies himself" (see 1 John 3:3). That is why I believe your view on the Rapture is of utmost importance. Live in constant expectancy of Jesus' return. Gang, be watching and be ready. The realization that Jesus could come at any time produces a great purifying effect in our lives. The apostle John said:

1 John 3:2–3 (NKJV) ² *Beloved, now we are children of God; and it has not yet been revealed what we shall be, but we know that when He is revealed, we shall be like Him, for we shall see Him as He is. ³ And everyone who has this hope in Him purifies himself, just as He is pure.*

Vital Church Teaches This / Sadly Most Don't

It is a tremendous purifying hope that He could come at anytime. It is vital that the church teaches continually on the rapture, sadly most don't.

Find Doing when Lord Returns / Be the Wise Servant - Intelligent

There are many things I don't want the Lord finding me doing when He returns. I want to be busy about the things of the Lord. Jesus calls such a one as a faithful and wise servant, the word for wise is intelligent. Philadelphia is known as the Faithful Church:

Matthew 24:45-47 (NKJV) ⁴⁵ "Who then is a faithful and wise servant, whom his master made ruler over his household, to give them food in due season? ⁴⁶ Blessed is that servant whom his master, when he comes, will find so doing. ⁴⁷ Assuredly, I say to you that he will make him ruler over all his goods.

Tendencies of Those that Don't

On the opposite side, look at the effect of the servant that says the Lord delays His coming. He began to live a careless life, abusing people, and drawn to drunkardness. Notice the 2 things they are prone to, drinking (carnality), and abusing (brutality):

Matthew 24:48-51 (NKJV) ⁴⁸ But if that evil servant says in his heart, 'My master is delaying his coming,' ⁴⁹ and begins to beat his fellow servants, and to eat and drink with the drunkards, ⁵⁰ the master of that servant will come on a day when he is not looking for him and at an hour that he is not aware of, ⁵¹ and will cut him in two and appoint him his portion with the hypocrites. There shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth.

Whole Point – Be Ready / Produces Purifying Effect

Jesus whole point of the story (Matt 24) is to be ready, to watch. Looking for His soon return, looking and expecting the rapture produces a purifying effect in our lives.

Important have Same Attitude / Gospel – Material – Purity / Lord creates that Belief

How important that we have the same attitude of the Lord's return as did the early church. It gave them urgency in getting the gospel out, it gave them the proper perspective on the material things, and an emphasis on purity. As they believed that Jesus was coming at any moment to wind things up. The Lord created that belief in the early church that His return was soon, and I believe He does it in every generation, but I look at the signs before us today and have to have the expectation that we are the generation that will see His return.

More Look for Jesus / More become Like Jesus

The more you look for Jesus Christ, the more you will become like Him. Only a Pre-tribulation rapture view will have us focused on Jesus Christ:

1 John 3:2-3 (NKJV) ² Beloved, now we are children of God; and it has not yet been revealed what we shall be, but we know that when He is revealed, we shall be like Him, for we shall see Him as He is. ³ And everyone who has this hope in Him purifies himself, just as He is pure.

(2 Corinthians 3:18 NKJV) But we all, with unveiled face, beholding as in a mirror the glory of the Lord, are being transformed into the same image from glory to glory, just as by the Spirit of the Lord.

4.) Philadelphia – God promises the Faithful Church they will be kept from Tribulation

God's Promise to Faithful Church

God promises the Faithful church that they will be kept from the hour of trial.

Revelation 3:10-11 (NKJV) ¹⁰ Because you have kept My command to persevere, I also will keep you from the hour of trial which shall come upon the whole world, to test those who dwell on the earth. ¹¹ Behold, I am coming quickly! Hold fast what you have, that no one may take your crown.

I will Keep You – Because Obedient / Definite Article – Specific Time

Because of their obedience, the faithful church, God said I will keep you from the hour of trial. This hour in the Greek structure is a definite article, meaning it speaks of a specific time. It speaks of the Tribulation Period (Revelation 6-19), and God says I will keep you from it, you will not go through it.

Keep From / People Martyred Saved after Rapture

Jesus says to believers that He will keep us from the hour of trial, not protect us in it. Keep means to guard from damage. We will read throughout the tribulation period martyrs being slaughtered for their faith, for not bowing their knee to the anti-christ. Those being martyred doesn't sound like they are being kept from danger....., the ones being martyred are the ones who missed the rapture:

Revelation 6:9-11 (NKJV) ⁹ When He opened the fifth seal, I saw under the altar the souls of those who had been slain for the word of God and for the testimony which they held. ¹⁰ And they cried with a loud voice, saying, "How long, O Lord, holy and true, until You judge and avenge our

blood on those who dwell on the earth?"¹¹ Then a white robe was given to each of them; and it was said to them that they should rest a little while longer, **until both the number of their fellow servants and their brethren, who would be killed as they were, was completed.**

Revelation 13:7–10 (NKJV) ⁷ It was granted to him to make war with the saints and to overcome them. And authority was given him over every tribe, tongue, and nation. ⁸ All who dwell on the earth will worship him, whose names have not been written in the Book of Life of the Lamb slain from the foundation of the world. ⁹ If anyone has an ear, let him hear. ¹⁰ He who leads into captivity shall go into captivity; he who kills with the sword must be killed with the sword. Here is the patience and the faith of the saints.

Revelation 20:4 (NKJV) ⁴ And I saw thrones, and they sat on them, and judgment was committed to them. Then I saw the souls of those who had been beheaded for their witness to Jesus and for the word of God, who had not worshiped the beast or his image, and had not received his mark on their foreheads or on their hands. And they lived and reigned with Christ for a thousand years.

The Very name of Philadelphia / Not my Brother

The very name of Philadelphia is brotherly love, and that name is used for a reason. I and you, would never allow our brother or sister to suffer. If we knew trouble was coming we would go and pull them out before the affliction would come upon them.

Come Quickly / Unannounced

May I also not that Jesus said to the Church of Philadelphia that He comes quickly. The word quickly (tachos in the Greek) means to come suddenly, without warning, surprise, so for us it can happen at any time, so be ready:

(Revelation 3:11 NKJV) "Behold, I am coming quickly! Hold fast what you have, that no one may take your crown.

5.) Pattern – The pattern (outline) of Revelation shows a Pre-tribulation Rapture

Book of Revelation Outline

- The Things Which You Have Seen - (Chapter 1).
- The Things Which Are - (Chapters 2-3).
- The Things Which Will Take Place After This - (Chapters 4-22).

(Revelation 1:19 NKJV) "Write the things which you have seen, and the things which are, and the things which will take place after this.

Pre-trib is Outline / Twisted Pretzel / 5 after 11 if Mid / 5 after 19 Post / Pre it flows

Pre-Tribulation Rapture follows the outline of the Book of Revelation. If you don't embrace a Pre-Tribulation view, your understanding of Revelation becomes as twisted as a pretzel because you've got to put chapters 4 and 5 after chapter 11 (after 2 witnesses killed), if you hold to a Mid-Tribulation stance; after chapter 19 (after the 2nd Coming of Christ) if you take a Post-Tribulation point of view. Only a Pre-Tribulation placement of the Rapture allows for a consistent flow of the Book of Revelation.

Meta Tauta

The Lord gives us another key to unlock this book, it isn't a hard book to understand as many people say or perceive. The Greek word (*meta tauta*) which means "after". So the Lord says after these things, then this begins. In our outline the things which are (the 7 Churches) then after the church period starts the next the Tribulation period. Chapter 2-3 are the Churches, then we begin chapter 4 with (*meta tauta*). I like how verse 1 has a trumpet sounding and a call to come up here,

(Revelation 1:19 NKJV) "Write the things which you have seen, and the things which are, and the things which will take place after this (*meta tauta*).

(Revelation 4:1 NKJV) After these things (*meta tauta*). I looked, and behold, a door standing open in heaven. And the first voice which I heard was like a trumpet speaking with me, saying, "Come up here, and I will show you things which must take place after this." (*meta tauta*).

1 Thessalonians 4:16–18 (NKJV) ¹⁶ For the Lord Himself will descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of an archangel, and with the trumpet of God. And the dead in Christ will rise first. ¹⁷ Then we who are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air. And thus we shall always be with the Lord. ¹⁸ Therefore comfort one another with these words.

No Mention of Church till Chapter

The word "church" is not used again in the book after 3:14. After chapter 4-5 there is no picture of the church until after the Tribulation period is over.

6.) Peace – The promise of a Pre-tribulation Rapture is to give us Peace in our heart.

Comforting One – Escape Agony / Mid or Post no Comfort

The doctrine is to be a comforting one, to bring peace to the heart (1 Thessalonians 4:18). The belief that the Rapture happens after or in the middle of the Tribulation is anything but comforting because it means believers must endure unbelievable agony before they are taken to heaven.

1 Thessalonians 4:16–18 (NKJV) ¹⁶ For the Lord Himself will descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of an archangel, and with the trumpet of God. And the dead in Christ will rise first. ¹⁷ Then we who are alive and remain **shall be caught up** together with them in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air. And thus we shall always be with the Lord. ¹⁸ **Therefore comfort one another with these words.**

Imagine hell on Earth – Boils – Locust – Famine – Drought – Scorched / Comforting Words?

Imagine if the word said, “you will go through hell on earth, you will have boils on your skin, locust attacking you, famine, drought, the earth will be scorched, earthquakes, and continual persecution from the anti-christ, you will go through extreme agony, now comfort one another with these words. No, no, we will be caught-up, taken out of here, we are heaven bound for a marriage supper with the Lamb, now comfort one another with those words.

7.) Purpose – A Pre-tribulation Rapture fits with the Purpose of the Tribulation

Pre-Trib Fits with Purpose / Wrath – Christ Rejecting / Must Judge – to be Righteous Judge

A Pre-tribulation rapture of the church fits with the purpose of the Tribulation. The Tribulation is God’s wrath against a Christ rejecting world. God must judge a rebellious world or else He is not a righteous judge, he would be more a social worker than a judge. Imagine a judge today who allowed every criminal to go free saying maybe grace will change his heart, and that same person came back into the court time and time again. God’s grace has its limit.

Revelation 6:15–17 (NKJV) ¹⁵ And the kings of the earth, the great men, the rich men, the commanders, the mighty men, every slave and every free man, hid themselves in the caves and in the rocks of the mountains, ¹⁶ and said to the mountains and rocks, “Fall on us and hide us from the face of Him who sits on the throne and from the wrath of the Lamb!” ¹⁷ **For the great day of His wrath has come, and who is able to stand?”**

3 Specific Purposes – Shake – Wake - Make

As we studied the Tribulation in chapters 6-19, we will see God doing 3 very specific things:

- To Shake-up the Heathen
- To Wake-up a Nation (Israel)
- To Make-up the Kingdom

Shake – Cruising / Keep Preaching

The purpose of the tribulation will be to shake-up the heathen. People are just cruising through life, thinking all is well, life is good, got my 2 cars, house, nice job, because I’m a nice person. They have no idea they are destined to hell because they have not sought a Savior for their sins. Christian keep preaching, keep sharing, keep telling them about the Rapture, because when you are gone, they will remember your words. When they enter into the Tribulation period after missing the Rapture, their life will be shaken, and they will see the need to be rescued.

Part of the reason of the Tribulation is to shake-up the heathen:

Revelation 6:12–17 (NKJV) ¹² I looked when He opened the sixth seal, and behold, there was a great earthquake; and the sun became black as sackcloth of hair, and the moon became like blood. ¹³ And the stars of heaven fell to the earth, as a fig tree drops its late figs when it is shaken by a mighty wind. ¹⁴ Then the sky receded as a scroll when it is rolled up, and every mountain and island was moved out of its place. ¹⁵ And the kings of the earth, the great men, the rich men, the commanders, the mighty men, every slave and every free man, hid themselves in the caves and in the rocks of the mountains, ¹⁶ and said to the mountains and rocks, “Fall on us and hide us from the face of Him who sits on the throne and from the wrath of the Lamb!” ¹⁷ **For the great day of His wrath has come, and who is able to stand?”**

Wake – God not Done with Israel / All Saved – God Protects in Trib – Wounds of Friends

Secondly, part of the reason of the Tribulation is to Wake-up a nation, the children of Israel. God is by no means done with the nation of Israel, and we will read in the coming chapters how all of Israel will be saved (Rom 11:25-27). It will be during the Tribulation period that they will see that they missed their Messiah, and they will come to Him, and He will protect them (Rev 12:6). They will ask Him where did you get those wounds, and He will say in the house of My friends:

Romans 11:25–27 (NKJV) ²⁵ For I do not desire, brethren, that you should be ignorant of this mystery, lest you should be wise in your own opinion, that blindness in part has happened to Israel until the fullness of the Gentiles has come in. ²⁶ And so all Israel will be saved, as it is written: "The Deliverer will come out of Zion, And He will turn away ungodliness from Jacob; ²⁷ For this is My covenant with them, When I take away their sins."

Revelation 12:6 (NKJV) ⁶ Then the woman fled into the wilderness, where she has a place prepared by God, that they should feed her there one thousand two hundred and sixty days.

Zechariah 13:6 (NKJV) ⁶ And one will say to him, 'What are these wounds between your arms?' Then he will answer, 'Those with which I was wounded in the house of my friends.'

Jacobs Trouble / Deuteronomy – Scattered – Regathered in Last Days / God Not done

Jeremiah 30 says that the children of Israel will go through the Tribulation (known as Jacob's Trouble), but during that time all of Israel will see their Messiah. In Deuteronomy it is prophesied that Israel will be scattered, but then re-gathered, and in the Last Days (latter) they will go through great Tribulation. And so it was in 70AD they were scattered, and 2,000 years later on May 14th 1948 they were gathered, and then into the Tribulation they will go. God is by no means done with the Nation Israel and He will wake them up in the Tribulation Period:

(Jeremiah 30:7 NKJV) Alas! For that day is great, So that none is like it; And it is the time of Jacob's trouble, **But he shall be saved out of it.**

Deuteronomy 4:27–31 (NKJV) ²⁷ And the LORD will scatter you among the peoples, and you will be left few in number among the nations where the LORD will drive you. ²⁸ And there you will serve gods, the work of men's hands, wood and stone, which neither see nor hear nor eat nor smell. ²⁹ But from there you will seek the LORD your God, and you will find Him if you seek Him with all your heart and with all your soul. ³⁰ When you are in distress, and all these things come upon you in the latter days, when you turn to the LORD your God and obey His voice ³¹ (for the LORD your God is a merciful God), He will not forsake you nor destroy you, nor forget the covenant of your fathers which He swore to them.

Make-up Kingdom / Sort-Out

Thirdly, the purpose of the Tribulation is to make-up a Kingdom. God through the Tribulation will sort out those who love Him, and those who will not bow a knee, and then establish His Millennial Kingdom, then after that His heavenly Kingdom. Let me just add here, any Christian who says I really don't care about ruling and reigning with Him in the Millennial Kingdom, I just want to make it into heaven, you will care when that day comes, and you'll be sorry that you didn't invest now, for what we do in our lifetime on earth will determine what we do in the Millennial Kingdom:

Revelation 20:4–6 (NKJV) ⁴ And I saw thrones, and they sat on them, and judgment was committed to them. Then I saw the souls of those who had been beheaded for their witness to Jesus and for the word of God, who had not worshiped the beast or his image, and had not received his mark on their foreheads or on their hands. And they lived and reigned with Christ for a thousand years. ⁵ But the rest of the dead did not live again until the thousand years were finished. This is the first resurrection. ⁶ Blessed and holy is he who has part in the first resurrection. Over such the second death has no power, but they shall be priests of God and of Christ, and shall reign with Him a thousand years.

Verse 10 – Against Whole World / To Test / Church Already Tested – Found Pure

Verse 10 says it is coming against the whole world, to test them. It's purpose is to test those who dwell on the earth. We test something to see if it is pure, if it has a fault in it. We have already been tested, and found without fault because we are examined through the lens of the Cross of Christ:

Revelation 3:10–11 (NKJV) ¹⁰ Because you have kept My command to persevere, I also will keep you from the hour of trial which shall come upon the whole world, to test those who dwell on the earth. ¹¹ Behold, I am coming quickly! Hold fast what you have, that no one may take your crown.

Ephesians 5:25–27 (NKJV) ²⁵ Husbands, love your wives, just as Christ also loved the church and gave Himself for her, ²⁶ that He might sanctify and cleanse her with the washing of water by the word, ²⁷ that He might present her to Himself a glorious church, not having spot or wrinkle or any such thing, but that she should be holy and without blemish.

8.) Penalty – God has not appointed us to Wrath, the Penalty has already been paid.

Wrath of Lamb / Church Not Appointed to Wrath / Our Hero took our Wrath

The Tribulation is the outpouring of the wrath of the Lamb—and God has not appointed us to wrath (1 Thessalonians 5:9–11). The wrath that should have been hurled at you and poured out on me was absorbed by our Hero, our Lord, our Savior on the Cross of Calvary:

Revelation 6:15–17 (NKJV) ¹⁵ And the kings of the earth, the great men, the rich men, the commanders, the mighty men, every slave and every free man, hid themselves in the caves and in the rocks of the mountains, ¹⁶ and said to the mountains and rocks, "Fall on us and hide us from the face of Him who sits on the throne and from the wrath of the Lamb! ¹⁷ For the great day of His wrath has come, and who is able to stand?"

1 Thessalonians 5:8–11 (NKJV) ⁸ But let us who are of the day be sober, putting on the breastplate of faith and love, and as a helmet the hope of salvation. ⁹ For God did not appoint us to wrath, but to obtain salvation through our Lord Jesus Christ, ¹⁰ who died for us, that whether we wake or sleep, we should live together with Him. ¹¹ Therefore comfort each other and edify one another, just as you also are doing.

Comfort with These Words

Notice again, it says to comfort one another with these words.

9.) Presented – As Presented in the Scriptures God removes His Righteous.

Not Appointed to Wrath / Not Judge Righteous with Wicked / Abe – Lot - Peter

God has not appointed His children to wrath, as He will not punish the just (righteous) with the unjust (unrighteous). We see that pictured very clearly with the story of Lot and the judgment against Sodom and Gomorrah. Abraham asked the Lord will you judge the righteous with the unrighteous, and God said surely not. So we see God pulling “righteous” Lot out before the destruction came down. In reference to this, Peter writes, “The Lord knoweth how to deliver the godly out of temptations” (2 Peter 2:9). The word translated “temptations” is the same word translated “tribulation.”

Genesis 18:25–26 (NKJV) ²⁵ Far be it from You to do such a thing as this, to slay the righteous with the wicked, so that the righteous should be as the wicked; far be it from You! Shall not the Judge of all the earth do right? ²⁶ So the LORD said, “If I find in Sodom fifty righteous within the city, then I will spare all the place for their sakes.”

2 Peter 2:4–9 (NKJV) ⁴ For if God did not spare the angels who sinned, but cast them down to hell and delivered them into chains of darkness, to be reserved for judgment; ⁵ and did not spare the ancient world, but saved Noah, one of eight people, a preacher of righteousness, bringing in the flood on the world of the ungodly; ⁶ and turning the cities of Sodom and Gomorrah into ashes, condemned them to destruction, making them an example to those who afterward would live ungodly; ⁷ and delivered righteous Lot, who was oppressed by the filthy conduct of the wicked ⁸ (for that righteous man, dwelling among them, tormented his righteous soul from day to day by seeing and hearing their lawless deeds)—⁹ then the Lord knows how to deliver the godly out of temptations and to reserve the unjust under punishment for the day of judgment,

Genesis 19:12–13 (NKJV) ¹² Then the men said to Lot, “Have you anyone else here? Son-in-law, your sons, your daughters, and whomever you have in the city—take them out of this place! ¹³ For we will destroy this place, because the outcry against them has grown great before the face of the LORD, and the LORD has sent us to destroy it.”

Pictured in Enoch / Noah type of Israel / Wake-up Nation

The Rapture before the Tribulation is illustrated in Enoch, who was taken to heaven prior to the Flood (Genesis 5:24). “Wrong analogy,” some protest. “The correct picture is Noah who went through the tribulation of the Flood.” But wait a minute. Noah is not a picture of the church, but of Israel, who will indeed go through the Tribulation—and will at last come to Jesus as a result. Part of the Purpose of the Tribulation is to Wake-up a nation:

(Genesis 5:24 NKJV) And Enoch walked with God; and he was not, for God took him.

(Revelation 7:4 NKJV) And I heard the number of those who were sealed. One hundred and forty-four thousand of all the tribes of the children of Israel were sealed:

(Revelation 12:6 NKJV) Then the woman fled into the wilderness, where she has a place prepared by God, that they should feed her there one thousand two hundred and sixty days.

Daniel 9 / 70 Weeks / 69 to Palm Sunday / Church Period / Final 7

Pre-Tribulation Rapture squares with the prophecy of Daniel. At the end of Daniel 9, Daniel was given the timetable for all of Jewish history in units of heptads, or weeks. It is clear from this all-important passage of Scripture that the sixty-nine weeks of Daniel refer to the time between the commandment to rebuild the temple, given in 445 B.C. by Artaxerxes, and the coming of Messiah, fulfilled perfectly on Palm Sunday when Jesus rode into Jerusalem on the back of a donkey. But Daniel was also told, “Seventy weeks are determined upon Israel.” To what does the seventieth week of Daniel refer? To the Tribulation. You see, the seventy weeks of Daniel refer to Israel. The church was not present for the first sixty-nine weeks. And the seventieth week doesn’t begin until after the church is raptured. In other words, if the church was not present in the first sixty-nine weeks, why would she be present in the last week? She won’t. She’ll be in heaven:

(Daniel 9:24 NKJV) “Seventy weeks are determined For your people and for your holy city, To finish the transgression, To make an end of sins, To make reconciliation for iniquity, To bring in everlasting righteousness, To seal up vision and prophecy, And to anoint the Most Holy.

(Daniel 9:25 NKJV) "Know therefore and understand, That from the going forth of the command To restore and build Jerusalem Until Messiah the Prince, There shall be seven weeks and sixty-two weeks; The street shall be built again, and the wall, Even in troublesome times.

(Daniel 9:26 NKJV) "And after the sixty-two weeks Messiah shall be cut off, but not for Himself; And the people of the prince who is to come Shall destroy the city and the sanctuary. The end of it shall be with a flood, And till the end of the war desolations are determined.

(Daniel 9:27 NKJV) Then he shall confirm a covenant with many for one week; But in the middle of the week He shall bring an end to sacrifice and offering. And on the wing of abominations shall be one who makes desolate, Even until the consummation, which is determined, Is poured out on the desolate."

Great Confusion / Matt 24 – the Elect

One of the greatest confusion in the Scriptures, where a lot of Mid-tribulation and Post-tribulation theology comes from is the misunderstanding of Matthew 24 in speaking of the Elect going through the Tribulation, and except those days should be shortened, there should no flesh be saved: but for the elect's sake those days shall be shortened:

Matthew 24:21–22 (NKJV) ²¹ For then there will be great tribulation, such as has not been since the beginning of the world until this time, nor nor ever shall be. ²² And unless those days were shortened, no flesh would be saved; but for the elect's sake those days will be shortened.

3 Elects – Christians – Israel – Saints Saved in Tribulation

On the basis of this verse, people say "Aha! Here we see the elect in the Tribulation"—failing to realize that the term "elect" refers to three groups of people: Christians (Colossians 3:12), Israel (Isaiah 45:4), and those who will be saved in the Tribulation (Matthew 24:21, 22).

(Colossians 3:12 NKJV) Therefore, as the elect of God, holy and beloved, put on tender mercies, kindness, humility, meekness, longsuffering;

(Isaiah 45:4 NKJV) For Jacob My servant's sake, And Israel My elect, I have even called you by your name; I have named you, though you have not known Me.

(Matthew 24:22 NKJV) "And unless those days were shortened, no flesh would be saved; but for the elect's sake those days will be shortened.

Elect of Matt 24 – Israel / Sabbath Day / Christians not under Sabbath

To which of the elect does Jesus refer in Matthew 24:21? I believe the answer lies in the verse preceding it....But pray ye that your flight be not in the winter, neither on the Sabbath day (Matthew 24:20). Even to this day, transportation in Israel is shut down on the Sabbath. Since the Sabbath means nothing to Gentile nations, the application to Israel is clear. As we have seen, Israel (the Elect) will go through the Tribulation, but God will take them away to safety (pray that journey isn't on the Sabbath). For today, for the believer, we are no longer under the Sabbath law:

Matthew 24:20–22 (NKJV) ²⁰ And pray that your flight may not be in winter or on the Sabbath. ²¹ For then there will be great tribulation, such as has not been since the beginning of the world until this time, no, nor ever shall be. ²² And unless those days were shortened, no flesh would be saved; but for the elect's sake those days will be shortened.

Colossians 2:15–17 (NKJV) ¹⁵ Having disarmed principalities and powers, He made a public spectacle of them, triumphing over them in it. ¹⁶ So let no one judge you in food or in drink, or regarding a festival or a new moon or sabbaths, ¹⁷ which are a shadow of things to come, but the substance is of Christ.

Pray Accounted Worthy / Our Worthy is Jesus on Cross / Found Faithful like Philadelphia

Jesus told us to pray that we would be raptured before the Tribulation. In speaking of the Tribulation in His Olivet Discourse, Jesus said, "Watch and pray always that you may be accounted worthy to escape all these things" (see Luke 21:36). How are we accounted worthy? One way: We are worthy because of what Jesus did for us on the Cross of Calvary. We are found worthy, for we are the Faithful Church of Philadelphia.

Luke 21:31–36 (NKJV) ³¹ So you also, when you see these things happening, know that the kingdom of God is near. ³² Assuredly, I say to you, this generation will by no means pass away till all things take place. ³³ Heaven and earth will pass away, but My words will by no means pass away.

³⁴ "But take heed to yourselves, lest your hearts be weighed down with carousing, drunkenness, and cares of this life, and that Day come on you unexpectedly. ³⁵ For it will come as a snare on all those who dwell on the face of the whole earth. ³⁶ Watch therefore, and pray always that you may be counted worthy to escape all these things that will come to pass, and to stand before the Son of Man."

10.) Promised – God has Promised His Bride a Honeymoon.

Fits with Jewish Marriage

Pre-Tribulation Rapture makes sense historically and scripturally. In accordance with Jewish custom, when a man came of age to marry, he would add a room on to his father's house for himself and his bride. When the addition

was complete, and when the father gave the go-ahead, a trumpet would sound, and the bridegroom would go to meet his bride. Now the bride would not know the specific day (but the general day) thus she would have her wedding dress ready, and her hair done, and her and her bridesmaids would be waiting for the trumpet to sound and the groom to come get her. When she heard the trumpet sound, then she would run out the door and meet the groom in the street half-way. We see the story illustrated in the Scriptures by the parable of the 10 virgins who were to be ready for the groom to come get them, at whatever time:

Matthew 25:1–10 (NKJV) ¹ "Then the kingdom of heaven shall be likened to ten virgins who took their lamps and went out to meet the bridegroom. ² Now five of them were wise, and five were foolish. ³ Those who were foolish took their lamps and took no oil with them, ⁴ but the wise took oil in their vessels with their lamps. ⁵ But while the bridegroom was delayed, they all slumbered and slept. ⁶ "And at midnight a cry was heard: 'Behold, the bridegroom is coming; go out to meet him!' ⁷ Then all those virgins arose and trimmed their lamps. ⁸ And the foolish said to the wise, 'Give us some of your oil, for our lamps are going out.' ⁹ But the wise answered, saying, 'No, lest there should not be enough for us and you; but go rather to those who sell, and buy for yourselves.' ¹⁰ And while they went to buy, the bridegroom came, and those who were ready went in with him to the wedding; and the door was shut.

Following Ceremony / To Fathers House 7days / End - Presented

Following the wedding ceremony, the bridegroom would take his bride to his father's house, where they would be tucked away for seven days in the newly completed "bridal suite." At the end of seven days, the bridegroom would come out with his bride and introduce her to the community.

That's What Happens to Us / Mansions – Presented

That's exactly what's going to happen with us. Jesus, our Bridegroom, is preparing a place for us in heaven, His Father's house (John 14:2). At the appointed time known only by the Father, a trumpet will sound, and Jesus will meet us, His bride, in the air to escort us up to the "Bridal Suite" He has prepared for us. We will remain with Him in heaven for seven years before we are presented to the world, where we will rule and reign with Him.

John 14:1–4 (NKJV) ¹ "Let not your heart be troubled; you believe in God, believe also in Me. ² In My Father's house are many mansions; if it were not so, I would have told you. I go to prepare a place for you. ³ And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again and receive you to Myself; that where I am, there you may be also. ⁴ And where I go you know, and the way you know."

Revelation 19:9–14 (NKJV) ⁹ Then he said to me, "Write: 'Blessed are those who are called to the marriage supper of the Lamb!' " And he said to me, "These are the true sayings of God." ¹⁰ And I fell at his feet to worship him. But he said to me, "See that you do not do that! I am your fellow servant, and of your brethren who have the testimony of Jesus. Worship God! For the testimony of Jesus is the spirit of prophecy." ¹¹ Now I saw heaven opened, and behold, a white horse. And He who sat on him was called Faithful and True, and in righteousness He judges and makes war. ¹² His eyes were like a flame of fire, and on His head were many crowns. He had a name written that no one knew except Himself. ¹³ He was clothed with a robe dipped in blood, and His name is called The Word of God. ¹⁴ And the armies in heaven, clothed in fine linen, white and clean, followed Him on white horses.

Conclusion

Pre-Tribulation – Proper Perspective

A Pre-tribulation understanding of the Rapture will put life in proper perspective, and it will lead us to seek first the Kingdom of God:

(Matthew 6:33 NKJV) "But seek first the kingdom of God and His righteousness, and all these things shall be added to you."

Be Looking / Spirit of Prophecy / Become Like Him

We need to constantly be living looking for His soon return. That is the spirit of prophecy, and the Lord commends His children for their continually looking for His soon return. For as our eyes are looking for Him, we will become what we behold, and we will become like Him.

6 Reasons Why We Should Study Prophecy

Here are 6 reasons why we study prophecy:

Control - (God is in Control for He Knows the End from the Beginning)

Isaiah 46:9–10 (NKJV) ⁹ Remember the former things of old, For I am God, and there is no other; I am God, and there is none like Me, ¹⁰ Declaring the end from the beginning, And from ancient times things that are not yet done, Saying, 'My counsel shall stand, And I will do all My pleasure,'

Comfort - (We can take Comfort knowing God is in Control, and none of these things Surprise Him)

1 Thessalonians 4:16–18 (NKJV) ¹⁶ For the Lord Himself will descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of an archangel, and with the trumpet of God. And the dead in Christ will rise first. ¹⁷ Then we who are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air. And thus we shall always be with the Lord. ¹⁸ Therefore comfort one another with these words.

Persevere - (We are to continue to Persevere, for He is Worth It)

(Revelation 3:10 NKJV) "Because you have kept My command to persevere, I also will keep you from the hour of trial which shall come upon the whole world, to test those who dwell on the earth.

Purity - (Everyone who has this Hope Purifies themselves – to Give Themselves to Him the Spotless Bride)

1 John 3:2–3 (NKJV) ² Beloved, now we are children of God; and it has not yet been revealed what we shall be, but we know that when He is revealed, we shall be like Him, for we shall see Him as He is. ³ And everyone who has this hope in Him purifies himself, just as He is pure.

Priority - (Make our Priorities to What Matters Most considering we are going to See the King soon and very soon)

Matthew 6:33 (NKJV) ³³ But seek first the kingdom of God and His righteousness, and all these things shall be added to you.

Preparation - (There is a Lost and Dying World who is not Prepared to Meet Him)

John 3:16–17 (NKJV) ¹⁶ For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have everlasting life. ¹⁷ For God did not send His Son into the world to condemn the world, but that the world through Him might be saved.

Communion

What a perfect study to usher us into communion, as Jesus said for us to take the bread and the cup until He comes! Let's proclaim He is coming soon, and very soon, for His Church, His spotless Bride!

1 Corinthians 11:23–26 (NKJV) ²³ For I received from the Lord that which I also delivered to you: that the Lord Jesus on the *same* night in which He was betrayed took bread; ²⁴ and when He had given thanks, He broke *it* and said, "Take, eat; this is My body which is broken for you; do this in remembrance of Me." ²⁵ In the same manner *He* also took the cup after supper, saying, "This cup is the new covenant in My blood. This do, as often as you drink *it*, in remembrance of Me." ²⁶ For as often as you eat this bread and drink this cup, you proclaim the Lord's death **till He comes**.

God Says Come

Today we come and are gifted this Word from God Himself, His very heart opened before us, the calling to come near, be drawn to Him.

Matthew 11:28 (NKJV) ²⁸ Come to Me, all you who labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest.

The Word of God is Living and Powerful, and is ready, and will do a mighty work in our lives.

Hebrews 4:12 (NKJV) ¹² For the word of God is living and powerful, and sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing even to the division of soul and spirit, and of joints and marrow, and is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart.

In Every Study

- Who Is God? (How Great is He?)
- What Does He Think of Me? (How Wonderful Are His Thoughts Towards Me?)
- What Does He Want Me to Do?
- What Can I Boldly Request of Him?
- What Do I Need to Be on Guard of When I Leave Here Today?

Boldly come to the throne of grace, ask God to reveal Himself in a mighty way to you, and to do I might work in you, and through you.

Hebrews 4:16 (NKJV) ¹⁶ Let us therefore come boldly to the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy and find grace to help in time of need

End of Study

Mark 14
Mark 14:1-9

Intro / Recap

It's Still Tuesday / See Map of Bethany (2miles)

It is Tuesday in the life of the King, His final week. Just 2 days earlier (on Sunday) was His Triumphal entry into Jerusalem, to the exact day as prophesied in the Book of Daniel chapter 9. Monday He cleansed the Temple, and now it is Tuesday and in 2 more days Jesus will go to the cross as the Lamb of God who will take away the sins of the world (and again exactly on the day and time that the Passover lamb were to be sacrificed according to the Scriptures). This day has been a long day for Jesus, earlier in the day he denounced the religious leaders for their hard and evil hearts, then He taught His second longest recorded sermon (the Olivet's Discourse – discussing the things of the end times – and that He is coming back for His loved ones) and now He is leaving the area of Jerusalem and heading to Bethany for what turns out to be very special dinner, as a woman will come anoint His body with expensive perfume.

The Jewish calendar of Events:

- Nissan 10th – Sunday – First Day of Week:
 - Jesus Triumphal Entry into Jerusalem (Mark 11:1-10)
 - Goes into Temple but Leaves (Mark 11:11)
 - Sleeps outside city in Bethany (Matt 21:17 / Mark 11:11)
- 11th – Monday
 - Curses Fig Tree (Mark 11:12-14)
 - Cleanses the Temple (Mark 11:15-18)
 - Leaves the city when Evening Came (Mark 11:19)
- 12th – Tuesday
 - Explains the Cursing of Fig Tree (Mark 11:20-26)
 - Goes to Temple (Authority Challenged) - (Mark 11:27 – 12:1-44)
 - The Olivet's Discourse (Mark 13)
 - Jesus goes out to Bethany (Matt 26:6)
- 13th – Wednesday
 - The Gospels are Silent
- 14th – Thursday –
 - Passover Meal (Mark 14:1-31)
 - Garden of Gethsemane (Mark 14:32-52)
 - The Trial (Mark 14:53 – 15:1-14)
 - The Passover Sacrifice – Jesus Beaten & Crucified (Mark 15:15-41)
 - Jesus Buried (Mark 15:42-47)
- 15th – Friday – Feast of Unleavened Begins
- 16th – Saturday - Sabbath
- 17th – Sunday – First Day of week – Resurrection – Feast of First Fruits

Jerusalem Buzzing – Not all Loving Him

Although all of Jerusalem is in a buzz about the miracle maker, there are those who have been plotting to kill Him, and we pick up our study here.

Today's Passage

Mark 14:1–11 (NKJV) ¹ After two days it was the Passover and *the Feast of Unleavened Bread*. And the chief priests and the scribes sought how they might take Him by trickery and put *Him* to death. ² But they said, "Not during the feast, lest there be an uproar of the people." ³ And being in Bethany at the house of Simon the leper, as He sat at the table, a woman came having an alabaster flask of very costly oil of spikenard. Then she broke the flask and poured *it* on His head. ⁴ But there were some who were indignant among themselves, and said, "Why was this fragrant oil wasted? ⁵ For it might have been sold for more than three hundred denarii and given to the poor." And they criticized her sharply. ⁶ But Jesus said, "Let her alone. Why do you trouble her? She has done a good work for Me. ⁷ For you have the poor with you always, and whenever you wish you may do them good; but Me you do not have always. ⁸ She has done what she could. She has come beforehand to anoint My body for burial. ⁹ Assuredly, I say to you, wherever this gospel is preached in the whole world, what this woman has done will also be told as a memorial to her." ¹⁰ Then Judas Iscariot, one of the twelve, went to the chief priests to betray Him to them. ¹¹ And when they heard *it*, they were glad, and promised to give him money. So he sought how he might conveniently betray Him.

God Says Come / He Has a Word that is Living & Powerful

Today we come and are gifted this Word from God Himself, His very heart opened before us, the calling to come near, be drawn to Him.

Matthew 11:28 (NKJV) ²⁸ *Come to Me, all you who labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest.*

The Word of God is Living and Powerful, and is ready, and will do a mighty work in our lives.

Hebrews 4:12 (NKJV) ¹² For the word of God is living and powerful, and sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing even to the division of soul and spirit, and of joints and marrow, and is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart.

In Every Study

- Who Is God? (How Great is He?)
- What Does He Think of Me? (How Wonderful Are His Thoughts Towards Me?)
- What Does He Want Me to Do?
- What Can I Boldly Request of Him?
- What Do I Need to Be on Guard of When I Leave Here Today?

Boldly come to the throne of grace, ask God to reveal Himself in a mighty way to you, and to do I might work in you, and through you.

Hebrews 4:16 (NKJV) ¹⁶ Let us therefore come boldly to the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy and find grace to help in time of need.

There is a Prayer Team Available to Pray with and for You

The Religious Leaders Plot to Kill Jesus (14:1-2)

Mark 14:1 After two days it was the Passover and the Feast of Unleavened Bread. And the chief priests and the scribes sought how they might take Him by trickery and put Him to death.

Mark 14:2 But they said, “Not during the feast, lest there be an uproar of the people.”

Passover Commemorating Deliverance from Egypt / All Picture of Jesus the Lamb

The Passover feast was a yearly event in Jerusalem commemorating the delivery of God’s people from Egypt, that final plague sent by God, that whoever would apply the blood of the lamb over the door of their home, then the angel of death would pass over it, all a picture of the day Jesus would become the final lamb, the final covering so that death would pass over all who would apply the blood over the door of their heart. How about you, have you applied the Blood of the Lamb over yourself, so when death comes, you will be passed over, because the blood covers your sin, blots it out, and all that is seen associated with you is the precious blood of Jesus Christ.

John 1:29 (NKJV) ²⁹ The next day John saw Jesus coming toward him, and said, “Behold! The Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world!

1 Corinthians 5:7 (NKJV) ⁷ Therefore purge out the old leaven, that you may be a new lump, since you truly are unleavened. For indeed Christ, our Passover, was sacrificed for us.

Josephus – 250,000 lambs / Brook Kidron

Josephus tells us that in Jesus’ day, 256,000 lambs were slaughtered in commemoration of Passover, and he estimates the crowds in Jerusalem to be 2.7 million people in Jerusalem for this festival. Jerusalem is packed; there is a buzz and energy in the air. On the day of preparing the Passover lamb, those lambs would be slaughtered between the hours of three and five o’clock (twilight hours), so the 250,000 lambs would be slaughtered in the temple in preparation for Passover. Blood would have flowed freely from the temple into the Kidron Valley below the temple mount, causing the Kidron brook to actually turn blood-red. Later in this chapter, we will see Jesus leaving Gethsemane and crossing over this creek and no doubt that creek must have been a graphic reminder to Him of what was to come as He, the Lamb of God, would shed His own blood for our sin.

Title: The Works of Josephus (chapter 9)

So these high priests, upon the coming of that feast which is called the Passover, when they slay their sacrifices, from the ninth hour till the eleventh, but so that a company not less than ten (Wars-6-33) belong to every sacrifice, (for it is not lawful for them to feast singly by themselves), and many of us are twenty in a company, found the number of sacrifices was two hundred and fifty-six thousand five hundred; which, upon the allowance of no more than ten that feast together, amounts to two millions seven hundred thousand and two hundred persons that were pure and holy; for as to those that have the leprosy, or the gonorrhea, or women that have their monthly courses, or such as are otherwise polluted, it is not lawful for them to be partakers of this sacrifice; nor indeed for any foreigners neither, who come hither to worship.

Exodus 12:6 (NKJV) ⁶ Now you shall keep it until the fourteenth day of the same month. Then the whole assembly of the congregation of Israel shall kill it at twilight.

John 18:1 (NKJV) ¹ When Jesus had spoken these words, He went out with His disciples over the Brook Kidron, where there was a garden, which He and His disciples entered.

Gospel

Have you received that free gift today? That death may “pass-over” you because your sin has been covered with the “Blood of the Lamb”, and God sees you as He sees His Son?

2 Corinthians 5:21 (NKJV) ²¹ For He made Him who knew no sin to be sin for us, that we might become the righteousness of God in Him.

John 1:29 (NKJV) ²⁹ The next day John saw Jesus coming toward him, and said, “Behold! The Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world!

Galatians 4:4–7 (NKJV) ⁴ But when the fullness of the time had come, God sent forth His Son, born of a woman, born under the law, ⁵ to redeem those who were under the law, that we might receive the adoption as sons. ⁶ And because you are sons, God has sent forth the Spirit of His Son into your hearts, crying out, “Abba, Father!” ⁷ Therefore you are no longer a slave but a son, and if a son, then an heir of God through Christ.

John 3:16–17 (NKJV) ¹⁶ For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have everlasting life. ¹⁷ For God did not send His Son into the world to condemn the world, but that the world through Him might be saved.

Lamb Singular

In Exodus 12, it's interesting, the whole time the word "the lamb" it's used in the singular as "it", even though millions of lambs would be slain, because it's very specific that there was one day going to be the "it", the one and only, the singular lamb of God, who would take away the sins of the world. Amazing how perfect these scriptures are.

High Priest – Family Line / Became Family Business – Jesus messing up Family Business

Originally, the position of high priest was passed from father to son through the Levitical line. But when the Romans came into the area and seized control of the nation, they began appointing the high priest and he became their political puppet. Caiaphas was the son-in-law of Annas. Annas chose to remove himself from the office of high priest, allowing Caiaphas to serve in his place. This was because Annas had four other sons who were making money from temple concessions, and he didn't want to jeopardize their thriving business. Think back with me. What did Jesus do with their concession tables? He overturned them (Matthew 21:12). Consequently, Caiaphas and Annas were determined to destroy Jesus. Not only were they jealous of His widespread fame and following among the people, but they were angry that He was upsetting their money-making operation and cutting into their profit margin.

Jesus Determines Day of Crucifixion

So the religious leaders, they don't want to crucify Jesus on the Passover, because the 2.5 million people who are in town, they don't want to riot on their hands, which would cost them possibly even their life, not just their jobs with the Roman government. But it doesn't matter what they determine. They think they're in charge, but they're far from it. Jesus Christ will and must be crucified at sundown on the 14th of Nisan in the Jewish Calendar. According to Exodus 12 that is when the Passover lamb shall be slain, and Jesus will be slain as the Passover lamb. The lamb who takes away the sin of the world at that exact time. Jesus set the time for the crucifixion. Jesus, our God, is in control, and may you find comfort in that today, whatever is going on in your life, how it may seem like there's no control and no order to it. May you be strengthened today with the word and see it here. Jesus Christ is in control. Jesus Christ is always on time. He may not come as early as you'd like, but He will never be late. I pray you are comforted and strengthened in your trial today. Jesus will be right on time for you, because we have a right on time God.

Still Today Man Thinks He Can Relieve Self by Trickery of Words of Christ

Verse 1, they think they can do this by trickery, some slight of hand, some words of wisdom, some logical argument, some great debate they think they can have. Oh the folly of man, then and now. They think that they can twist the word of God, the scriptures, present their case, swing the crowd, excuse themselves of what is required of them by coming up with this argument. Make no mistake, just look around. Man today, many men today still want to put Jesus to death, put His words to death so that they can relieve themselves of what is required of them. Yet they simply deceive themselves, for this word of God is living and powerful, sharper than a two-edged sword. It cannot be killed. "Heaven and earth may pass away," Jesus would say, "but My words will by no means pass away." See the word can't be killed. No matter how man tries, the word will always rise again and man will be faced with a resurrected Christ and a resurrected word.

Hebrews 4:12 (NKJV) ¹² For the word of God is living and powerful, and sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing even to the division of soul and spirit, and of joints and marrow, and is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart.

Matthew 24:35 (NKJV) ³⁵ Heaven and earth will pass away, but My words will by no means pass away.

Pray for Loved Ones Beings Deceived by So-called Wise

Verse 2, they said not during the feast least there be an uproar. We don't want the crowd to change their mind about Jesus. They think Jesus is great. So the chance of changing their mind right now is going to be slim during the feast, but afterwards lets stir their minds against Jesus. Beloved, We must pray specifically for our loved ones, brothers and sisters. There are those who are speaking on behalf of wisdom, that your loved ones are hearing and receiving and applying to their life. We must pray against their counsel and the words that change their minds and lead them astray. Pray that specifically for them in your prayer life. Not just praying for them to repent but pray that words aren't taking root and seizing their minds that lead them astray.

A Woman Anoints Jesus' Head with Oil (14:3-9)

Mark 14:3 And being in Bethany at the house of Simon the leper, as He sat at the table, a woman came having an alabaster flask of very costly oil of spikenard. Then she broke the flask and poured it on His head.

Jesus Never Stays not Welcomed

Verse 3, Jesus never stays in Jerusalem. He'll never stay where he's not welcome. He'll always leave when He's asked to leave. Therefore, it's to any nation, any home, any church.

Jesus Heals Simon – Renovates his Home Too

Verse 3, but Jesus, He'll eat at Simon the leper's, which better said was Simon the former leper, because Jesus has healed him. Not only healed him, Jesus would have had to cleanse his house, because his house very well could have ended up being demolished because he went and infected it with his leprosy, and everything in it, including the tables they are reclining at and the pots that they're using, Jesus has done a complete renovation of the man and his home. That's what Jesus wants to do for every one of us. I want to renovate and redeem you and your heart, and then I want to move into your home and I want to cleanse your home of anything that needs to go. Then I want to draw, and use your home to draw people into a place. They come and they can recline and rest and enjoy Jesus Christ. So I think we need to be in a place where we go, "Jesus, make my home such as that."

Reclining / Pretty Smart – Start where we End

It says they are sitting, but the definition as it applies in those days was that they would really be reclining on the table. Pretty smart for when you really load up with the food, about halfway through the meal you wish you were laying on your side; so they pretty much start where we end up. So Jesus is at the table and this woman comes in with this costly oil and pours it over his head.

Opportunities – Missed (Pilate), Misused (Religious Leaders), Mastered (Woman and Jesus)

All through these next chapters we will see "opportunities", and what people do with the opportunity that is placed before them. Some will have an opportunity to do something great, and they will totally miss it, as Pilate will miss his opportunity to bow before the true King of kings. Others will total misuse their opportunity, as we will see with these religious leaders misusing their position to turn people against Jesus, rather than to Jesus as God had established the priesthood to do. In today's passage we will see a woman take full advantage (master) the opportunity that was before her as she anoints and worship Jesus with oil. And, of course, we will see ultimate opportunity mastered, as Jesus will allow all of these to redeem man back from sin and darkness.

Today – God gives various Opportunities / What do – Fall in 3 Categories

I suggest to you today that everyday God gives you abundance of various opportunities, and what we do with them will fall into one of those three categories, missed, misused, or glory be – mastered! Well in verses 3-9, we see a woman who didn't miss her opportunity, misuse it either, but as a memorial for the whole world for all time, she mastered it.

(Matthew 26:13 NKJV) "Assuredly, I say to you, wherever this gospel is preached in the whole world, what this woman has done will also be told as a memorial to her."

Mark - Spikenard Expensive / 300 – 40K / Made in Himalayas / Luxury / Chanel a Wal-Mart Special

Mark's gospel says this was spikenard oil (which was very expensive) and it was worth 300 denarius, which was equivalent to almost 1 year's wages (a denarius a day was the average wage – Sabbath days off equal about 300 days). So if that was today, that would be around 40,000 dollars. If she was single, it could have been her dowry (the money that a bride was to bring into the marriage). This spikenard is a flowering plant that grows in the Himalayas of China, India and Nepal (so it was imported). The plant grows to about 1 m in height and has pink, bell-shaped flowers. Spikenard rhizomes (underground stems) can be crushed and distilled into an intensely aromatic amber-colored essential oil, which is very thick in consistency. It was obtained as a luxury in ancient Egypt, the Near East region. Even the container (alabaster was expensive). The expensive perfume spoken of here would make Chanel look like a Walmart special.

Once Break Seal – Once Poured Out – No Getting Back

Verse 3, once you break the seal, basically the oil is now the ointment, the fragrance, whatever it may be, the spice, the perfume. It's lost its validation. People can say it's watered down. People can say it's been diluted. They might even say it's been polluted, but once you break that seal, there's literally no going back. Of course, once you pour it out, it's gone. So this woman breaking the seal is totally, there's no turning back. She's calculated this. She's been waiting, I believe, to get to this moment. She's been praying and pondering and thinking, "What can I do to pour out this lavish love onto Jesus?".

Mark 14:4 But there were some who were indignant among themselves, and said, "Why was this fragrant oil wasted?

Mark 14:5 For it might have been sold for more than three hundred denarii and given to the poor." And they criticized her sharply.

Plural

Verse 5, the word is plural. So this isn't just Judas.

Amazing What World Calls Waste / They Amazed at Us – Careers and Vacations

Isn't it amazing what the world considers waste, and Jesus considers a treasure? Nothing we ever do for Jesus is wasted. Oh we live in a world, especially in the region that we live in here with our high tech and our high information, and it's so much pushing and shoving for the career and the ladder and the promotions. Yet when someone says, "No thanks, I'm just content where I'm at. I don't want work to be my life. Jesus is my life." People think it's a waste. How often have you heard people said to you, "What a waste." You tithe and give your money to the Lord. How much of a waste do people think it is when you spend your vacation going on a mission trip to a foreign country and live in poor conditions when they think you could be going to exotic resorts. The world just doesn't understand what a waste those things can be apart from Jesus. There's nothing wrong with going on vacation, of course.

My Struggle with Prayer

To me, maybe the world, maybe more so myself, I'll just be honest with you, is the continual struggle I live with of prayer. Oh I'll never call it a waste, but boy, for me, I'm so driven to produce. I have to accomplish so much every day to stay on schedule and track. Sometimes it seems the hardest thing to do is to pray, because I feel I'm not accomplishing anything.

- I think it was Martin Luther who said, "I have so much to do every day that, if I don't spend the first three hours in prayer, I'll never get anything done." That's a good word for all of us.
- DL Moody said, he who kneels the most, stands the best.

It's Never a Waste

It's kind of funny, their critique of this woman, because honestly as I look back through the Scriptures and follow the path of these disciples as they walk with Jesus, I have yet to really find where they cared about the poor. Oh,

they will after the resurrection of course but up at this time I'm not reading that they got this great burden for the poor and yet here they are, defending the poor even though there's no history that they ever did.

They criticize her, plural. They criticize her because she's not loving the way they think love's supposed to be. Not loving the way they love even though it's hard to see that they truly love the way they say they love and we see that in a lot of people. They talk about the way they love but you look and go, "I don't really see that, to be honest with you. I don't really see you loving the way that you tell other people to love."

Which I just want to say to everyone, reminding myself also, it's never a waste, whatever you give to him. You know what, it's even never a waste that when you give in the name of Jesus, what you're doing is because of your love for Jesus and if you give to someone else and they waste it, that's not a waste because you didn't give it because they were the recipient of your love for Jesus and just responding.

And you can trust that God will use that in their life somewhere down the road even if they did waste it. But for you, don't stop because it was wasted. Just pour out your love in the name of Jesus and for Jesus and it will never be a waste.

And if you look at this, this woman's pouring it out upon Jesus. These disciples are criticizing her for wasting it. Do you know what they're saying? Ultimately, Jesus isn't worth this. Wow. Who are they to determine what the worth is to Jesus?

Mark 14:6 But Jesus said, "Let her alone. Why do you trouble her? She has done a good work for Me.

Good Work is Beautiful – When Done Because of Love

Verse 6, there is a place we do good work. People say it's not about works, and it's not for salvation, but there is a place where we do good works, and it's a beautiful thing. The difference is there's a performance based works that people think they can earn their way to God, totally missing that the good work is just a loved base, here I am, Lord, pouring myself out to you because I love you, because of what You've done for me. When you see that it's not your work, but it's His finished work, you'll no longer try to work the please, you'll simply be overflowing with love.

Mark 14:7 For you have the poor with you always, and whenever you wish you may do them good; but Me you do not have always.

You Can Bless Poor Not Just Anytime – But All the Time / Subtle Correlation to Jesus & Matthew 25

So Jesus says, "You have the poor among you always," and he also says, "and anytime you want to bless them, you can." The need and the opportunity are ever present. You can go bless the poor, the needy at any given moment. And, you can not only bless them at any time, but you can bless them all the time. There's a subtle correlation, but it is here very strongly that this woman's lavish love upon Jesus is equivalent to a person pouring lavish love out upon the needy, as we see in Matthew 25. "When you do it unto the least of these, you've done it unto Me." So we might not have Jesus physically present before us to pour out this lavish love as this woman did with the alabaster jar broken open and pouring out this expensive perfume onto Jesus, but we have opportunity every day to the least of these, whether the poor or the rich, because there's rich who are just as needy because they're broken and empty finding that the world is broken and empty.

Matthew 25:34–40 (NKJV) ³⁴ Then the King will say to those on His right hand, 'Come, you blessed of My Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world: ³⁵ for I was hungry and you gave Me food; I was thirsty and you gave Me drink; I was a stranger and you took Me in; ³⁶ I was naked and you clothed Me; I was sick and you visited Me; I was in prison and you came to Me.' ³⁷ "Then the righteous will answer Him, saying, 'Lord, when did we see You hungry and feed You, or thirsty and give You drink? ³⁸ When did we see You a stranger and take You in, or naked and clothe You?' ³⁹ Or when did we see You sick, or in prison, and come to You?' ⁴⁰ And the King will answer and say to them, 'Assuredly, I say to you, inasmuch as you did it to one of the least of these My brethren, you did it to Me.'

Some Use Reason not to Engage / The Sand Dollars

Verse 7, some quote verse 7 as an excuse not to engage, because they say even Jesus said the poor will be with us always. I'm reminded of the story of the man after a hurricane storm, a bunch of sand dollars had washed ashore,

couldn't make their way back out to the sea. And as a man walked up the beach, he would pick one up and throw it back in the water, walk some more and throw some back in the water. To which a reporter on the scene stopped and said, "Do you really think you can make a difference with the tens of thousands of sand dollars that have washed up on the shore?" As he picked one up and he threw it back into the water, he said, "I made a difference in this one." There's an example for us. The need is overwhelming if we look at it from a sense of how great it is, but there is a place that we can make a difference in one. So let's focus on the one.

Mark 14:8 She has done what she could. She has come beforehand to anoint My body for burial.

Jesus Does Compare our Giving

Verse 8, she did what she could. Jesus is not measuring by worth, because still 300 denari, a year's wage, is a lot of money, but there are millionaires all around Jerusalem. This would be yes, more than a widow's mite, but it was still not tremendous amount of money. It is not the value, but the worth you put on Jesus.

She Sees What They Can't / Love Sees Deeper

This room is filled with disciples who have walked with Jesus for three years plus, but it's this woman who is the one who sees that His death and burial are near, and Jesus acknowledges that. She sees what these men can't see, and see love always sees deeper and greater and farther and wider than anything else in this world. More than our intellect, more than our understanding, love sees deep and perceives deep.

Fragrance Will Last to the Cross

My wife, I'm sure there's plenty of times she thinks I'm strange. I don't blame her, I guess. There's definitely things that I do that must seem odd. As I study the woman with the hunched over back coming to Jesus, I try to put myself in her place because that's always the key to Bible study. Put yourself in the place, as if you're going and they're actually there along the way. I think what it must be like for her, hunched over. So for me to fully understand and think about it, I went outside and walked three miles hunched over with my back down, only being able to see sidewalk and my feet. The only thing I could see in front of me would be three to four feet. I'm sure that was pretty odd. I'm sure there's times my wife is driving through the neighborhood saying, "I don't know that man."

I was building a fireplace, still am, on the end of my deck. So I have to build this massive frame, and the neighbors would literally stop on their walk and they would stand and they would stare going and saying, some would scream from the road, "What in the world is that?" My wife would go to the store and run into somebody and they'd go, "Hey how's the kids?" Et cetera, et cetera, then they would always say, "What in the world is your husband building back there?" She goes to some community meeting and she's talking to somebody and they find out they live in the same neighborhood, and the lady says, "What house do you live at?" My wife says, "XY," and then the person goes, "I know where that is. What in the world is your husband building back there?" Well, concerning this spikenard.

I went and bought some spikenard, and I just bought a little bit of it. I didn't buy a whole flask of it, and I didn't pour it over my head and into my hair, but I put enough on to get the fragrance. I dabbled it onto my head and my side cheeks, and I want to tell you, I could smell this spikenard, for the little that I put on, for three days. That was then after being out in the hot sun, and working and sweating, showering, a couple days of showering, I could still smell the spikenard. That's how powerful and potent the spikenard is. This fragrance will stay on Jesus up to the cross..... the burial..... and the resurrection.

Mark 14:9 Assuredly, I say to you, wherever this gospel is preached in the whole world, what this woman has done will also be told as a memorial to her."

Proof Word is Inspired

Verse 9 proves that this word is inspired. Jesus makes sure that this word comes to pass and He says it's a memorial for the whole world, and here we are reading it. He's making sure that through the inspiration of the Holy Spirit, it got recorded.

Contrast of Hatred and Love / Sandwiched between Pharisees and Judas

Here is the contrast, as there are people who hated Jesus, but there were those who loved Him greatly and gave of themselves to be with Him and love on Him. In verse 10-11 we will see Judas agree to betray the Lord; so here sandwiched between these two hearts of hatred, is this story of love and self-sacrifice.

Who is this Unnamed Woman / Bible Heading of Mary / Not Mary in Luke 7 – Diff Time and Place

The question is, who was this unnamed woman? Maybe your Bible has headings over each section of Scripture, and maybe yours says “Mary anoints Jesus”. Well first let’s not confuse this account with a similar account in Luke where a woman washes Jesus’ feet with her tears. In that account the woman is a well-known sinner in town, the language points towards a prostitute (some think it is Mary Magdalene, but that is purely speculative). That story happened several months earlier than this one, and in a different home (a Pharisee’s home).

Luke 7:36–50 (NKJV) ³⁶ Then one of the Pharisees asked Him to eat with him. And He went to the Pharisee’s house, and sat down to eat. ³⁷ And behold, a woman in the city who was a sinner, when she knew that Jesus sat at the table in the Pharisee’s house, brought an alabaster flask of fragrant oil, ³⁸ and stood at His feet behind Him weeping; and she began to wash His feet with her tears, and wiped them with the hair of her head; and she kissed His feet and anointed them with the fragrant oil. ³⁹ Now when the Pharisee who had invited Him saw this, he spoke to himself, saying, “This Man, if He were a prophet, would know who and what manner of woman this is who is touching Him, for she is a sinner.” ⁴⁰ And Jesus answered and said to him, “Simon, I have something to say to you.” So he said, “Teacher, say it.” ⁴¹ “There was a certain creditor who had two debtors. One owed five hundred denarii, and the other fifty. ⁴² And when they had nothing with which to repay, he freely forgave them both. Tell Me, therefore, which of them will love him more?” ⁴³ Simon answered and said, “I suppose the one whom he forgave more.” And He said to him, “You have rightly judged.” ⁴⁴ Then He turned to the woman and said to Simon, “Do you see this woman? I entered your house; you gave Me no water for My feet, but she has washed My feet with her tears and wiped them with the hair of her head. ⁴⁵ You gave Me no kiss, but this woman has not ceased to kiss My feet since the time I came in. ⁴⁶ You did not anoint My head with oil, but this woman has anointed My feet with fragrant oil. ⁴⁷ Therefore I say to you, her sins, which are many, are forgiven, for she loved much. But to whom little is forgiven, the same loves little.” ⁴⁸ Then He said to her, “Your sins are forgiven.” ⁴⁹ And those who sat at the table with Him began to say to themselves, “Who is this who even forgives sins?” ⁵⁰ Then He said to the woman, “Your faith has saved you. Go in peace.”

John’s Account – Mary sister of Lazarus

The Mary that is referred to maybe in your Bible heading, or a commentary you pick up, is Mary the sister of Martha and Lazarus. John records that account, and clearly identifies this woman as Mary the sister of Martha and Lazarus.

John 12:1 - 11 (NKJV) ¹ Then, six days before the Passover, Jesus came to Bethany, where Lazarus was who had been dead, whom He had raised from the dead. ² There they made Him a supper; and Martha served, but Lazarus was one of those who sat at the table with Him. ³ Then Mary took a pound of very costly oil of spikenard, anointed the feet of Jesus, and wiped His feet with her hair. And the house was filled with the fragrance of the oil. ⁴ But one of His disciples, Judas Iscariot, Simon’s son, who would betray Him, said, ⁵ “Why was this fragrant oil not sold for three hundred denarii and given to the poor?” ⁶ This he said, not that he cared for the poor, but because he was a thief, and had the money box; and he used to take what was put in it. ⁷ But Jesus said, “Let her alone; she has kept this for the day of My burial. ⁸ For the poor you have with you always, but Me you do not have always.” ⁹ Now a great many of the Jews knew that He was there; and they came, not for Jesus’ sake only, but that they might also see Lazarus, whom He had raised from the dead. ¹⁰ But the chief priests plotted to put Lazarus to death also, ¹¹ because on account of him many of the Jews went away and believed in Jesus.

Mark & Matthew

And here we have the account in Mark and Matthew.

Matthew 26:1–9 (NKJV) ¹ Now it came to pass, when Jesus had finished all these sayings, that He said to His disciples, ² “You know that after two days is the Passover, and the Son of Man will be delivered up to be crucified.” ³ Then the chief priests, the scribes, and the elders of the people assembled at the palace of the high priest, who was called Caiaphas, ⁴ and plotted to take Jesus by trickery and kill Him. ⁵ But they said, “Not during the feast, lest there be an uproar among the people.” ⁶ And when Jesus was in Bethany at the house of Simon the leper, ⁷ a woman came to Him having an alabaster flask of very costly fragrant oil, and she poured it on His head as He sat at the table. ⁸ But when His disciples saw it, they were indignant, saying, “Why this waste? ⁹ For this fragrant oil might have been sold for much and given to the poor.”

Mark 14:1–5 (NKJV) ¹ After two days it was the Passover and the Feast of Unleavened Bread. And the chief priests and the scribes sought how they might take Him by trickery and put Him to death. ² But they said, “Not during the feast, lest there be an uproar of the people.” ³ And being in Bethany at the house of Simon the leper, as He sat at the table, a woman came having an alabaster flask of very costly oil of spikenard. Then she broke the flask and poured it on His head. ⁴ But there were some who were indignant among themselves, and said, “Why was this fragrant oil wasted? ⁵ For it might have been sold for more than three hundred denarii and given to the poor.” And they criticized her sharply.

3 Gospels Comparison 3

In Matthew, Mark, and John the story told in those passages are very similar. Here the contrasts and parallels of the stories:

- All 3 – happened in the town of Bethany

- All 3 – Jesus says have the poor with you always
- All 3 – criticized (of Jesus or the woman)
- All 3 – Jesus defends woman
- All 3 – for His burial
- John & Mark – say it was spikenard (which was very costly / Matthew – just says it was costly oil.
- John – worth 300 denarius / Matthew – no price / Mark – 300 denarius
- John – Judas criticized / Matthew & Mark – Disciples plural criticize
- John – dinner at home in Bethany – Mary & Martha serving / Matthew and Mark – dinner is at Simon the Leper’s home (who obviously was healed by Jesus or would be living in a leper colony, not a house.)
- John – Jesus’ feet anointed / Matthew & Mark – Jesus’ head is anointed
- John – 6 days before the Passover / Matthew & Mark – 2 days before Passover
- Chronologically – Next event in John is Triumphal Entry / Judas Betrayal then Passover Meal

Why the Time – Not same Account / 9th Nisan in John / Commentators say Divine / Chronological the 12th

Why spend so much time in this exercise you may ask; the reason, I personally do not believe the account given in John, is the same account given here in Matthew (and Mark which parallels Matthew’s account and vice-versa). The accounts are so close that I could see why they say Matthew, Mark, and John are all the same story being told just by different observation. In John’s account it clearly says that Mary came and anointed Jesus 6 days before the Passover, which would make it the 9th of Nisan, the day before Jesus’ triumphal entry into Jerusalem. Commentators will say that by Divine design this account is inserted here in Matthew to show the contrast between those that hated Jesus (Pharisees and Judas), and those that loved Jesus (this woman); and that Matthew and Mark necessarily weren’t written in chronological order. Personally, I don’t think so, I think Matthew and Mark recording of this story is in chronological order, just as all the events that have happened from Sunday (the triumphal entry) all the way up to the resurrection are, why change now. I believe it is Tuesday, the 12th of Nisan, just 4 days after Mary the sister of Martha and Lazarus anointed the feet of Jesus.

Different Woman – there 4 days Earlier / Something Stirred – Longed in Heart to do Same

See it is a different woman, she may have been there 4 days earlier when Mary the sister of Martha and Lazarus anointed Jesus’ feet, or maybe she just heard the story being retold as people were talking about that night. Maybe she saw it, maybe she heard it, but something was stirred in her heart and she longed to do the same; and then she heard the news, Jesus is over at Simon the leper’s home, and immediately her heart was moved into action and nothing was going to stop her from getting to Jesus.

Mary Released Fragrance – Filled Room / Mary’s Fragrance reached this Woman – She was Moved

Mary released a fragrance in that room 4 days earlier, and John’s account said that it filled the whole room. The fragrance that Mary released in a home 4 days earlier had reached this woman, and she was now moved by fragrance that was released.

John 12:3 (NKJV) ³Then Mary took a pound of very costly oil of spikenard, anointed the feet of Jesus, and wiped His feet with her hair. And the house was filled with the fragrance of the oil.

This Mary Amazing / Found 3 times in Gospels – Listening to Word, Death of Lazarus, Anointing

This Mary that had released the fragrance is an amazing woman; I look forward to meeting her in heaven, asking her what it is like to enjoy supper with Jesus in Bethany, and supper with Jesus at the Marriage Supper of the Lamb. Interestingly, she is found three times in the Gospels, and in these instances, she is at the feet of Jesus. She sat at His feet and listened to the Word (Luke 10:38-42); she came to His feet in sorrow after the death of Lazarus (John 11:28-32); and she worshiped at His feet when she anointed Him with the ointment (John 12:1-11).

Luke 10:39 (NKJV) ³⁹And she had a sister called Mary, who also sat at Jesus’ feet and heard His word.

John 11:32 (NKJV) ³²Then, when Mary came where Jesus was, and saw Him, she fell down at His feet, saying to Him, “Lord, if You had been here, my brother would not have died.”

John 12:3 (NKJV) ³Then Mary took a pound of very costly oil of spikenard, anointed the feet of Jesus, and wiped His feet with her hair. And the house was filled with the fragrance of the oil.

Mary found Blessing, brought Burden, gave her Best

Mary, found at His feet her blessing, she brought to His feet her burdens, and she gave at His feet her best.

Her life a Fragrance to Others / Ministry unto Jesus / How long has it Been for Us / Receive

This life that Mary lived, became a fragrance that others enjoyed and were blessing by. Jesus was blessed by the anointing for His burial. Jesus was all man, and He was all God, the God-Man; and as man we know the heaviness that was upon His heart as the cross grew nearer and nearer. The agony of the cross, the suffering of being separated from His Father for the first time ever. What a ministry of love this would be to Him as His heart weighed heavy, as the next day He would enter Jerusalem in His triumphal entry, allow public exaltation of Him being the King, and thus delivering the final blow to the religious leaders. Yet before that march, He is afforded this time of being ministered to. We continually read of Jesus teaching, confronting, being confronted, healing the sick and battling the Evil One, and for a brief moment, He is ministered to by this woman, who comes neither asking or seeking anything from Him, except to serve and love on Him. Christian, how long has it been that you have done the same? The same in that you just come unto the Lord to love on Him, to not complain, question, challenge, or seek, but to just love on Him and pour yourself out upon Him. I think it hard for us to imagine this, but this story is example for us, Jesus doesn't say stop it, I don't want anyone to think I am soft, but He freely and gladly receives it. Why, because He loves you, and He loves being loved by you, He loves to receive love as much as He loves to give it, because it is the very reason you and I were created, for His good pleasure:

Revelation 4:11 (KJV) ¹¹Thou art worthy, O Lord, to receive glory and honour and power: for thou hast created all things, and for thy pleasure they are and were created.

Mary Releases Fragrance – Fills whole Room / This Woman gets deep Whiff – Nothing Stopping

Mary released a fragrance the filled the whole room, and I believe this woman in our story, now 3 days later got a deep whiff of it herself and her heart was moved to do the same, to pour herself out upon Jesus. She wasn't going to read or hear about someone else's devotion, she was going to live it and experience it for herself personally.

Dictionary Definition of Devotion

I went to the Dictionary to get the definition of devotion and it read, "Devotion: ardent affection towards something". Ardent means "a warmth and passion glowing hot as fire". The something part for us is easy, that's Jesus. For the Believer, here is what devotion means: A Warmth and Passion glowing hot as fire for our Lord Jesus Christ. I like that.

Devotions Great – Only if Translate into Personal Experience

Beloved I think devotional books are great, I think hearing other people's testimony is great, but only if they do to us like they did to this woman, that we say we are going to go live it and experience it for ourselves personally.

They Criticized Her

We are told they criticized her, but I believe as they watched, as people in the room watched, in their hearts their were many who wished and desired in their heart to do the same, but they couldn't release the fragrance because they could release themselves from their logical thinking, or what others may think of them, or their very own fear of letting go..... Others wished it, but this no-named woman does it, she releases herself, pours out lavish love up the Lord, the fragrance in the room greater than the spikenard, is the fragrance of love this woman is pouring out from her heart.

What holds us back from this type of love? Could this be us today?

Moved into Action / I Wonder – 12oz of Powerful Fragrance / Garden – Cross / Heb 12:2

This woman in our story was moved into action, she had to pour herself out for the Lord, and I wonder, being that in those days you didn't take a bath daily, I wonder how long the fragrance of this perfume lingered upon Jesus. They say this perfume was so strong that only a drop needed to be supplied, but here this woman is applying an estimated 12 ounces upon Jesus; seeping into His hair, beard, pores, and clothing. I wonder how long this fragrance stayed with Jesus.

- I wonder if when He prayed in Gethsemane if He could smell that fragrance (sure He could).

- I wonder if when he beat Him with the 40 lashes he could smell it (sure He could),
- and I wonder if when He hung on the cross and sweat poured from His head that He could smell it (sure He could).
- This account is said to be a memorial for her, and I believe as the fragrance lingered on, it was a memory of her, and a memory of you and me, as the fragrance come up before the Lord, He remembered us, and it moved Him on, for the joy that was set before Him He endured the shame and the pain to redeem man: [Hebrews 12:2 \(NKJV\)](#) ²looking unto Jesus, the author and finisher of our faith, who for the joy that was set before Him endured the cross, despising the shame, and has sat down at the right hand of the throne of God.

Imagine Everyone He Passed / Trial, Pilate, Soldier, Via Delarosa / 2 Cor 2

Imagine everyone that Jesus came in contact with during the crucifixion, and all would smell this fragrance.

- Judas didn't need to say the one I kiss, but the one who smells of the sweet fragrance.
- As they have the mock trial all in the room would continually be asking themselves, what is that wonderful smell.
- How about Pilate.
- I wonder if the soldier that nailed Him to the cross had some of the fragrance rub off on him, and then all night he would be smelling that sweet fragrance as a reminder of the one he had nailed to the cross.
- I wonder if those who were closer enough as Jesus made His way to the cross could smell the beautiful fragrance coming from Him. To some He would be the fragrance of new life, to other, the aroma of death, just as the scriptures say (and I might add, it speaks the same of our life today).
- Interestingly, what I found when I poured the spikenard out on my piece of paper was that it started with a strong somewhat pungent odor, but as the days passed, it became sweeter and sweeter in aroma. Sometimes that is the Gospel, or a Word from God, it seems like it hits hard, but as we dwell in it and upon it, and come to understand it, it becomes sweeter and sweeter.

[2 Corinthians 2:14–3:3 \(NKJV\)](#) ¹⁴ Now thanks be to God who always leads us in triumph in Christ, and through us diffuses the fragrance of His knowledge in every place. ¹⁵ For we are to God the fragrance of Christ among those who are being saved and among those who are perishing. ¹⁶ To the one we are the aroma of death leading to death, and to the other the aroma of life leading to life. And who is sufficient for these things? ¹⁷ For we are not, as so many, peddling the word of God; but as of sincerity, but as from God, we speak in the sight of God in Christ. ¹ Do we begin again to commend ourselves? Or do we need, as some others, epistles of commendation to you or letters of commendation from you? ² You are our epistle written in our hearts, known and read by all men; ³ clearly you are an epistle of Christ, ministered by us, written not with ink but by the Spirit of the living God, not on tablets of stone but on tablets of flesh, that is, of the heart.

Application simple today = Fragrance Released through Communion

For our application today, it is real simple, the fragrance of Christ was released through communing with Him. It is the basest application of the Christian faith, but the most missed. As we said, throughout this chapter we will see opportunities presented, some will be missed, some misused, and others such as this one – mastered!

Entire house Filled / What does your House Smell Like / Communion / Opportunities

The entire house was filled with the aroma of the ointment. Christian, what does your house smell like? Does it emanate the fragrance of Christ? It is really easy to change that if it doesn't, break open your communion with Christ. I will challenge all of us today, God presents the opportunity (to be missed or mastered), and that is to slow down and come sit at His feet. For how long? Ask Him, He will tell you. I'll tell you this, if you do, there will be sweet fragrance released from you, and all around you will smell it, it will be in the air around you.

Beautiful example of Worship - Communion

This woman is a beautiful example and application of worship, come next study and we will pick it up there, and celebrate Communion together as a family.

What Might You Break Open Today?

So Christian, what alabaster flask might you have this week, this month, this day that you could break open and pour out for Jesus? I pray that when we enter into our last worship song, that we're not waiting to pour out lavish love onto Jesus, but we get this opportunity with this worship song to worship Him, pour out our lavish love, tell Him He's worth it. You're worthy, Lord, You're worthy. Receive our praise, and we pour it out upon You. We praise You and we thank You.

Closing Prayer

God Says Come

Today we come and are gifted this Word from God Himself, His very heart opened before us, the calling to come near, be drawn to Him.

Matthew 11:28 (NKJV) ²⁸ Come to Me, all you who labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest.

The Word of God is Living and Powerful, and is ready, and will do a mighty work in our lives.

Hebrews 4:12 (NKJV) ¹² For the word of God is living and powerful, and sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing even to the division of soul and spirit, and of joints and marrow, and is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart.

In Every Study

- Who Is God? (How Great is He?)
- What Does He Think of Me? (How Wonderful Are His Thoughts Towards Me?)
- What Does He Want Me to Do?
- What Can I Boldly Request of Him?
- What Do I Need to Be on Guard of When I Leave Here Today?

Boldly come to the throne of grace, ask God to reveal Himself in a mighty way to you, and to do I might work in you, and through you.

Hebrews 4:16 (NKJV) ¹⁶ Let us therefore come boldly to the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy and find grace to help in time of need.

End of Study

Mark 14:10-21

The Night of the Passover

We pick up here today in verse 10 of Mark 14. It is the Passover meal of Jesus with His disciples, and Judas will betray Him this night, and Jesus will institute the remembrance of Communion. Let's pray and get into this deep and wide passage before us.

The Jewish calendar of Events:

Nissan 10th – Sunday – First Day of Week:
Jesus Triumphant Entry into Jerusalem (Mark 11:1-10)
Goes into Temple but Leaves (Mark 11:11)
Sleeps outside city in Bethany (Matt 21:17 / Mark 11:11)

11th – Monday
Curses Fig Tree (Mark 11:12-14)
Cleanses the Temple (Mark 11:15-18)
Leaves the city when Evening Came (Mark 11:19)

12th – Tuesday
Explains the Cursing of Fig Tree (Mark 11:20-26)
Goes to Temple (Authority Challenged) - (Mark 11:27 – 12:1-44)
The Olivet's Discourse (Mark 13)
Jesus goes out to Bethany (Matt 26:6)

13th – Wednesday
The Gospels are Silent

14th – Thursday –
Passover Meal (Mark 14:1-31)
Garden of Gethsemane (Mark 14:32-52)
The Trial (Mark 14:53 – 15:1-14)
The Passover Sacrifice – Jesus Beaten & Crucified (Mark 15:15-41)
Jesus Buried (Mark 15:42-47)

15th – Friday – Feast of Unleavened Begins
16th – Saturday - Sabbath
17th – Sunday – First Day of week – Resurrection – Feast of First Fruits

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Judas Agrees to Betray Jesus (13:10-11)

Mark 14:10 Then Judas Iscariot, one of the twelve, went to the chief priests to betray Him to them.

Mark 14:11 And when they heard it, they were glad, and promised to give him money. So he sought how he might conveniently betray Him.

Judas Common Name / Means Praise

Judas' was a common name in that place of Israel and therefore Iscariot is putting on there to clarify more specifically which Judas we are talking about.

- Judas means praise. It's a name that is based off Judah, which means praise.
- Iscariot means son of Kerioth, which was a small town in Judea about 23 miles south of Jerusalem.
- In other places, his name is called Judas, son of perdition, which means waste.

John 17:12 (NKJV) ¹² While I was with them in the world, I kept them in Your name. Those whom You gave Me I have kept; and none of them is lost except the son of perdition, that the Scripture might be fulfilled.

Son of Perdition / The Ultimate Waste – to Waste Your Calling / (Comparison of Woman to Judas)

Perdition means waste. So, Judas criticized the woman pouring out the fragrant oil saying, "What a waste,"

There's lots of things we waste. We do, whether it's just not the best time spent or money spent. Yeah, the other day Rene comes into my office and she sees six one-liter coffee creamers next to my coffeemaker. She goes, "Wow. That's a lot of creamer." I bought them because they're sugar-free and supposedly they'll cut down on my calories and all those things. But as I respond to Rene I go, "Yeah, probably somewhat of a little impulsive buy on my behalf," to which she laughs and she goes, "You? Impulsive buy? Never." And that's the joke, because many times I'm like, "Oh yeah. This is great. I need this. This'll make my life better or I can be more productive or whatever it may be." But in the end, kind of a waste.

Her and Maggie still laugh at my miracle blueberry bush that was as seen on TV and ended up coming. Maggie happened to be at the house, and when I opened the box it was literally a root. It wasn't a bush. And after three years, I think I got three blueberries off of it, even though I was promised a bushel a month. So yeah, we do have waste, and we can be like a Judas and judge and criticize on what is considered wasteful that could have went to better causes. This is true. But here, looking at the life of Judas, there is an ultimate waste, and it was his life. He totally wasted it. And may that not be our story, nor anyone here, this gift of life is meant to be lived and lived to its fullest, and the fullest is to live for the glory of God as we are created in his image.

But you know what the greatest waste is for Judas, for anyone? It's to not live up to your calling, your position that God has given you. Judas criticizes the woman for being wasteful, and Judas will waste his whole life. The woman he criticized, Jesus says she'll be reminded and remembered as a memorial to Jesus forever, and so here we are 2000 years later, Judas, he takes his name and he wastes it. He wastes his calling; he wastes his relationship with the Lord. Judas means praise, but he lives up to be a waste, and now that is the ultimate waste.

John 12:4-7 (NKJV) ⁴ But one of His disciples, Judas Iscariot, Simon's son, who would betray Him, said, ⁵ "Why was this fragrant oil not sold for three hundred denarii and given to the poor?" ⁶ This he said, not that he cared for the poor, but because he was a thief, and had the money box; and he used to take what was put in it. ⁷ But Jesus said, "Let her alone; she has kept this for the day of My burial.

What a Waste to Come Here and Not be Changed / Ireland

It would be a waste to come here week after week, spend this time together, and not study and teach this word of God, to be changed into his glory, to be changed into his likeness, to become like him. It's why we come here. We come into his presence to take on his very person in our life, to shape us, to form us. And oh, what a waste it would be to come here and do anything else, such as to come here and seek entertainment, to come here and to hear words being spoken that doesn't change us in any way, does not change our marriages, does not change our holiness, does not change our purpose and our priorities, does not change our families, does not change our communities, and does not change our nation, and ultimately does not change the kingdom of God. That would be a waste, to come in to the so-called presence of the Lord and not be changed or conformed into its presence and likeness.

I remember doing missions in Ireland, and it would definitely fit that place of a "post Christian nation", as people had quit on church for a whole generation by the time we arrived for missions. So all the youth and young adults we ministered to, had no experience or exposure to the true Gospel. They didn't go to church, for their parents had quit going to church. The good news was that when we went to share Christ, it was a blank sheet of paper, and they were hopeless and empty, and the response to the Gospel was amazing. We ran a coffeehouse in the evening and sports activities in the day, and by the end of the week there were close to 100 youth every day coming, and many getting saved, and then their parents coming down or inviting us to dinner asking us, what in the world has happened to my child, they are like a whole new person, tell us how we can have what they have.

Now as I talked to an old old pastor, faithful from start to finish for 50+ years. He said Ray the challenge is getting them to Church on Sunday. He said, we are a post Christian culture, Church on Sunday is not part of our culture, so telling people come to church on Sunday is like changing the whole the culture. He said in America, people get saved, you invite them to church on Sunday, they come, because that is part of the American culture, but here in Ireland, it is quite the challenge. And indeed it was quite a challenge. So I agreed with the pastor of the problem and challenge we faced; but I said you know one of the problems and challenges in America is that going to church on Sunday is part of our culture.....lots of people come to church on Sunday because it is part of our culture, it is part of routine, even part of a habit, something very common, something of a ritual..... And people come to church Sunday after Sunday, and are never changed, transformed, from the old man to the new man.

Be changed Christian, desire change, desire to be transformed into the image of Jesus Christ, and to live and be all God called and purposed you to be:

Romans 12:1–2 (NKJV) ¹ I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that you present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable to God, which is your reasonable service. ² And do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind, that you may prove what is that good and acceptable and perfect will of God.

Some people talk about how much they are learning, and that is great, but my question is always, how much are you changing, and growing, based on all that learning.

Why Would Judas Betray Jesus?

Verse 10, why would he betray Jesus? What was it that he would betray this one who loved him so, calls him friend?

- Was it money? Some think so. Some indicators based on this criticism of a woman pouring out the fragrant oil, calling it a waste. Was it that he didn't feel that he was getting recognition as he should, maybe losing the debate among the other disciples and apostle who's the greatest in the kingdom?
- Was it that he saw maybe he wasn't going to get the top spot and this is what drove him to this place of betrayal?

Well, here's what I do know from the scriptures. Whatever it was, it was because he was playing catch with the devil. In John 13:2, the word there for "put" into the heart of Judas, is the Greek word "ballo" where we get our word ball, and the devil had cast/thrown his evil thoughts into Judas as a ball. We play ball as adults, we play ball as children, and there's a part of the game of ball that makes it a game of ball where we really call it a game of catch. You throw it, I catch it. I throw it back to you, you catch it, and back and forth it goes. Here Judas, he's playing catch with the devil. The devil is casting these thoughts into Judas's mind. Judas catches them, he holds them, throws them back. Satan catches them, builds on them, masters them and brings them back stronger, bigger, bolder. Satan throws them back, Judas catches them, and they play this game all the way to the point until Satan himself casts himself, throws himself, and Judas opens himself to catch the devil himself and receive him in. Judas has a free will to determine if he wants to play catch with the devil, and no man can be influenced by the devil beyond what he's willing to receive, and therefore any man can resist the devil to the point that he's willing to defend against and reject.

John 13:1–2 (NKJV) ¹ Now before the Feast of the Passover, when Jesus knew that His hour had come that He should depart from this world to the Father, having loved His own who were in the world, He loved them to the end. ² And supper being ended, the devil having already put (ballo) it into the heart of Judas Iscariot, Simon's son, to betray Him,

John 13:21–30 (NKJV) ²¹ When Jesus had said these things, He was troubled in spirit, and testified and said, "Most assuredly, I say to you, one of you will betray Me." ²² Then the disciples looked at one another, perplexed about whom He spoke. ²³ Now there was leaning on Jesus' bosom one of His disciples, whom Jesus loved. ²⁴ Simon Peter therefore motioned to him to ask who it was of whom He spoke. ²⁵ Then, leaning back on Jesus' breast, he said to Him, "Lord, who is it?" ²⁶ Jesus answered, "It is he to whom I shall give a piece of bread when I have dipped it." And having dipped the bread, He gave it to Judas Iscariot, the son of Simon. ²⁷ Now after the piece of bread, Satan entered him. Then Jesus said to him, "What you do, do quickly." ²⁸ But no one at the table knew for what reason He said this to him. ²⁹ For some thought, because Judas had the money box, that Jesus had said to him, "Buy those things we need for the feast," or that he should give something to the poor. ³⁰ Having received the piece of bread, he then went out immediately. And it was night.

906 βάλλω, ἀμφιβάλλω [ballo /bal-ō/] v. A primary word; TDNT 1:526; TDNTA 91; GK 965 and together with Strongs 293 as GK 311; 125 occurrences; AV translates as "cast" 86 times, "put" 13 times, "thrust" five times, "cast out" four times, "lay" three times, "lie" twice, and

translated miscellaneous 12 times. 1 to throw or let go of a thing without caring where it falls. 1A to scatter, to throw, cast into. 1B to give over to one's care uncertain about the result. 1C of fluids. 1C1 to pour, pour into of rivers. 1C2 to pour out. 2 to put into, insert.

*Strong, J. (1995). Enhanced Strong's Lexicon. Woodside Bible Fellowship.

When Devil Come to Play Catch – Drop the Ball

Christian, when the devil comes to catch, don't play ball. You just need to let it drop. When he throws and tries to cast the ball to you, a thought, whatever it may be, you just have to put hands down, ears close, and let the ball drop onto the ground. We can't engage and hold that thought even for a second. We're told to take every thought captive. We can't catch it. We can't hold it. We can't let it bounce around. We have to let them be taken captive and words with the devil, you just let it drop and put a cage around it, if you would, and it's captive. The ball can't roll anymore, can't bounce. It's done. It's literally deflated.

2 Corinthians 10:4-6 (NKJV) ⁴ *For the weapons of our warfare are not carnal but mighty in God for pulling down strongholds,* ⁵ *casting down arguments and every high thing that exalts itself against the knowledge of God, bringing every thought into captivity to the obedience of Christ,* ⁶ *and being ready to punish all disobedience when your obedience is fulfilled.*

When that evil one comes with his sinful thoughts or lustful thoughts, negative thoughts, and throws them, we have to shut it down. We can't sit and ponder it and go, "You know, they did mistreat me now, didn't they? I am going to retaliate against them," or even, "Hey, doesn't this look good? This apple? Take a bite out of it. It will bring pleasure," where we have to go, "No, I'm not even going to entertain that. The word of God says no, and there's nothing more to discuss. Game over," when he comes and says, "Look at you. Is this who you are," and he tries to shame us through whatever it may be using the world body image, that great power of discouragement.

1 John 2:15-17 (NKJV) ¹⁵ *Do not love the world or the things in the world. If anyone loves the world, the love of the Father is not in him.* ¹⁶ *For all that is in the world—the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life—is not of the Father but is of the world.* ¹⁷ *And the world is passing away, and the lust of it; but he who does the will of God abides forever.*

Devil & Discouragement

And when he comes with his discouragement, you must shut it down. Whatever the cause, whatever the case, however it's presented, you must shut it down. Look at that word discourage; compound dis and courage. It's dis=no, courage. That's what it leads to, no courage, and discouragement always leads to depression, and what does depression mean and its compound word? It simply means to press down, and that's what discouragement does. That's how we come into depression, is we start with this discouragement of something that's wrong in our life or something that's not being played out in our life as we think it should, whereas we have to shut it down, walk it out, and let the Lord not allow it to press us down, but him to lift us up.

And he can do that for you right now, today. You can say, "Lord, here's my hand. I'm reaching to you. Lift me up." Like the woman who tried every doctor there in Mark 5, but then when she heard Jesus was coming, she didn't let the crowd, she didn't let the doctors, she didn't let the diagnosis, she didn't let the stigma and all those things. She didn't depress, she pressed in. She pressed through the crowd to reach out to Jesus, just believing if I can touch the hem of his garment, I'll be healed. And what we touch is not the hem of his garment, but the God that is in that garment that walked on this earth, and say, "Lord, lift me up." And he'll meet you. The Bible says, "Draw near to God and he'll draw near to you."

Mark 5:27-28 (NKJV) ²⁷ *When she heard about Jesus, she came behind Him in the crowd and touched His garment.* ²⁸ *For she said, "If only I may touch His clothes, I shall be made well."*

James 4:8 (NKJV) ⁸ *Draw near to God and He will draw near to you. Cleanse your hands, you sinners; and purify your hearts, you double-minded.*

Mark 14:11 *And when they heard it, they were glad, and promised to give him money. So he sought how he might conveniently betray Him.*

Judas goes to Priest

Judas goes to the priests, he initiates this. We don't have a record of the priests' religious leaders trying to get hold of one of the disciples and try to sway them. Judas is the one who initiates it. He goes to them.

Convenient Way / Judas is not Being a Secret Informant

Verse 11 says how he might conveniently betray him and basically means what's the most opportune way? How do I do this that's low risk, high payoff? Well, let it be known so there's no mistake, the depths of the heart of Judas, where he's at, he's not trying to be an undercover snitch and tell these people who want to destroy Jesus, "He'll be at this place at 10:00. You can get him there," and he acts like he knew nothing about it. He wasn't there or he can be part of it, and the plan is they let Judas go after Jesus is arrested. Now Judas comes very clearly, very bluntly and boldly as the betrayer. There is no doubt that Judas is betraying Jesus openly. To do it openly, speaks to me that Judas is doing it spitefully, that it was more than just about money, but some type of resentment towards Jesus.

This Was not Impulsive

Verse 10-11, this is not Judas's first thought about betraying Jesus. It's been stirring in him, so this is not an impulsive decision. We see progression and persistence. He seeks out the priests, he accepts the blood money, he arranges the setup, he carries it through; there is clear and persistent intent with him, this isn't a spur of a moment thing. And the importance of that point is we don't get judged for impulsive actions. Our sin, our life, is judged as a habitual lifestyle. Now, one sin is enough to have us guilty before the holy God and in need of a savior, but in terms of a relationship and all of that, it's not an impulsive decision that would rob us of our blessings, but it's a lifestyle that we see. And if there is a lifestyle involved, the lifestyle proves out that there may not have been a regeneration through the acceptance of the finished work of the cross of Jesus Christ. So I say to you today, I'll boldly before we come into communion that a man, a woman, needs to examine their own heart, and truly if there's something that I need to repent of, even if it was impulsive, but is there a lifestyle that I should really be looking and pondering and say, "How can I have Jesus Christ living inside me and yet still live in a habitual lifestyle of sin?" And you should examine yourself, and then as we look at communion, you may need to ask Jesus to save you of your sin, or you need to be honest with him and say, "This cup represents victory and power, and I'm asking you to apply the victory and power to overcome and be victorious over my sin."

James 2:10–11 (NKJV) ¹⁰ For whoever shall keep the whole law, and yet stumble in one point, he is guilty of all. ¹¹ For He who said, "Do not commit adultery," also said, "Do not murder." Now if you do not commit adultery, but you do murder, you have become a transgressor of the law.

1 Corinthians 11:27–32 (NKJV) ²⁷ Therefore whoever eats this bread or drinks this cup of the Lord in an unworthy manner will be guilty of the body and blood of the Lord. ²⁸ But let a man examine himself, and so let him eat of the bread and drink of the cup. ²⁹ For he who eats and drinks in an unworthy manner eats and drinks judgment to himself, not discerning the Lord's body. ³⁰ For this reason many are weak and sick among you, and many sleep. ³¹ For if we would judge ourselves, we would not be judged. ³² But when we are judged, we are chastened by the Lord, that we may not be condemned with the world.

He is Not a Victim – It is Habitual Lifestyle

What Judas did was not impulsive. He's not a victim. He wasn't predestined and chosen as the vessel of destruction. He's making his own choice, because God gives every man free choice, and this is the choice that he has made. And God doesn't judge on impulsive decisions but habitual lifestyles. And that is confirmed in the scriptures. 1 Corinthians 6 speaks of habitual lifestyle when it speaks of those who will not inherit the kingdom of God. And there is a clear warning given in Revelation 21 who will be outside the gates. It's those who have lived this continual lifestyle of habitual un-repentance.

Revelation 21:8 (NKJV) ⁸ But the cowardly, unbelieving, abominable, murderers, sexually immoral, sorcerers, idolaters, and all liars shall have their part in the lake which burns with fire and brimstone, which is the second death."

1 Corinthians 6:9–11 (NKJV) ⁹ Do you not know that the unrighteous will not inherit the kingdom of God? Do not be deceived. Neither fornicators, nor idolaters, nor adulterers, nor homosexuals, nor sodomites, ¹⁰ nor thieves, nor covetous, nor drunkards, nor revilers, nor extortioners will inherit the kingdom of God. ¹¹ And such were some of you. But you were washed, but you were sanctified, but you were justified in the name of the Lord Jesus and by the Spirit of our God.

Jesus Celebrates the Passover with His Disciples (14:12-21)

Mark 14:12 Now on the first day of Unleavened Bread, when they killed the Passover lamb, His disciples said to Him, "Where do You want us to go and prepare, that You may eat the Passover?"

The Feasts

The Feast of Unleavened Bread ran from (Nissan 15-21). The Feast of Unleavened Bread was seven days long, and it started on the 15th day of the month of Nisan in the Jewish calendar, it was the day after the Passover (which was on the 14th of Nissan). So this kind of merged into one feast, but they're two separate feasts, but many considered the Feast of Unleavened bread began on the Feast of Passover, thus making it an 8 day feast. It is kind of like what we do with Christmas, that it begins on Christmas Eve and goes into Christmas Day, and for some the whole week until New Year's Day.

And then there was even a third one that carried on over these seven days, called the Feast of First Fruit and that was on the 17th day of Nisan (on this particular Passover we are studying). So, we'll be working all of these things together, but we'll simply see Jesus dies on the 14th, three days later on the 17th Jesus rises again. He's the first fruit of the resurrection of everlasting life. Marvelous by design, 1,500 years designed before it came to pass. The Feast of Firstfruits is not on the 16 of Nisan, it does not say the 16th, but the day after the Sabbath. Saturday is the Sabbath and would vary according to when the 14 and 15th fall. In the case of Jesus, He rose again on the first day of the week (Sunday), therefore the sabbath was the day before, and thus the Feast of Firstfruits was on the 17th that year. Perfectly, three days after the crucifixion, to perfectly fulfill what He said of three nights and three days in the grave.

Leviticus 23:4-8 (NKJV) ⁴ "These *are* the feasts of the LORD, holy convocations which you shall proclaim at their appointed times. ⁵ On the fourteenth *day* of the first month at twilight *is* the LORD's Passover. ⁶ And on the fifteenth day of the same month *is* the Feast of Unleavened Bread to the LORD; seven days you must eat unleavened bread. ⁷ On the first day you shall have a holy convocation; you shall do no customary work on it. ⁸ But you shall offer an offering made by fire to the LORD for seven days. The seventh day *shall be* a holy convocation; you shall do no customary work *on it.*"

Leviticus 23:9-14 (NKJV) ⁹ And the LORD spoke to Moses, saying, ¹⁰ "Speak to the children of Israel, and say to them: 'When you come into the land which I give to you, and reap its harvest, then you shall bring a sheaf of the firstfruits of your harvest to the priest. ¹¹ He shall wave the sheaf before the LORD, to be accepted on your behalf; on the day after the Sabbath the priest shall wave it. ¹² And you shall offer on that day, when you wave the sheaf, a male lamb of the first year, without blemish, as a burnt offering to the LORD. ¹³ Its grain offering shall be two-tenths of an ephah of fine flour mixed with oil, an offering made by fire to the LORD, for a sweet aroma; and its drink offering shall be of wine, one-fourth of a hin. ¹⁴ You shall eat neither bread nor parched grain nor fresh grain until the same day that you have brought an offering to your God; it shall be a statute forever throughout your generations in all your dwellings.

Exodus 23:14-17 (NKJV) ¹⁴ "Three times you shall keep a feast to Me in the year: ¹⁵ You shall keep the Feast of Unleavened Bread (you shall eat unleavened bread seven days, as I commanded you, at the time appointed in the month of Abib, for in it you came out of Egypt; none shall appear before Me empty); ¹⁶ and the Feast of Harvest, the firstfruits of your labors which you have sown in the field; and the Feast of Ingathering at the end of the year, when you have gathered in the fruit of your labors from the field. ¹⁷ "Three times in the year all your males shall appear before the Lord GOD.

1 Corinthians 15:20 (NKJV) ²⁰ But now Christ is risen from the dead, and has become the firstfruits of those who have fallen asleep.

(Matthew 28:1 NKJV) Now after the Sabbath, as the first day of the week began to dawn, Mary Magdalene and the other Mary came to see the tomb.

(Matthew 12:40 KJV) For as Jonas was three days and three nights in the whale's belly; so shall the Son of man be three days and three nights in the heart of the earth.

The Ark Rested

The 17th day just happens to be the same day and same month that the Ark rested after the flood, after God's judgment was poured out. A picture and a typology for us.

Genesis 8:4 (NKJV) ⁴ Then the ark rested in the seventh month, the seventeenth day of the month, on the mountains of Ararat.

Feasts and their Various Names

Just for informational purposes, The Feast of Ingathering is also known as the Feast of Tabernacles, Feast of Booths, Sukkot, The Feast of Weeks is also known as the Feast of Pentecost.

Deuteronomy 16:13–17 (NKJV) ¹³ “You shall observe the Feast of Tabernacles seven days, when you have gathered from your threshing floor and from your winepress. ¹⁴ And you shall rejoice in your feast, you and your son and your daughter, your male servant and your female servant and the Levite, the stranger and the fatherless and the widow, who are within your gates. ¹⁵ Seven days you shall keep a sacred feast to the LORD your God in the place which the LORD chooses, because the LORD your God will bless you in all your produce and in all the work of your hands, so that you surely rejoice. ¹⁶ “Three times a year all your males shall appear before the LORD your God in the place which He chooses: at the Feast of Unleavened Bread, at the Feast of Weeks, and at the Feast of Tabernacles; and they shall not appear before the LORD empty-handed. ¹⁷ Every man shall give as he is able, according to the blessing of the LORD your God which He has given you.

No Yeast (Leaven) in the House

And interestingly, during the Feast of Unleavened bread, and the way you make leaven bread is not to put the yeast in it so it doesn't rise. Yeast, leaven was a picture of sin in the Old Testament, and if you put a little yeast, it's going to rise as sin always does, and spread and puff up and build out. So during the feast of unleavened bread, they had a ceremony in the family that they made sure they cleaned the house, that there was no yeast, and they would even get down to where they use the... They started with a broom and finished with a feather so that there was no yeast in the home, which amazing picture sweeping the house clean of sin. Jesus, these feasts that he fulfills so perfectly is meant to sweep our house, our body, out of sin. First Corinthians 5:7 we're told Jesus is our Passover.

1 Corinthians 5:6–8 (NKJV) ⁶ Your glorying is not good. Do you not know that a little leaven leavens the whole lump? ⁷ Therefore purge out the old leaven, that you may be a new lump, since you truly are unleavened. For indeed Christ, our Passover, was sacrificed for us. ⁸ Therefore let us keep the feast, not with old leaven, nor with the leaven of malice and wickedness, but with the unleavened bread of sincerity and truth.

Sweep Sin Out (Continues After Passover)

And it should be noted, that the Feast of Unleavened Bread is after the Passover, the next day, for seven days (7 the number of completion). This speaks that although sin is paid for, man is not to sin freely. There are some that think since Jesus paid the price of the penalty of sin, that a person is free to live in sin (after all they say – Jesus forgives and loves us). Now Jesus loves us and forgives us, this is true, but He did not go to the cross that we might sin freely, but that we might have power to be free from sin, as man can now because we have been washed in the Blood of Jesus of the sin that separated us from God, He can now come inside of us and take up residence with in, to give us the power to overcome sin. So we see since the Feast of Unleavened Bread is immediately the day after Passover, we see the picture/illustration/type that there is still the calling to sweep sin out of our life. Have you done that today, are you doing that today, what needs swept away today.

And we know the definition of Passover, going back to Exodus 12. When the angel of death came to take the first born during their time in the bondage of Egypt, if the blood of the lamb was applied over the door of the home, when the angel of death came it would see the blood and it would pass over taking the life that was in the home. First fruit was a celebration of the harvest to come. 50 days later, the fourth feast we're talking about is the feast of Pentecost, which would be the feast celebrating the crops, bringing them in, and we see it as the promise fulfilled of the baptism of the Holy Spirit.

Exodus 12:12–13 (NKJV) ¹² “For I will pass through the land of Egypt on that night, and will strike all the firstborn in the land of Egypt, both man and beast; and against all the gods of Egypt I will execute judgment: I am the LORD. ¹³ Now the blood shall be a sign for you on the houses where you are. And when I see the blood, I will pass over you; and the plague shall not be on you to destroy you when I strike the land of Egypt.

Mark 14:13 And He sent out two of His disciples and said to them, “Go into the city, and a man will meet you carrying a pitcher of water; follow him.

Man Carry

There are many who say that this would be unique for a man to carry the water, and thus separate him out, because they say in those days it was the woman who carried the water. To which I say, I am not sure, I have yet to confirm that in my research of history of the culture. We know from John 4, the woman at the well, that she went to get the water. In any case, it was clear that this man would be carrying the water, and they would meet him, and follow him.

Mark 14:14 Wherever he goes in, say to the master of the house, ‘The Teacher says, “Where is the guest room in which I may eat the Passover with My disciples?” ’

Mark 14:15 Then he will show you a large upper room, furnished and prepared; there make ready for us.”

Prepare the Meal / Planning & Waiting for Supernatural

So hosting 13 men for a meal is no small task, there is definitely preparation that is required. Now the man carrying the water, and the timing of the disciples seeing him, are clearly Divine, an exercise of the prophetic gift of prophecy. But the preparing of the room and the meal, that is clearly foreplanning and preparation. I see a balance of life and ministry here. There are things we need to plan and prepare for as best we can, within our ability. And after planning, there is a place where we have to trust God to move and work supernaturally. Do our best, and trust God for the rest. May people leave no room for the Holy Spirit to work, because they leave no room for the Holy Spirit, because every last detail is scheduled and mapped out, that a person won't deviate from the plan, nor see the need for the Holy Spirit because everything is "perfectly" planned. Some consider planning, the complete work of the Holy Spirit, that He has worked supernaturally by giving the great plan. Then there can be some who don't plan, and think somehow, in the disorder and confusion, the Holy Spirit is going to show up take care of it all. We see here, and place of planning, and a place of the supernatural. I try to live in the middle, do my best, and entrust the rest.

Mark 14:16 So His disciples went out, and came into the city, and found it just as He had said to them; and they prepared the Passover.

Count on It – Things Will Always be as Jesus Said They will Be

So..... one word Christian that you can count on in your life, "so"!

You will always find everything, just as He says it will be. You can trust in that and believe in that - and live in the power of that. The God of the universe goes before you and prepares your ministry before you at all times.

Mark 14:17 In the evening He came with the twelve.

Mark 14:18 Now as they sat and ate, Jesus said, "Assuredly, I say to you, one of you who eats with Me will betray Me."

Mark 14:19 And they began to be sorrowful, and to say to Him one by one, "Is it I?" And another said, "Is it I?"

Jesus Treated Judas Fairly

The fact that they all didn't immediately say, it is Judas, speaks volumes to me of how fairly, lovingly, and gentle was with Judas. Even knowing Judas was the betrayer, Jesus didn't treat him roughly, or with contention, so fairly and gently was Jesus with Judas, the disciples couldn't pick it out. If it had been me in Jesus' place there would no doubt as to the culprit's identity. The disciples would've concluded, "Well let's think... For three years now Judas has been on permanent latrine duty. He's the one who always has to collect wood for the fire. He gets the cold food, and rides in the back of the bus." Judas would've been in my doghouse from the start. But apparently, that's not how He treated him. Jesus even honored Judas by making him the treasurer. Apparently, Jesus cared for Judas, and tried to give him every opportunity to repent, and avoid his destiny. It's interesting, rather than suspect Judas, the disciples doubted their own hearts. More than one man asked, "Is it I?" They were conscious of their own evil and suspected themselves before they thought Judas.

There is a Judas in All of Us

Verse 19, there is a Judas in all of us. It says it could be me, could be you. As each one of these disciples say, "Is it I," every one of them thought, "It could possibly be me. Lord, you know my heart. Do you see something in me," and what a place for us to say, "Lord, you know, I know in the wickedness of my heart what I could be capable of. Lord, give me ears to hear. Is there something you want to speak to me about?" I give the disciples credit here in that they know there's a possibility that inside of them, in their nature, their sin nature, is a betrayer and they're asking, "Lord, is it me," because these men love Jesus and they're in the place, "If it's me," the next question, if he answered yes would be, "Lord, change me. Help me."

Jeremiah 17:9 (NKJV) ⁹ "The heart is deceitful above all things, And desperately wicked; Who can know it?"

As we say, "There we go I, except by the grace of God," there's a betrayer in all of us that needs to continually be guarded about.

Each of the disciple's question, "Could it be myself that could possibly fail and betray you Lord?" There's a healthy, and I say that very clearly, there is a healthy non-trust in the self because we know the heart is deceitful and desperately wicked. Who can know it? There's something healthy here about them about not trusting themselves fully, knowing that there's a possibility within them and to examine themselves and they examine themselves the greatest way that you can. You take it to Jesus and say, "Is it I? Could I possibly do this Lord? Is there a potential of my fall?" I think there's a healthy place where we have that conversation with the Lord. "Lord, is there anything in me that is wicked of my ways, that needs to be cleansed and that I need to stand clear of?" As David would say. "If there is Lord, create a new heart in me and renew a right spirit," as David would say.

*Psalm 51:10 (NKJV)*¹⁰ *Create in me a clean heart, O God, And renew a steadfast spirit within me.*

Come Thou Fount

It was a bright Sunday morning in 18th century London, but Robert Robinson's mood was anything but sunny. All along the street, there were people hurrying to church, but in the midst of the crowd, Robinson was a lonely man. The sound of church bells reminded him of years past when his faith in God was strong and the church was an integral part of his life. It had been years since he set foot in a church -- years of wandering, disillusionment, and gradual defection from the God he once loved. That love for God -- once fiery and passionate -- had slowly burned out within him, leaving him dark and cold inside. Robinson heard the clip-clop, clip-clop of a horse-drawn cab approaching behind him. Turning, he lifted his hand to hail the driver. But then he saw that the cab was occupied by a young woman dressed in finery for the Lord's Day. He waved the driver on, but the woman in the carriage ordered the carriage to be stopped.

"Sir, I'd be happy to share this carriage with you," she said to Robinson. "Are you going to church?" Robinson was about to decline, then he paused. "Yes," he said at last. "I am going to church." He stepped into the carriage and sat down beside the young woman. As the carriage rolled forward Robert Robinson and the woman exchanged introductions. There was a flash of recognition in her eyes when he stated his name. "That's an interesting coincidence," she said, reaching into her purse. She withdrew a small book of inspirational verse, opened it to a ribbon bookmark²⁷, and handed the book to him. "I was just reading a verse by a poet named Robert Robinson. Could it be...?"

He took the book, nodding. "Yes, I wrote these words years ago." "Oh, how wonderful!" she exclaimed. "Imagine! I'm sharing a carriage with the author of these very lines!"

But Robinson barely heard her. He was absorbed in the words he was reading. They were words that would one day be set to music and become a great hymn of the faith, familiar to generations of Christians:

Come, Thou Fount of every blessing,
Tune my heart to sing Thy grace'
Streams of mercy, never ceasing,
Call for songs of loudest praise.

His eyes slipped to the bottom of the page where he read:

Prone to wander, Lord, I feel it—
Prone to leave the God I love;
Here's my heart, O take and seal it,
Seal it for Thy courts above.

He could barely read the last few lines through the tears that brimmed in his eyes. "I wrote these words—and I've lived these words. 'Prone to wander...prone to leave the God I love.'"

The woman suddenly understood. "You also wrote, 'Here's my heart, O take and seal it.' You can offer your heart again to God, Mr. Robinson. It's not too late."

And it wasn't too late for Robert Robinson. In that moment he turned his heart back to God and walked with him the rest of his days. [Ron Lee Davis, *Courage to Begin Again*, (Harvest House, Eugene, OR; 1978), pp. 145-147]

Mark 14:20 He answered and said to them, "It is one of the twelve, who dips with Me in the dish."

Judas Sits next to Jesus

But "He answered and said to them, "It is one of the twelve, who dips with Me in the dish." For Judas to dip his bread in oil at the same time Jesus dipped His, it means Judas was sitting adjacent to Jesus at the table (the place of honor), or within one or two spots away, for Judas was within arm reach of the bowl, that is how close he was sitting next to Jesus.

Sad Statement – 1 of 12

Verse 10, notice sad statement, one of the 12, "Oh, what he missed." He was one of the 12, he missed the greatness. He missed the greatness of the resurrection. He missed the greatness of being one of the 12 apostles whose names would be written on the 12 gates of the new Jerusalem. As we study in Revelation 21, so much that he misses because he trades it for trinkets of the world, the stuff that perishes and doesn't last

Revelation 21:14 (NKJV) ¹⁴ Now the wall of the city had twelve foundations, and on them were the names of the twelve apostles of the Lamb.

Judas is one of the 12. Again, what a statement. Only 12 and he's one of the 12 and only 12 in all of human history, got to walk with Jesus for three and half years. Heard every sermon, saw every healing, saw every resurrection of the dead, saw how he handled and touched little children and blessed them. His kindness to people, his care for the hurting. Judas is one of the 12. Only 12 in all of history.

Judas Betrays with Clean Feet

And as we follow through the chronological order of the Gospel's, Judas will betray Jesus with clean feet, as Judas leaves to betray Jesus after the foot washing from the Servant Man Jesus Christ.

John 13:1–5 (NKJV) ¹ Now before the Feast of the Passover, when Jesus knew that His hour had come that He should depart from this world to the Father, having loved His own who were in the world, He loved them to the end. ² And supper being ended, the devil having already put it into the heart of Judas Iscariot, Simon's son, to betray Him, ³ Jesus, knowing that the Father had given all things into His hands, and that He had come from God and was going to God, ⁴ rose from supper and laid aside His garments, took a towel and girded Himself. ⁵ After that, He poured water into a basin and began to wash the disciples' feet, and to wipe them with the towel with which He was girded.

John 13:21–30 (NKJV) ²¹ When Jesus had said these things, He was troubled in spirit, and testified and said, "Most assuredly, I say to you, one of you will betray Me." ²² Then the disciples looked at one another, perplexed about whom He spoke. ²³ Now there was leaning on Jesus' bosom one of His disciples, whom Jesus loved. ²⁴ Simon Peter therefore motioned to him to ask who it was of whom He spoke. ²⁵ Then, leaning back on Jesus' breast, he said to Him, "Lord, who is it?" ²⁶ Jesus answered, "It is he to whom I shall give a piece of bread when I have dipped it." And having dipped the bread, He gave it to Judas Iscariot, the son of Simon. ²⁷ Now after the piece of bread, Satan entered him. Then Jesus said to him, "What you do, do quickly." ²⁸ But no one at the table knew for what reason He said this to him. ²⁹ For some thought, because Judas had the money box, that Jesus had said to him, "Buy those things we need for the feast," or that he should give something to the poor. ³⁰ Having received the piece of bread, he then went out immediately. And it was night.

Mark 14:21 The Son of Man indeed goes just as it is written of Him, but woe to that man by whom the Son of Man is betrayed! It would have been good for that man if he had never been born."

Still Man's Responsibility

Jesus' betrayal and death fulfilled divine prophecy - it was God's will - but His sovereignty doesn't eliminate man's responsibility. Judas was responsible for his rejection of Jesus.

Judas is in Hell

Verse 21, it's clear. Judas goes to hell. People say Judas repented. They put that on the title. Maybe your Bible says that he had sorrow, but he didn't repent of his sorrow. He didn't come to Jesus and say, "I dimed you out. I sold you out." His sorrow never brought him to coming before the Lord, returning the money wasn't enough. Acknowledging the wrong is never enough. It's coming to the Lord in confession. Repentance is confession, coming into an agreement with the Lord, "What I did was wrong," and having a discussion with him, and Judas doesn't do that.

Judas is in hell. People want to water it down, dilute it or soften it up, that Jesus didn't send him to hell, but for Jesus to say, "It'd be better if this man was never born," is simply saying, "If you end up in hell, it would be better if you were never even born, because hell is horrible because hell is for all of eternity". Jesus would say in his sermon on the mount, better if your hand causes you to sin to cut it off and go through the rest of this world maimed than to go to everlasting hell. He's not saying that to Judas. Judas is going to go in to hell for eternity.

Matthew 5:29–30 (NKJV) ²⁹ *If your right eye causes you to sin, pluck it out and cast it from you; for it is more profitable for you that one of your members perish, than for your whole body to be cast into hell.* ³⁰ *And if your right hand causes you to sin, cut it off and cast it from you; for it is more profitable for you that one of your members perish, than for your whole body to be cast into hell.*

Matthew 18:8–9 (NKJV) ⁸ *"If your hand or foot causes you to sin, cut it off and cast it from you. It is better for you to enter into life lame or maimed, rather than having two hands or two feet, to be cast into the everlasting fire.* ⁹ *And if your eye causes you to sin, pluck it out and cast it from you. It is better for you to enter into life with one eye, rather than having two eyes, to be cast into hell fire.*

Mark 9:43–48 (NKJV) ⁴³ *If your hand causes you to sin, cut it off. It is better for you to enter into life maimed, rather than having two hands, to go to hell, into the fire that shall never be quenched—⁴⁴ where 'Their worm does not die And the fire is not quenched.'* ⁴⁵ *And if your foot causes you to sin, cut it off. It is better for you to enter life lame, rather than having two feet, to be cast into hell, into the fire that shall never be quenched—⁴⁶ where 'Their worm does not die And the fire is not quenched.'* ⁴⁷ *And if your eye causes you to sin, pluck it out. It is better for you to enter the kingdom of God with one eye, rather than having two eyes, to be cast into hell fire—⁴⁸ where 'Their worm does not die And the fire is not quenched.'*

Abortion

Just a comment as the abortion debate increases more and more in our Nation, and that is that Matthew 18 is in the context of children. The word there for despise means "to think nothing of", and that is what abortion does, it thinks nothing of the child in the womb.

Matthew 18:6–11 (NKJV) ⁶ *"Whoever causes one of these little ones who believe in Me to sin, it would be better for him if a millstone were hung around his neck, and he were drowned in the depth of the sea.* ⁷ *Woe to the world because of offenses! For offenses must come, but woe to that man by whom the offense comes!* ⁸ *"If your hand or foot causes you to sin, cut it off and cast it from you. It is better for you to enter into life lame or maimed, rather than having two hands or two feet, to be cast into the everlasting fire.* ⁹ *And if your eye causes you to sin, pluck it out and cast it from you. It is better for you to enter into life with one eye, rather than having two eyes, to be cast into hell fire.* ¹⁰ *"Take heed that you do not despise one of these little ones, for I say to you that in heaven their angels always see the face of My Father who is in heaven.* ¹¹ *For the Son of Man has come to save that which was lost.*

Communion Passage

We will take communion today, so we remember, yes Judas was 1 of the 12, but the others were 11 of 12, and there is power and love, poured out for us.

- There were 11 of the 12 that followed at whatever the cost
- There were 11 of the 12 that lived all out for Jesus
- There were 11 of the 12 that turned the world upside down
- There were 11 of the 12 that lives showed they lived, not thy will but yours be done
- There were 11 of the 12 that took communion, oneness, at-one-ment, with the Lord

And here we are today, doing the same. And having the opportunity, in light of the study of Judas, to look back at remembrance of what the Lord has done for us, and to look forward to His soon return. We examine ourselves, looking to be transformed, and we live with power and urgency, and excitement..... we are going to see Him soon and very soon!

Mark 14:22–26 (NKJV) ²² *And as they were eating, Jesus took bread, blessed and broke it, and gave it to them and said, "Take, eat; this is My body."* ²³ *Then He took the cup, and when He had given thanks He gave it to them, and they all drank from it.* ²⁴ *And He said to them, "This is My blood of the new covenant, which is shed for many.* ²⁵ *Assuredly, I say to you, I will no longer drink of the fruit of the vine until that day when I drink it new in the kingdom of God."* ²⁶ *And when they had sung a hymn, they went out to the Mount of Olives.*

Closing Prayer

God Says Come

Today we come and are gifted this Word from God Himself, His very heart opened before us, the calling to come near, be drawn to Him.

Matthew 11:28 (NKJV) ²⁸ *Come to Me, all you who labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest.*

The Word of God is Living and Powerful, and is ready, and will do a mighty work in our lives.

Hebrews 4:12 (NKJV) ¹² For the word of God is living and powerful, and sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing even to the division of soul and spirit, and of joints and marrow, and is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart.

In Every Study

- Who Is God? (How Great is He?)
- What Does He Think of Me? (How Wonderful Are His Thoughts Towards Me?)
- What Does He Want Me to Do?
- What Can I Boldly Request of Him?
- What Do I Need to Be on Guard of When I Leave Here Today?

Boldly come to the throne of grace, ask God to reveal Himself in a mighty way to you, and to do I might work in you, and through you.

Hebrews 4:16 (NKJV) ¹⁶ Let us therefore come boldly to the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy and find grace to help in time of need.

End of Study

Mark 14:22-26

Mark 14:22–26 (NKJV) ²² And as they were eating, Jesus took bread, blessed and broke *it*, and gave *it* to them and said, “Take, eat; this is My body.” ²³ Then He took the cup, and when He had given thanks He gave *it* to them, and they all drank from it. ²⁴ And He said to them, “This is My blood of the new covenant, which is shed for many. ²⁵ Assuredly, I say to you, I will no longer drink of the fruit of the vine until that day when I drink it new in the kingdom of God.” ²⁶ And when they had sung a hymn, they went out to the Mount of Olives.

Cross reference communion passages: Matthew 26, Luke 22.

The Night of the Passover

We pick up here today in verse 22 of Mark 14. It is the Passover meal of Jesus with His disciples, and Judas will betray Him this night, and Jesus will institute the remembrance of Communion. Let’s pray and get into this deep and wide passage before us.

The Jewish calendar of Events:

Nissan 10th – Sunday – First Day of Week:
Jesus Triumphal Entry into Jerusalem (Mark 11:1-10)
Goes into Temple but Leaves (Mark 11:11)
Sleeps outside city in Bethany (Matt 21:17 / Mark 11:11)

11th – Monday
Curses Fig Tree (Mark 11:12-14)
Cleanses the Temple (Mark 11:15-18)
Leaves the city when Evening Came (Mark 11:19)

12th – Tuesday
Explains the Cursing of Fig Tree (Mark 11:20-26)
Goes to Temple (Authority Challenged) - (Mark 11:27 – 12:1-44)
The Olivet’s Discourse (Mark 13)
Jesus goes out to Bethany (Matt 26:6)

13th – Wednesday
The Gospels are Silent

14th – Thursday –
Passover Meal (Mark 14:1-31)
Garden of Gethsemane (Mark 14:32-52)
The Trial (Mark 14:53 – 15:1-14)
The Passover Sacrifice – Jesus Beaten & Crucified (Mark 15:15-41)
Jesus Buried (Mark 15:42-47)

15th – Friday – Feast of Unleavened Begins
16th – Saturday - Sabbath
17th – Sunday – First Day of week – Resurrection – Feast of First Fruits

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Boldly come to the throne of grace, ask God to reveal Himself in a mighty way to you, and to do I might work in you, and through you.

Hebrews 4:16 (NKJV) ¹⁶ *Let us therefore come boldly to the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy and find grace to help in time of need.*

Jesus Institutes the Lord's Supper (14:22-26)

Mark 14:22 And as they were eating, Jesus took bread, blessed and broke it, and gave it to them and said, "Take, eat; this is My body."

Judas Not There – Communion is for Believers

Let it be noted, that Judas is not present at the communion service, he has stepped out to betray Jesus at this point. Communion is for believers, and many people in the world don't understand it or get it, because they are not believers.

1 piece Broken / Jewish Blessing Before Eating Bread

The bread as we read here, it started as one piece, and then Jesus broke it and passed the bread. So out of one piece, all would be filled. All were fed by the one piece. All were partaking of the one piece. And so the picture of communion for a church, picture of communion for a family, our unity and our oneness comes out of this one piece. No one is to bring some other piece to the communion table at all. Breaks forth out of the one piece and it brings life, and hence why Jesus would say he is the bread of life. And as the picture would just so explode and scream itself out, the Jewish people were told at the time of Jesus, from the time of Moses, when they took a piece of bread, that's how they gave it out. They broke it and they passed it out. And the head of the house would bless the bread and he would say, "Thanks be to God who provides the bread."

The Jewish "blessing" which was spoken over the bread was, "Blessed be thou, O Lord our God, king of the world, who causest bread to come forth from the earth" (Jeremias Eucharistic Words, 107).

- Bratcher, R. G., & Nida, E. A. (1993). *A handbook on the Gospel of Mark* (p. 439). New York: United Bible Societies.

Jesus is making a statement to these disciples who would be the apostles to take the gospel to the outer parts of the world, and this night would be recorded for all to read, including the Jewish people, that they would see that Jesus is tying the literal bread that they ate to him being the literal bread, and that there was a thanks that could be given for his body that would be broken because it would be the provision that all men could have everlasting life. The bread that we eat from day to day would give us life for today, but this bread of the body of Jesus Christ crucified upon the cross would give us bread for life and sustain us for eternal life. So he ties these things together using the physical to display the spiritual.

We Must Eat – Fully Consume

Verse 22, we must eat it to become one. John 6, when Jesus starts talking about becoming one and partaking with him, the people can't handle it. They're like, "Oh, this is too much for me." They're not understanding how much oneness a person must do to become one with the Lord.

John 6:32–33 (NKJV) ³² Then Jesus said to them, "Most assuredly, I say to you, Moses did not give you the bread from heaven, but My Father gives you the true bread from heaven. ³³ For the bread of God is He who comes down from heaven and gives life to the world."

John 6:35 (NKJV) ³⁵ And Jesus said to them, "I am the bread of life. He who comes to Me shall never hunger, and he who believes in Me shall never thirst."

John 6:52–58 (NKJV) ⁵² The Jews therefore quarreled among themselves, saying, "How can this Man give us His flesh to eat?" ⁵³ Then Jesus said to them, "Most assuredly, I say to you, unless you eat the flesh of the Son of Man and drink His blood, you have no life in you. ⁵⁴ Whoever eats My flesh and drinks My blood has eternal life, and I will raise him up at the last day. ⁵⁵ For My flesh is food indeed, and My blood is drink indeed. ⁵⁶ He who eats My flesh and drinks My blood abides in Me, and I in him. ⁵⁷ As the living Father sent Me, and I live because of the Father, so he who feeds on Me will live because of Me. ⁵⁸ This is the bread which came down from heaven—not as your fathers ate the manna, and are dead. He who eats this bread will live forever."

We're doing this picture of communion right here also, not just in the breaking of bread but in the dipping of the bowl. As the way they would eat in that time you would get each usually a piece of bread, pita bread, or broken pieces of the pita bread. You'd usually get your own pita bread and then laying in that U-shaped table as we talked, bowls would be brought out and you would dip your bread into the bowl filled with humus or some savory mix, maybe sometimes even a little bit of meat but it'd be savory and delicious. As you dip, there was no double dipping rule.

You'd dip in, you'd take a bite and you'd dip back in. But as you'd dip back in, the thought was, rightly so, your saliva, you, part of you is on that piece of bread and as you're dip it back in you're transferring yourself into the bowl. And someone else as they dip, they would do the same. But as you dip and you scooped, you're bringing in that other person. Therefore you are becoming more and hence why the Jewish people had such strict dietary rules and laws of not eating with Gentiles. They said they would never become one with the Gentiles. But here Jesus is becoming one with his disciples as they dip and they eat. That's the picture of communion here, dipping and eating, becoming one. It's a beautiful thing. But again.

What we see, you must eat. Jesus says, "Eat this. Take this. Eat this, all of you." You can't be one with Jesus, you can't be part of Jesus without fully eating and becoming one with him. You can't look and say, "Yes." You can't see a picture and point and go, "Oh, yeah." No, you must eat. You must be willing to fully take it all in, become one, receive him, identify with him, change your identity to become him, his. It's a beautiful thing.

The Passover Lamb was to be eaten in its entirety

Exodus 12:6–10 (NKJV) ⁶ Now you shall keep it until the fourteenth day of the same month. Then the whole assembly of the congregation of Israel shall kill it at twilight. ⁷ And they shall take some of the blood and put it on the two doorposts and on the lintel of the houses where they eat it. ⁸ Then they shall eat the flesh on that night; roasted in fire, with unleavened bread and with bitter herbs they shall eat it. ⁹ Do not eat it raw, nor boiled at all with water, but roasted in fire—its head with its legs and its entrails. ¹⁰ You shall let none of it remain until morning, and what remains of it until morning you shall burn with fire.

Jesus would say to them, "You take. You eat." The sentence structure is a verb tense that puts ... it's your responsibility to take it. You must eat it. You must take it and you must eat it. There is a participation for it to be applied to your life.

Mark 14:23 Then He took the cup, and when He had given thanks He gave it to them, and they all drank from it.
Mark 14:24 And He said to them, "This is My blood of the new covenant, which is shed for many."

Gives Thanks

Maybe you've heard it called the Eucharist. What Eucharist means is blessing. It means thanks. That's what the word here in the original Greek language is, Eucharist. Jesus gives thanks because there is a way. We can come and give thanks because there is a way.

He Give Thanks / Praise God – There is a Way / Wide Enough for You to Get Through

He gives thanks. He's giving thanks, I believe, because there is a way. He gives thanks because there's a way that man can be redeemed and come into the presence and a personal relationship with the Lord and have their sins passed over. People will say that it's too narrow. I say it's so wide that you can't miss it. There's only one way that makes it easy to see it. John 14:6 Jesus says, "I am the way, the truth, and the life. No man comes to the Father, except by me." Praise God, there is a way.

John 14:6 (NKJV) ⁶ Jesus said to him, "I am the way, the truth, and the life. No one comes to the Father except through Me."

Jeremiah 31 – the New Covenant

The new covenant (contract) prophesied there in Jeremiah 31, some 500 years before Jesus Christ fulfills it.

Jeremiah 31:31–34 (NKJV) ³¹ "Behold, the days are coming, says the LORD, when I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel and with the house of Judah—³² not according to the covenant that I made with their fathers in the day that I took them by the hand to lead them out of the land of Egypt, My covenant which they broke, though I was a husband to them, says the LORD. ³³ But this is the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel after those days, says the LORD: I will put My law in their minds, and write it on their hearts; and I will be their God, and they shall be My people. ³⁴ No more shall every man teach his neighbor, and every man his brother, saying, 'Know the LORD,' for they all shall know Me, from the least of them to the greatest of them, says the LORD. For I will forgive their iniquity, and their sin I will remember no more."

Communion Tokens

Some 500 years ago, people wanting to turn this relationship into a religion (binding it up and bringing people into bondage) came up with what was called "Communion Tokens". And "man" would examine "man" to determine if they were worthy, holy, fit enough to partake in communion. And they would thus give the "worthy" person a metal token (some a printed card), and you had to show your token before they would allow you to partake in communion.

Communion tokens. Metal tokens stamped with such devices as texts, initials, chalices, and the *Good Shepherd, which were used as certificates of fitness for admission to the Communion. There is evidence of the employment of '*householding tokens' in England in 1534. In the Church of *Scotland, where they have been most generally used, they were common from the first, and the institution has survived, their place being taken today by printed cards on which the communicants' names are written. As these cards are distributed previously by the elders and collected at the service, a check is kept on those who do not communicate. In isolated Presbyterian churches in Scotland and other parts of the Commonwealth, however, the old metal tokens are still retained.

- Cross, F. L., & Livingstone, E. A. (Eds.). (2005). In *The Oxford dictionary of the Christian Church* (3rd ed. rev., p. 391). Oxford; New York: Oxford University Press.

Examine Ourselves – But Don't Exclude Ourselves

We're told in 1 Corinthians 11 to examine ourselves before taking communion. But let that not be mistaken that we're ever to exclude ourselves. Because see, forgiveness comes immediately upon the last breath of confession. 1 John 1:9, "If we confess our sins, He's faithful and just to forgive us of our sins and cleanse us from all unrighteousness." This is the horizontal relationship that we have with the Lord. The cross is the positional relationship and our position never changes because it is done and we have been sealed, and we are adopted as sons and daughters. But like any father-son relationship, father-daughter relationship, they can become strained by someone in a willful disobedience or rebellion. So, communion gives us a time to focus, not just to remember, but to examine ourselves.

1 Corinthians 11:27–32 (NKJV) ²⁷ Therefore whoever eats this bread or drinks this cup of the Lord in an unworthy manner will be guilty of the body and blood of the Lord. ²⁸ But let a man examine himself, and so let him eat of the bread and drink of the cup. ²⁹ For he who eats and drinks in an unworthy manner eats and drinks judgment to himself, not discerning the Lord's body. ³⁰ For this reason many are weak and sick among you, and many sleep. ³¹ For if we would judge ourselves, we would not be judged. ³² But when we are judged, we are chastened by the Lord, that we may not be condemned with the world.

1 John 1:9 (NKJV) ⁹ If we confess our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.

Modern Parable - Discouragement

A modern parable has been written about the tools of the enemy that I believe we can really learn from.

"Some time ago, an advertisement appeared in which the devil was putting all his tools up for sale. On the day of public inspection, each one of his tools was marked with its selling price: Hatred, Envy, Jealousy, Doubt, Lying, Pride, and so on, were each on the block. Set apart, however, from all the rest of the pile, was a harmless-looking tool, well-worn, but priced very high -- it was discouragement!"

Someone asked the devil, 'why is that one priced so high?' He replied, 'Ah, that one is more useful to me than all the rest. With it I can pry open a man's heart and enter, when I cannot get near him with any other tools. Once inside, I can lead him any way I choose. The tool is very worn because I use it on almost everyone, since few people know it belongs to me.'"

The enemy loves to sow discouragement -- but believers have a tool much more powerful -- encouragement! We can speak a word into the lives of those who desperately need to hear it: to the college student adjusting to his new environment; to the missionary who may feel alone in the harvest field; to the disillusioned newlywed young couple; to the forgotten servants of God who labor in an obscure and difficult ministry; to the orphans and the widows; to all those who need to hear a word in due season!

Mark 14:25 Assuredly, I say to you, I will no longer drink of the fruit of the vine until that day when I drink it new in the kingdom of God."

No Transubstantiation

Jesus said He would not drink of the cup until, again, when we're together in the kingdom. So this totally dispels that doctrine of what is called transubstantiation, where there is some religious sects that say, "Every time you take communion, you're taking the literal body of Jesus. You're eating His flesh and the wine becomes literally his blood and therefore you're drinking His blood." There's no Scripture to support that. In fact, there's Scripture to disassociate that doctrine and this is it right here. I'm not going to do it again till we drink together. So these are just remembrance. They're not the actual body and blood of Jesus Christ.

The Gold Plate

One of the church traditions that came out of communion was this thing called the Gold Plate where they would put the gold plate under the chin of the partaker, therefore to catch the crumbs that would fall because they're making the crumbs holy and of course the gold plate adds to this essence of some type of holy religious activity. But there's no gold plate here in the Passover meal with Jesus. He broke the bread and He passed it out and they ate it. And I think there's a place as we examine these things, just let the word speak for itself. John 14 tells us that the spirit will reveal all things. He's our teacher. And there's a place we just need to let the spirit reveal these things, and He will and just let the word speak for itself and not make it say something that isn't there.

John 14:26 (NKJV) ²⁶ *But the Helper, the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in My name, He will teach you all things, and bring to your remembrance all things that I said to you.*

Sacrifices in Millennial Kingdom

Interesting just side note. We will see in the millennial kingdom as we've been talking about, the last days stuff, that we'll be doing animal sacrifices. What I believe we see here is, it will be a remembrance as we do communion, that's what we'll be doing in Jerusalem during the thousand years as a reminder. There at the temple, we'll be having animal sacrifices and we'll always remember the price that Jesus paid. Jesus says he'll do this when the kingdom comes, and that very well could mean that we don't do communion again until the marriage supper of the lamb or the millennial kingdom, I don't know.

Ezekiel 46:13–15 (NKJV) ¹³ *You shall daily make a burnt offering to the LORD of a lamb of the first year without blemish; you shall prepare it every morning. ¹⁴ And you shall prepare a grain offering with it every morning, a sixth of an ephah, and a third of a hin of oil to moisten the fine flour. This grain offering is a perpetual ordinance, to be made regularly to the LORD. ¹⁵ Thus they shall prepare the lamb, the grain offering, and the oil, as a regular burnt offering every morning.*

Without Shedding of Blood – No Forgiveness of Sin

But, we will have continual reminder through the sacrificial system, and that's what communion displays, that without the shedding of blood there is no forgiveness of sin.

Hebrews 9:20–22 (NKJV) ²⁰ *saying, "This is the blood of the covenant which God has commanded you."* ²¹ *Then likewise he sprinkled with blood both the tabernacle and all the vessels of the ministry. ²² And according to the law almost all things are purified with blood, and without shedding of blood there is no remission.*

1 Corinthians

In the Epistle to the Corinthians, which some say was the first book penned in the New Testament (many research scholars think it was James), we have more detail on the subject of communion:

1 Corinthians 11:23–26 (NKJV) ²³ *For I received from the Lord that which I also delivered to you: that the Lord Jesus on the same night in which He was betrayed took bread; ²⁴ and when He had given thanks, He broke it and said, "Take, eat; this is My body which is broken for you; do this in remembrance of Me." ²⁵ In the same manner He also took the cup after supper, saying, "This cup is the new covenant in My blood. This do, as often as you drink it, in remembrance of Me." ²⁶ For as often as you eat this bread and drink this cup, you proclaim the Lord's death till He comes.*

Proclaim Lord's Death Until He Comes Again

Verse 25 says you remember 1 Corinthians 11:23-26. Remember what this means and it goes on to say, "Proclaim until the Lord's death." Communion is to bring us to a remembrance, and a proclamation of His death. That is the remembrance. But of His resurrection and His second coming. Communion takes us from His first coming, His death and resurrection, but communion is to look forward to His second coming and His soon return as it says until the Lord returns. Jesus Christ is coming back. First He's going to take us up for the Marriage Supper of the Lamb, but there will be a second coming of Christ where He will put His feet back down upon this Earth, and it will begin the Millennial Kingdom. The 1,000 year reign of Christ.

2 Ordinances

The Lord gives us two ordinances as a church, as a body, as believers while we tarry and wait for his return that we're to be doing. One is communion and one is baptism. May I just say, they're not sacraments as it has been made to be by man. A sacrament can be something that is applied in a workspace duty that must be done to earn. No, these are ordinances to remind us and to release for us the power that comes with them as we remember and as we do the declarations that are made.

COMMUNION (at-one-ment)

Such as for communion represents the word means fellowship, oneness, atonement. We like to say that word atonement spells out at one-ment. It means we're at one with Jesus, no longer separated, no longer distant. We're at one because of His body and His blood, and we hold the representation of that in our hands today for communion.

When we are in communion, we're in fellowship with one another. We're in fellowship with Him in that moment. When we truly come in and do it in remembrance of Him, we coming into the sweet one-ment and fellowship and communion with Him, and we're celebrating it. We're at one, it's beautiful.

Not a Ritual or Routine / It is Fellowship with the Lord

That's why we don't schedule it the first Sunday of every month or the third Sunday of every month. We don't schedule it because we don't want to make it routine. We don't want to make it something that we go through. We want to make it something that it's meant to be, this beautiful at one-ment, this beautiful communion, this beautiful fellowship with the Lord. We literally tie it in and make it a special part of our service. It's not something that we do because it's scheduled, then we go on to do the next thing. It's something that we enter into and fully gather and glean all that we can from it as it was meant to be.

Some Weak (Spiritual Death) for Not Taking Communion

We're told by the Apostle Paul under the inspiration of the Holy Spirit in 1 Corinthians that there are actually some people, they became weak, sick, even onto death and that wasn't just physical but spiritual. And there's a spiritual weakness that comes when we forget communion and the remembrance of it and the power of it and the purpose of it. But then there's that promise that we read. Then, that there's a power in communion. See, precious saint. There's power in the remembrance of what Jesus Christ did for us. There's power in the proclamation that Jesus Christ is coming back. There's power that Jesus Christ will never leave us, nor forsake us. There's power that He wants to share a meal with us and have oneness with us. There's a power that He is saying, "I can't wait to be with you again for eternity when all this world and all this pain and all this emptiness will be wrapped up in this fallen world and we'll come into the perfect kingdom of God together."

Tuesday night, we had communion in our prayer time. We shared communion together. The husbands served their wives communion. Prayed over their wives and the wives prayed over them. And then we went and we prayed for the singles and their time, and their season. As the singles prayed for the married couples. Because see, there's power in this cup and when we take it together, husband and wives, and we share communion together, there's a spiritual strength that comes in the unity. And so may I encourage you communion doesn't just have to be here at the church, practice it regularly with your spouse. Make it a regular thing that you do. Share a meal together, maybe even at the end of your dinner. Break communion. Maybe that's something that the Lord's speaking to you to do with your children at the end of a meal. Have communion and share communion together.

And if anybody's feeling convicted or beat down, I hope not, and I hope you hear my heart. I share the same thing. I need to remind myself of this. I need to put myself in a place of I need to have communion and remember it with my spouse and with my children, that there's a power and a oneness together. There's a power in the breaking of the bread together and a partaking of the cup.

Jesus Said – Remember What I have Done – For You / My Work – Your Value

Jesus says, though, very clearly, "Do this in remembrance of me." Do this in remembrance of what, of Him? We're talking about pierced body, broken body, poured out blood. He's saying every time you take communion, remember the price that was paid. You can't make that routine. You can't make that ordinary. Every time you take communion, you slow down and remember what I did for you, what I was willing to do for you and the beauty and the price that I put upon you. You become valuable. There's no price, there's no value that can be put on you because of the purchase price had no measure to it. Infinite value paid, therefore makes us of infinite value as the purchased person.

Remember – Jesus is Soaked with Spikenard

And I want you to remember as these men are taking communion with Jesus. It's two days later now. It's literally the day of the crucifixion, for their day began at night. And ended the following sunset. And I like that picture in the Jewish religion calendar that it goes from darkness to light. Things just get brighter and brighter. But here we are just two days prior. This woman who we don't know her name came and soaked and saturated Jesus Christ with the potent spikenard in His hair. His hair follicles would have absorbed all the oil. It would have retained all that oil. His hair would be glistening but it would also be putting off a fragrance. So as they're taking this communion, it is in the fragrance of the spikenard which again, He just says it was prepared for His death and burial. Communion takes us back to the remembrance of Christ.

Jesus Doesn't Make Monument – But Invites for a Meal

And I like what Jesus does with communion. He doesn't make a monument. And tells us to build a statue. Instead, He comes and He gives us a meal and says, "Come and join me for a meal." Let's share a meal together. Oh, the intimacy of our Lord. He's not some concrete pillar that we can't relate to and speak to. But He's a god who invites us to a meal to share oneness. Fellowship. Do we not all look forward to our special times of meals together? It's like the highlight of my day, and here Jesus says, "Come to the table. Let's break bread together."

Not Fighting to Victory – Battle Already Won / Going on From Victory

Now church, remember this: so many people, their Christian life, they think they're walking and working to victory. The battle's already been won. We don't work and walk towards victory, we walk from victory, we walk in victory.

That's what it means, that it is done. The battle's won. No work, no performance, no separation of love. Therefore, we're free to love. You know what? I know some pastors are afraid to say this, you're free to fail. If you're truly free to love and living in love when you do fail, you'll feel horrible and say, "I got to get away from this, Lord. Give me the power to overcome." But, you're free to fail in that, if you do fail, there's forgiveness, there's hope, there's peace, because He lives. I can live too.

1 Corinthians 11:23–26 (NKJV) ²³ For I received from the Lord that which I also delivered to you: that the Lord Jesus on the same night in which He was betrayed took bread; ²⁴ and when He had given thanks, He broke it and said, "Take, eat; this is My body which is broken for you; do this in remembrance of Me." ²⁵ In the same manner He also took the cup after supper, saying, "This cup is the new covenant in My blood. This do, as often as you drink it, in remembrance of Me." ²⁶ For as often as you eat this bread and drink this cup, you proclaim the Lord's death till He comes.

4 Things

So we see four things in communion. We're to take and eat. We're to remember him. Thirdly, we're to proclaim the Lord's death. And fourthly, we are to examine ourselves.

Mark 14:26 And when they had sung a hymn, they went out to the Mount of Olives.

They go Out Singing

They go out singing, and we can too, for God has provided a way!

Be Ready

The English journalist, G. K. Chesterton, reminded us of a practice among certain Christian knights of the medieval period. Before leaving for battle, they would receive the sacraments with one foot in the stirrup.

*Jones, G. C. (1986). 1000 illustrations for preaching and teaching (p. 7). Nashville, TN: Broadman & Holman Publishers.

Cup of Blessing – Not a Euphuism

In 1 Corinthians 11, Paul speaking in the context of communion, says the words "the cup of blessing". The "cup of blessing" to us sounds like a euphuism, Paul speaking poetically about the partaking of communion, but oh it is much deeper than that, and the people of Corinth would be fully aware of what the "cup of blessing" meant. Normally in the Seder meal (the Jewish celebration of Passover) there are 4 different cups that are served. The Four Cups represent the four expressions of deliverance promised by God Exodus 6:6-7: "I will bring out," "I will deliver," "I will redeem," and "I will take."

1 Corinthians 10:16–17 (NKJV) ¹⁶ The cup of blessing which we bless, is it not the communion of the blood of Christ? The bread which we break, is it not the communion of the body of Christ? ¹⁷ For we, *though* many, are one bread *and* one body; for we all partake of that one bread.

Exodus 6:6–7 (NKJV) ⁶ Therefore say to the children of Israel: 'I am the LORD; I will bring you out from under the burdens of the Egyptians, I will rescue you from their bondage, and I will redeem you with an outstretched arm and with great judgments. ⁷ I will take you as My people, and I will be your God. Then you shall know that I am the LORD your God who brings you out from under the burdens of the Egyptians.

1st Cup (I will bring out): This consisted of a solemn blessing (Kiddush) pronounced over the 1st cup of wine which was followed by a dish of bitter herbs. (This reminded them of their bitterness of Egyptian bondage). There are a few variations, of how this blessing would go, but it has its basis of remembering who the Lord is, the mighty God, the Creator of Heaven and Earth, all that is seen and unseen.

Genesis 2:1–3 (NKJV) ¹ Thus the heavens and the earth, and all the host of them, were finished. ² And on the seventh day God ended His work which He had done, and He rested on the seventh day from all His work which He had done. ³ Then God blessed the seventh day and sanctified it, because in it He rested from all His work which God had created and made.

Here is an excerpt from one Jewish rabbi on what is/was to be said after the reading of the Scripture:

Blessed are You, Lord our God, King of the Universe, Who sanctified us with His commandments, and hoped for us, and with love and intent invested us with His sacred Sabbath, as a memorial to the deed of Creation. It is the first amongst the holy festivals, commemorating the exodus from Egypt. For You chose us, and sanctified us, out of all nations, and with love and intent You invested us with Your Holy Sabbath.

2nd Cup (I will deliver): The Passover narrative (the retelling of the story of God delivering them from Egypt) is recited after which the "Little Hallel" Ps 113 was sung. This cup is then drunk following the psalm. The psalm reminds the hearer who has the power, and the heart, to deliver them. This would have been the cup they took in Luke 22.

Psalm 113:1–9 (NKJV) ¹ Praise the LORD! Praise, O servants of the LORD, Praise the name of the LORD! ² Blessed be the name of the LORD From this time forth and forevermore! ³ From the rising of the sun to its going down The LORD's name is to be praised. ⁴ The LORD is high above all nations, His glory above the heavens. ⁵ Who is like the LORD our God, Who dwells on high, ⁶ Who humbles Himself to behold The things that are in the heavens and in the earth? ⁷ He raises the poor out of the dust, And lifts the needy out of the ash heap, ⁸ That He may seat him with princes— With the princes of His people. ⁹ He grants the barren woman a home, Like a joyful mother of children. Praise the LORD!

Luke 22:17 (KJV 1900) ¹⁷ And he took the cup, and gave thanks, and said, Take this, and divide it among yourselves:

3rd Cup (I will redeem): The main meal was served consisting of lamb and unleavened bread which preceded the drinking of the 3rd cup known as the "cup of blessing". It is the blessing after the meal, which is a little different for us as we only say a blessing before the meal. The Scripture reference is Deuteronomy 8:12. The heart of the blessing is to praise God for all His goodness, for bringing, for delivering, and for redeeming – all His provisions both miracle wise and physically. The cup that Jesus blessed and distributed is identified as the 3rd cup of the Passover meal. This is apparent from the singing of the Great Hallel which immediately follows (see Mk 14:26). Paul identifies this cup of blessing with the cup of the Eucharist (see 1Cor 10:16).

Deuteronomy 8:10 (NKJV) ¹⁰ When you have eaten and are full, then you shall bless the LORD your God for the good land which He has given you.

Here is an excerpt (just one paragraph) from one Jewish rabbi on what is/was to be said

Blessed are You, Adonai, our God, King of the universe, who sustains the entire universe with Your goodness, grace and mercy. You provide for all, and prepare the food for each of Your creations that You have created. Blessed are You, Adonai, who sustains all.

Here is what Jesus said:

Mark 14:22–25 (NKJV) ²² And as they were eating, Jesus took bread, blessed and broke it, and gave it to them and said, "Take, eat; this is My body." ²³ Then He took the cup, and when He had given thanks He gave it to them, and they all drank from it. ²⁴ And He said to them, "This is My blood of the new covenant, which is shed for many. ²⁵ Assuredly, I say to you, I will no longer drink of the fruit of the vine until that day when I drink it new in the kingdom of God."

4th Cup (I will take): Finally the climax of the Passover came with the singing of the "Great Hallel" Psalms 114-118. This is succeeded by the drinking of the 4th cup of wine called the "cup of consummation." How picture perfect this has been of Jesus being our Passover. But how the picture gets even more amazing.

1 Corinthians 5:7 (NKJV) ⁷ Therefore purge out the old leaven, that you may be a new lump, since you truly are unleavened. For indeed Christ, our Passover, was sacrificed for us.

Hallel Song – but no Cup

The 4th cup was to be taken after the singing of the Hallel song, and Jesus and the disciples that night sang them we read in Mark.

Mark 14:26 (NKJV) ²⁶ *And when they had sung a hymn, they went out to the Mount of Olives.*

Any other way to Take Them

But this fourth cup, how amazing, as we read of Jesus saying Father is there any other way to “take them, bring them into the family”, and there was no other way except by divine blood, the perfect Lamb of God who would take away the sins of the world so God could take us as His own, to call us sons to call us daughters.

Matthew 26:42 (NKJV) ⁴² *Again, a second time, He went away and prayed, saying, “O My Father, if this cup cannot pass away from Me unless I drink it, Your will be done.”*

Luke 22:41–42 (NKJV) ⁴¹ *And He was withdrawn from them about a stone's throw, and He knelt down and prayed, ⁴² saying, “Father, if it is Your will, take this cup away from Me; nevertheless not My will, but Yours, be done.”*

Ends with Presiding Priest – It is Done

How is the Passover Meal, the Seder, end? By the presiding priest, the host leading all in the drinking of the fourth cup, and then saying "TEL TELESTI" which is interpreted as "IT IS FINISHED" or "IT IS CONSUMATED".

John 19:28–30 (NKJV) ²⁸ *After this, Jesus, knowing that all things were now accomplished, that the Scripture might be fulfilled, said, “I thirst!” ²⁹ Now a vessel full of sour wine was sitting there; and they filled a sponge with sour wine, put it on hyssop, and put it to His mouth. ³⁰ So when Jesus had received the sour wine, He said, “It is finished!” And bowing His head, He gave up His spirit.*

What a Word

It is Finished, and what a word this word "TEL TELESTI" as we read it in its meaning: done, consummated, paid, to expire, to execute, termination, the end of series, success, and perfection, to be exempt, to give a receipt. It is done my brothers and sisters, the receipt of proof of purchase, written in blood, the end of the series and the beginning of a new one for our life, the debit against us has been retired, and we are exempt from all punishment due us.

Isaiah – Messianic Prophecy / Jesus is the Sure Peg

Isaiah 22 is a Messianic prophecy of Jesus Christ. In the day of the writing when they would pitch their tents, they would fasten a peg (a nail) on to the main beam of the structure and there they would hang their cups and pots, because it was sure to hold, and not fall. The passage says Jesus is the sure peg, and when we hold unto to Him He will not fail us. And I picture in my mind, when Jesus drank of that last cup, that fourth cup, He hung the cup up on the peg, and said – DONE!

Isaiah 22:22–25 (NKJV) ²² *The key of the house of David I will lay on his shoulder; So he shall open, and no one shall shut; And he shall shut, and no one shall open. ²³ I will fasten him as a peg in a secure place, And he will become a glorious throne to his father's house. ²⁴ They will hang on him all the glory of his father's house, the offspring and the posterity, all vessels of small quantity, from the cups to all the pitchers. ²⁵ In that day,' says the LORD of hosts, 'the peg that is fastened in the secure place will be removed and be cut down and fall, and the burden that was on it will be cut off; for the LORD has spoken.'*

How Picture Perfect!

The 5th Cup

But, there is more. There were four cups that were served, but a fifth cup that was not partaken of. Most Jews call it the cup of Elijah, as it refers to when the Messiah will come for Israel. And He will!

Most Ashkenazim have the custom to fill a fifth cup at this point. This relates to a Talmudic discussion that concerns the number of cups that are supposed to be drunk. Given that the four cups are in reference to the four expressions of redemption in Exodus 6:6-7, some rabbis felt that it was important to include a fifth cup for the fifth expression of redemption in Exodus 6:8. All agreed that five cups should be poured but the question as to whether or not the fifth should be drunk, given that the fifth expression of redemption concerned being brought into the Land of Israel, which - by this stage - was no longer possessed of an autonomous Jewish community, remained insoluble. The rabbis determined that the matter should be left until Elijah (in reference to the notion that Elijah's arrival would precipitate the coming of the Messiah, at which time all halakhic questions will be resolved) and the fifth cup came to be known as the Kos shel Eliyahu ("Cup of Elijah"). Over time, people came to relate this cup to the notion that Elijah will visit each home on Seder night as a foreshadowing of his future arrival at the end of the days, when he will come to announce the coming of the Jewish Messiah.

For Us – he is Waiting to Celebrate the 5th Cup

But for us, those who have received Him, He has told us in a sense there is another cup awaiting to be drunk with Him, and He said He would not drink until we were all together. That time is near, it will be when He calls us all home, and we celebrate the Millennial Kingdom,

Mark 14:22–25 (NKJV) ²² And as they were eating, Jesus took bread, blessed and broke it, and gave it to them and said, "Take, eat; this is My body." ²³ Then He took the cup, and when He had given thanks He gave it to them, and they all drank from it. ²⁴ And He said to them, "This is My blood of the new covenant, which is shed for many. ²⁵ Assuredly, I say to you, I will no longer drink of the fruit of the vine until that day when I drink it new in the kingdom of God."

Revelation 19:9 (NKJV) ⁹ Then he said to me, "Write: 'Blessed are those who are called to the marriage supper of the Lamb!' " And he said to me, "These are the true sayings of God."

The Broken Body

How fascinating again is the bread of the Seder, called matzah, which we can clearly see is the perfect picture of the trinity, the crucifixion, and the resurrection.

Yachatz: Breaking (done early in the Seder, after the first cup)

One of the three matzahs on the table is broken. Part is returned to the pile, the other part is set aside for the afikomen (see below). The bread is wrapped in a napkin and then put out of sight until later in the meal.

Tzafun: The Afikomen (this is done right after the main meal of the Seder), right before the Cup of Blessing.

The piece of matzah set aside earlier is eaten as "dessert," the last food of the meal. Different families have different traditions relating to the afikomen. Some have the children hide it, while the parents have to either find it or ransom it back. Others have the parents hide it. But then the family eats it together.

Why Me?

Again, I had saw this news headline article. The question was being asked, "What's the number one question asked of Jesus?"

- You know how it goes, why do you allow evil on the earth?
- Why is there so much suffering?
- Where were you when this happened in my life?"

As soon as I saw that headline article, the first thing immediately my question was to Jesus Christ, "Why me? Why would you ever choose me, receive me and love me? Why me?" As I take communion as deep as it is, it's still just a glimpse. One day I'm going to get to see him and say, "Why me?" And I know what he's going to say because this Bible tells me. He is going to say, "Because I love you." That's what he says to every one of you, "Because I love you." That's it, period. "Because I love you." There's nothing more to be said when it is said, "I love you." As we take communion you can ask yourself, "Why me?" And as you take communion, you'll hear him simply say, "Because I love you. Because I love you."

2 Ordinances

The Lord gives us two ordinances as a church, as a body, as believers while we tarry and wait for his return that we're to be doing. One is communion and one is baptism. May I just say, they're not sacraments as it has been made to be by man. A sacrament can be something that is applied in a workspace duty that must be done to earn. No, these are ordinances to remind us and to release for us the power that comes with them as we remember and as we do the declarations that are made.

Baptism – To Immerse / Change Identity

Baptism means to immerse. When you went to change a garment in color, say you had a white garment and you wanted to change it to blue or purple, you mixed up a pot of dye, purple dye, you took that garment, and you said, "I'm going to baptize this garment." Literally, I'm going to immerse this garment and it's going to change its identity from white to blue. That's what the Lord does. He gives us a new identity. When we're baptized, we get a new identity. We're baptized in Christ. That happens the day that you receive Him as your Lord and savior. But, then we go and we do this as an ordinance before man. When you're baptized in the Christ, He immerses you. He changes your identity. He changes your identity from blackness of sin into whiteness of holiness. When we come and we do

baptism, part of it is like communion, a remembrance. My identity's been changed. I'm no longer that same person. The old person has passed away, the new man arises.

Romans 6:1-14 (NKJV) ¹ What shall we say then? Shall we continue in sin that grace may abound? ² Certainly not! How shall we who died to sin live any longer in it? ³ Or do you not know that as many of us as were baptized into Christ Jesus were baptized into His death? ⁴ Therefore we were buried with Him through baptism into death, that just as Christ was raised from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life. ⁵ For if we have been united together in the likeness of His death, certainly we also shall be in the likeness of His resurrection, ⁶ knowing this, that our old man was crucified with Him, that the body of sin might be done away with, that we should no longer be slaves of sin. ⁷ For he who has died has been freed from sin. ⁸ Now if we died with Christ, we believe that we shall also live with Him, ⁹ knowing that Christ, having been raised from the dead, dies no more. Death no longer has dominion over Him. ¹⁰ For the death that He died, He died to sin once for all; but the life that He lives, He lives to God. ¹¹ Likewise you also, reckon yourselves to be dead indeed to sin, but alive to God in Christ Jesus our Lord. ¹² Therefore do not let sin reign in your mortal body, that you should obey it in its lusts. ¹³ And do not present your members as instruments of unrighteousness to sin, but present yourselves to God as being alive from the dead, and your members as instruments of righteousness to God. ¹⁴ For sin shall not have dominion over you, for you are not under law but under grace.

I remember many years ago, 25 probably at this point, first person I became good friends with through the church, he just came across some issues in his life. He literally went in, tried to rob a bank. I think as soon as they arrested him, they took him to the mental hospital. They definitely saw something wrong with him that he was trying to be a suicide by cop. Nonetheless, he went to rob a bank, you're guilty. You're a bank robber. There is an arrest warrant out for you, and there's a penalty that needs to be paid. You are a criminal. This man used to be a special ops man, knew lots of tricks, and he was able to unshackle himself and flee. They couldn't catch him, he was on the run. Task force looking for him.

He would call me covertly, pay phones, it's long before the cell phone days. Pay phone, someone else's phone, emails through encrypted names. I would say to him, "My friend, brother in the Lord, you just got to stand up. You got to face this before you will never have a life living as a criminal. You'll never be free. You'll always be looking over your shoulder. You'll never be able to love your family again. You'll never be able to enjoy your family again. Your state of being a criminal will simply drive you to a life of being a criminal, because you'll never be able to do anything above the surface legally." We would talk and we would talk. He would eventually come to the place, "Okay, I want to turn myself in. Will you come with me?" Which, of course, I did.

But, it was interesting over that span of time over a couple months, there were times he would say, "Can you come and meet with me?" Being a pastor, I was under the covering, and so I met him. It was interesting, where he told me to meet him, I came upon him and I knew him because I knew him. But, even I had to take another look at him, because he had changed his whole identity. He changed various features of his face through facial hair, changed his hair color, changed the way he dressed compared to the way he used to dress, changed his weight, all kinds of stuff. I knew him because I knew him, but anybody looking for him, they'd been having a difficult time looking for him from all the pictures they gathered because his total identity had changed.

I like that, as an illustration and an example as I looked back upon that. When we're baptized and we're changed, that criminal status that we were, it's gone, it's changed. When the devil comes looking for that criminal and to point out that guilty party, everywhere he goes as he would come back to report, I can't find him. I can't find him. Everywhere I look, I can't find him. All'd I continually keep seeing is people that look like Jesus Christ. All those people out there, I continually see all these people who look like Jesus Christ, and he's spotless and he's perfect and I can't lay a charge against that person that I see, because they look just like Jesus. Pilot, when he's going to say to Jesus before the people, "I find no fault in him," as we study that, that's the same application for us when we're looked at under the covering of Jesus Christ. The statement is I find no fault in him, and we do that through the baptism, the covering, being baptized into the body of Christ.

Closing Prayer

God Says Come

Today we come and are gifted this Word from God Himself, His very heart opened before us, the calling to come near, be drawn to Him.

Matthew 11:28 (NKJV) ²⁸ Come to Me, all you who labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest.

The Word of God is Living and Powerful, and is ready, and will do a mighty work in our lives.

Hebrews 4:12 (NKJV) ¹² For the word of God is living and powerful, and sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing even to the division of soul and spirit, and of joints and marrow, and is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart.

In Every Study

- Who Is God? (How Great is He?)
- What Does He Think of Me? (How Wonderful Are His Thoughts Towards Me?)
- What Does He Want Me to Do?
- What Can I Boldly Request of Him?
- What Do I Need to Be on Guard of When I Leave Here Today?

Boldly come to the throne of grace, ask God to reveal Himself in a mighty way to you, and to do I might work in you, and through you.

Hebrews 4:16 (NKJV) ¹⁶ Let us therefore come boldly to the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy and find grace to help in time of need.

End of Study

Mark 14:26-31

Mark 14:26–31 (NKJV) ²⁶ And when they had sung a hymn, they went out to the Mount of Olives. ²⁷ Then Jesus said to them, “All of you will be made to stumble because of Me this night, for it is written: ‘I will strike the Shepherd, *And the sheep will be scattered.*’” ²⁸ “But after I have been raised, I will go before you to Galilee.” ²⁹ Peter said to Him, “Even if all are made to stumble, yet I *will not be.*” ³⁰ Jesus said to him, “Assuredly, I say to you that today, *even this night, before the rooster crows twice, you will deny Me three times.*” ³¹ But he spoke more vehemently, “If I have to die with You, I will not deny You!” And they all said likewise.

Introduction

Introduction. It is the day and the Jewish day began at sundown and went to sundown. The day is the 14th of the Jewish month known as Nisan, which usually falls in our calendar in March or April. Jesus is now less than 24 hours from those words. It is done. He's less than 18 hours from nails being pierced in his hands as he will hang on the cross before this day is over, For six agonizing hours.

So they have eaten the last supper. Jesus has washed the disciple's feet and that included Judas. Judas will leave with clean feet and go and betray Jesus, and while he's gone, Jesus will institute the believer's meal that we know as communion. And he says to do this in remembrance of him. He says to do this to proclaim that he'd come in back.

Jesus doesn't make a monument to what's going to happen on this day. Jesus calls us to a meal to eat and partake with him. So let's pick it up. The Passover celebration meal is over. Communion has been taken. And Verse 26, they're gonna sing a song and head out to the garden of Gethsemane.

God Says Come

Today we come and are gifted this Word from God Himself, His very heart opened before us, the calling to come near, be drawn to Him.

Matthew 11:28 (NKJV) ²⁸ Come to Me, all you who labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest.

The Word of God is Living and Powerful, and is ready, and will do a mighty work in our lives.

Hebrews 4:12 (NKJV) ¹² For the word of God is living and powerful, and sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing even to the division of soul and spirit, and of joints and marrow, and is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart.

In Every Study

- Who Is God? (How Great is He?)
- What Does He Think of Me? (How Wonderful Are His Thoughts Towards Me?)
- What Does He Want Me to Do?
- What Can I Boldly Request of Him?
- What Do I Need to Be on Guard of When I Leave Here Today?

Boldly come to the throne of grace, ask God to reveal Himself in a mighty way to you, and to do I might work in you, and through you.

Hebrews 4:16 (NKJV) ¹⁶ Let us therefore come boldly to the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy and find grace to help in time of need.

Jesus Foretells of Peter's Denial (14:27-31)

Mark 14:26 And when they had sung a hymn, they went out to the Mount of Olives.

Psalm 115-118 / Read Them Today – And Watch Your Heart be Moved

They probably are singing Psalm 118, or one of the Psalms between (Ps 115-118) known as the Hallel songs/Psalms, the praise song to which would end the Passover meal. Psalm 118 just imagine that being sung, as it speaks of the mercy of God enduring forever, even after betrayal and abandonment. Speaks of the stone which the builder rejected and speaks of Jesus the chief cornerstone. Jesus the chief cornerstone, is singing the song with the disciples, about Himself. I encourage you to read Psalm 115-118 today, and just read and think of Jesus on His way to the Garden and to the cross, and watch how your heart is moved with love and sweetness.

Psalm 118 (NKJV) ¹ Oh, give thanks to the LORD, for He is good! For His mercy endures forever. ² Let Israel now say, "His mercy endures forever." ³ Let the house of Aaron now say, "His mercy endures forever." ⁴ Let those who fear the LORD now say, "His mercy endures forever." ⁵ I called on the LORD in distress; The LORD answered me and set me in a broad place. ⁶ The LORD is on my side; I will not fear. What can man do to me? ⁷ The LORD is for me among those who help me; Therefore I shall see my desire on those who hate me. ⁸ It is better to trust in the LORD Than to put confidence in man. ⁹ It is better to trust in the LORD Than to put confidence in princes. ¹⁰ All nations surrounded me, But in the name of the LORD I will destroy them. ¹¹ They surrounded me, Yes, they surrounded me; But in the name of the LORD I will destroy them. ¹² They surrounded me like bees; They were quenched like a fire of thorns; For in the name of the LORD I will destroy them. ¹³ You pushed me violently, that I might fall, But the LORD helped me. ¹⁴ The LORD is my strength and song, And He has become my salvation. ¹⁵ The voice of rejoicing and salvation is in the tents of the righteous; The right hand of the LORD does valiantly. ¹⁶ The right hand of the LORD is exalted; The right hand of the LORD does valiantly. ¹⁷ I shall not die, but live, And declare the works of the LORD. ¹⁸ The LORD has chastened me severely, But He has not given me over to death. ¹⁹ Open to me the gates of righteousness; I will go through them, And I will praise the LORD. ²⁰ This is the gate of the LORD, Through which the righteous shall enter. ²¹ I will praise You, For You have answered me, And have become my salvation. ²² The stone which the builders rejected Has become the chief cornerstone. ²³ This was the LORD's doing; It is marvelous in our eyes. ²⁴ This is the day the LORD has made; We will rejoice and be glad in it. ²⁵ Save now, I pray, O LORD; O LORD, I pray, send now prosperity. ²⁶ Blessed is he who comes in the name of the LORD! We have blessed you from the house of the LORD. ²⁷ God is the LORD, And He has given us light; Bind the sacrifice with cords to the horns of the altar. ²⁸ You are my God, and I will praise You; You are my God, I will exalt You. ²⁹ Oh, give thanks to the LORD, for He is good! For His mercy endures forever.

Place of Crushing

And now they are leaving that room that they celebrated this Last Supper and they're heading towards the Mount of Olives, which is known as the pressing place, the crushing place. And the reason it gets its name for that is because they would take olives and they crush them to produce olive oil. And we see the picture so fitting. The crushing of the body of Jesus to release the spirit that is pictured as oil in the scriptures for us.

Geography / Vantage Point

Jesus will be on the Mount of Olives and if he's at the peak of it he's at 777 meters in elevation. He will be able to look and see the temple and the temple mount before him. He'll be able to see where he'll be taken into the unlawful illegal trial. He'll see the Via Dolorosa from his vantage point, the path that he'll be walking carrying the cross. And he'll also have a vantage point above, slightly above the Mount Golgotha which is 777 meters. The mount of Mount of Olives at 826 meters. The Mount Golgotha will be north from where Jesus is at on the Mount of olives. And I find it significant the location of the two and the way this picture is before us as Jesus will be heading into the garden of Gethsemane to pray.

History Looking Back

Jesus would see from the historical past and especially when he looks at Golgotha.

- In Genesis 1-3, Jewish history and Jewish tradition says that Golgotha, which is also known as Mount Moriah, is the cradle of the world. They believe the rock is what God used to form the whole world around. That the rock, and that's what Mount Moriah is, it's literally a big rock, they say that is where God formed man. We don't know and no one knows but Jesus would know and it's somewhere in this area very close.
- In Genesis 14 this is where Melchizedek appeared to Abraham after he rescued lot from the five kings. And we know that Melchizedek as told in Hebrews was none other than Jesus Christ. We call it a Christophany Christ's literal manifestation presence on the earth. In what form we do not know but to Abraham it appeared to be in the form of a man not a spirit. This is where Jesus, God would give Abraham the promise to bless the whole nation. To the priesthood, before there was the Levitical priesthood there was the priesthood according to Melchizedek as he came and offered Abraham bread and wine as we just studied that in our last study. And Jesus has just broken that bread and that wine with his disciples in a perfect order and picture of the high priest Melchizedek, a priest forever we are told. And all of this makes sense as he says, "I am the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob." And that's the lineage of Israel and the Messiah. And all three, Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob saw Jesus Christ.
- In Genesis 22, as Jesus would be looking out over Mount Moriah we see the perfect picture when God spoke to Abraham to take his only son Isaac and to sacrifice him there on Mount Moriah, the exact spot where the cross would be 2000 years later. And in that story we know when Abraham lifted his knife the Lord said to stop and he did not sacrifice Isaac and Abraham knew that by faith. But the key word that was spoken was Abraham saying, "Not that God won't provide a lamb for the sacrifice but God would provide himself as the lamb for the sacrifice." All a fore picture, a foreshadow of this day that Jesus is looking and experience as he prays here on the Mount of Olives.

- Genesis 28, Jacob's ladder where Jacob wanted to run from Esau lays down and has a dream. And in the dream he sees God's angels ascending and descending into the heaven, a stairway into heaven we call it. And on top of the stairway was God himself. And Jacob would say, "This is none other than the house of God." And in that passage, it says that he renamed the place from Luz to Bethel. And so, we think that the city is where this happened. And so, when we go and we look Bethel is located just a short distance north of Mount Moriah. But a careful look at the Hebrew structure of the sentence plays to what the Jewish tradition says and that is that they believe that the place of Jacob's ladder, the rock, was Mount Moriah. And he said, "Surely the Lord is in this place." Speaking of where this happened. And then, he renamed the town that he went to and was next to.
- House of God/The Temple - And the reason they say that is because the temple that would be built by Solomon, the temple that would be rebuilt, and the one that Jesus is overlooking is called the house of God and it is on this mountainous slope called Mount Moriah. And here Jesus looks over all of those things. He's seen the historical past of his presence from the foundation of the world to the establishment of the old covenant.

Genesis 2:7 (NKJV) ⁷ And the LORD God formed man of the dust of the ground, and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life; and man became a living being.

Genesis 2:8–9 (NKJV) ⁸ The LORD God planted a garden eastward in Eden, and there He put the man whom He had formed. ⁹ And out of the ground the LORD God made every tree grow that is pleasant to the sight and good for food. The tree of life was also in the midst of the garden, and the tree of the knowledge of good and evil.

Genesis 14:18–20 (NKJV) ¹⁸ Then Melchizedek king of Salem brought out bread and wine; he was the priest of God Most High. ¹⁹ And he blessed him and said: "Blessed be Abram of God Most High, Possessor of heaven and earth; ²⁰ And blessed be God Most High, Who has delivered your enemies into your hand." And he gave him a tithe of all.

Genesis 22:9–14 (NKJV) ⁹ Then they came to the place of which God had told him. And Abraham built an altar there and placed the wood in order; and he bound Isaac his son and laid him on the altar, upon the wood. ¹⁰ And Abraham stretched out his hand and took the knife to slay his son. ¹¹ But the Angel of the LORD called to him from heaven and said, "Abraham, Abraham!" So he said, "Here I am." ¹² And He said, "Do not lay your hand on the lad, or do anything to him; for now I know that you fear God, since you have not withheld your son, your only son, from Me." ¹³ Then Abraham lifted his eyes and looked, and there behind him was a ram caught in a thicket by its horns. So Abraham went and took the ram, and offered it up for a burnt offering instead of his son. ¹⁴ And Abraham called the name of the place, The-LORD-Will-Provide; as it is said to this day, "In the Mount of the LORD it shall be provided."

Genesis 28:10–22 (NKJV) ¹⁰ Now Jacob went out from Beersheba and went toward Haran. ¹¹ So he came to a certain place and stayed there all night, because the sun had set. And he took one of the stones of that place and put it at his head, and he lay down in that place to sleep. ¹² Then he dreamed, and behold, a ladder was set up on the earth, and its top reached to heaven; and there the angels of God were ascending and descending on it. ¹³ And behold, the LORD stood above it and said: "I am the LORD God of Abraham your father and the God of Isaac; the land on which you lie I will give to you and your descendants. ¹⁴ Also your descendants shall be as the dust of the earth; you shall spread abroad to the west and the east, to the north and the south; and in you and in your seed all the families of the earth shall be blessed. ¹⁵ Behold, I am with you and will keep you wherever you go, and will bring you back to this land; for I will not leave you until I have done what I have spoken to you." ¹⁶ Then Jacob awoke from his sleep and said, "Surely the LORD is in this place, and I did not know it." ¹⁷ And he was afraid and said, "How awesome is this place! This is none other than the house of God, and this is the gate of heaven!" ¹⁸ Then Jacob rose early in the morning, and took the stone that he had put at his head, set it up as a pillar, and poured oil on top of it. ¹⁹ And he called the name of that place Bethel; but the name of that city had been Luz previously. ²⁰ Then Jacob made a vow, saying, "If God will be with me, and keep me in this way that I am going, and give me bread to eat and clothing to put on, ²¹ so that I come back to my father's house in peace, then the LORD shall be my God. ²² And this stone which I have set as a pillar shall be God's house, and of all that You give me I will surely give a tenth to You."

1 Kings 6:11–13 (NKJV) ¹¹ Then the word of the LORD came to Solomon, saying: ¹² "Concerning this temple which you are building, if you walk in My statutes, execute My judgments, keep all My commandments, and walk in them, then I will perform My word with you, which I spoke to your father David. ¹³ And I will dwell among the children of Israel, and will not forsake My people Israel."

Research Details

- **Luz – Bible Dictionary** - LUZ (almond tree). It seems impossible to discover with precision whether Luz and Bethel represent one and the same town—the former the Canaanite, the latter the Hebrew, name—or whether they were distinct places, though in close proximity. The most probable conclusion is that the two places were, during the times preceding the conquest, distinct, Luz being the city and Bethel the pillar and altar of Jacob; that after the destruction of Luz by the tribe of Ephraim the town of Bethel arose. When the original Luz was destroyed, through the treachery of one of its inhabitants, the man who had introduced the Israelites into the town went into the "land of the Hittites" and built a city, which he

named after the former one. Judges 1:26. Its situation, as well as that of the “land of the Hittites,” has never been discovered, and is one of the favorite puzzles of Scripture geographers

- *Smith, W. (1986). In *Smith’s Bible Dictionary*. Nashville: Thomas Nelson.

Dome of Rock / Devil Counterfeit

By the way, speaking of the rock, there is the so-called Dome of the Rock, the 3rd most religious site for the Islamic religion. Religion being the key word, man’s way to try to reach and link to God through his own efforts. So what we see here is a continual. Everything that God, Jesus does, the devil tries to replicate and imitate and counterfeit. When we speak of the Antichrist, people think complete opposite of Christ. And that’s not what the word means. The word actually means instead of Christ. So some think when the Antichrist comes, there’s this extreme opposite. God is love. The Antichrist will be angry and bitter and attacking, which he will show his true colors in the end, but that’s not how he will come. He continually, the devil, counterfeits, mirrors, imitate.

And the only way we as Christians can tell the difference between the two is through tapping into the spiritual realm. And that is through the word and prayer. The word will declare it, the word will reveal it to us. The word will also reveal what’s counterfeit and what’s a lie. And unfortunately for many people, they want to try to figure out what’s real and what’s counterfeit and all the likes by reading man’s wisdom, reading what man says, and they will always be deceived.

We have to come to what’s genuine. And that’s the word of God. And we need prayer as is we fellowship with the Lord and he reveals the truth of the scriptures to us. That’s why it says that the word of God is living and powerful and sharper than a two edged sword. He will to divide spirit and soul, joint and marrow. It’s the word of God that divides truth and lies. Real and counterfeit.

Hebrews 4:12 (NKJV) ¹² For the word of God is living and powerful, and sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing even to the division of soul and spirit, and of joints and marrow, and is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart.

The Future

And here he is looking out and seeing the whole historical path and past of Jerusalem, the apple of his eye. Because the place that he would make the new covenant shed for many. And so, Jesus is looking to the past but he also looks to the future as he looks to the Cross and what the cross will bring. Forgiveness of sin, and restoration, and redemption of fallen man. Not a lamb for the moment but a lamb that can wash away the sin of the world. Behold, as John would say, “The Lamb of God who would take away the sins of the world,” as Jesus will there before the sun goes back down. Before the sun goes down, He will say “It is Done”.

Mark 13:1–4 (NKJV) ¹ Then as He went out of the temple, one of His disciples said to Him, “Teacher, see what manner of stones and what buildings are here!” ² And Jesus answered and said to him, “Do you see these great buildings? Not *one* stone shall be left upon another, that shall not be thrown down.” ³ Now as He sat on the Mount of Olives opposite the temple, Peter, James, John, and Andrew asked Him privately, ⁴ “Tell us, when will these things be? And what *will be* the sign when all these things will be fulfilled?”

Hebrews 7:1–3 (NKJV) ¹ For this Melchizedek, king of Salem, priest of the Most High God, who met Abraham returning from the slaughter of the kings and blessed him, ² to whom also Abraham gave a tenth part of all, first being translated “king of righteousness,” and then also king of Salem, meaning “king of peace,” ³ without father, without mother, without genealogy, having neither beginning of days nor end of life, but made like the Son of God, remains a priest continually.

Hebrews 8:7–13 (NKJV) ⁷ For if that first *covenant* had been faultless, then no place would have been sought for a second. ⁸ Because finding fault with them, He says: “Behold, the days are coming, says the LORD, when I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel and with the house of Judah—⁹ not according to the covenant that I made with their fathers in the day when I took them by the hand to lead them out of the land of Egypt; because they did not continue in My covenant, and I disregarded them, says the LORD. ¹⁰ For this is the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel after those days, says the LORD: I will put My laws in their mind and write them on their hearts; and I will be their God, and they shall be My people. ¹¹ None of them shall teach his neighbor, and none his brother, saying, ‘Know the LORD,’ for all shall know Me, from the least of them to the greatest of them. ¹² For I will be merciful to their unrighteousness, and their sins and their lawless deeds I will remember no more.” ¹³ In that He says, “A new covenant,” He has made the first obsolete. Now what is becoming obsolete and growing old is ready to vanish away.

Hebrews 10:19–25 (NKJV) ¹⁹ Therefore, brethren, having boldness to enter the Holiest by the blood of Jesus, ²⁰ by a new and living way which He consecrated for us, through the veil, that is, His flesh, ²¹ and *having* a High Priest over the house of God, ²² let us draw near with a true heart in full assurance of faith, having our hearts sprinkled from an evil conscience and our bodies washed with pure water. ²³ Let us hold fast the confession of *our* hope without wavering, for He who promised *is* faithful. ²⁴ And let us consider one another in order to stir up love and good

works,²⁵ not forsaking the assembling of ourselves together, as *is* the manner of some, but exhorting *one another*, and so much the more as you see the Day approaching.

Mark 14:22–25 (NKJV) ²² And as they were eating, Jesus took bread, blessed and broke *it*, and gave *it* to them and said, “Take, eat; this is My body.” ²³ Then He took the cup, and when He had given thanks He gave *it* to them, and they all drank from it. ²⁴ And He said to them, “This is My blood of the new covenant, which is shed for many. ²⁵ Assuredly, I say to you, I will no longer drink of the fruit of the vine until that day when I drink it new in the kingdom of God.”

John 1:29 (NKJV) ²⁹ The next day John saw Jesus coming toward him, and said, “Behold! The Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world!

John 19:30 (NKJV) ³⁰ So when Jesus had received the sour wine, He said, “It is finished!” And bowing His head, He gave up His spirit.

Genesis 5 / Now Is the Time

For 4,000 years the end of man is death. In Genesis 5 the genealogy of Adam, every name (except Enoch who was taken up into heaven – a picture of the Church) ends in death:

Genesis 5:1–32 (NKJV) ¹ This is the book of the genealogy of Adam. In the day that God created man, He made him in the likeness of God. ² He created them male and female, and blessed them and called them Mankind in the day they were created. ³ And Adam lived one hundred and thirty years, and begot *a son* in his own likeness, after his image, and named him Seth. ⁴ After he begot Seth, the days of Adam were eight hundred years; and he had sons and daughters. ⁵ So all the days that Adam lived were nine hundred and thirty years; and he died. ⁶ Seth lived one hundred and five years, and begot Enosh. ⁷ After he begot Enosh, Seth lived eight hundred and seven years, and had sons and daughters. ⁸ So all the days of Seth were nine hundred and twelve years; and he died. ⁹ Enosh lived ninety years, and begot Cainan. ¹⁰ After he begot Cainan, Enosh lived eight hundred and fifteen years, and had sons and daughters. ¹¹ So all the days of Enosh were nine hundred and five years; and he died. ¹² Cainan lived seventy years, and begot Mahalalel. ¹³ After he begot Mahalalel, Cainan lived eight hundred and forty years, and had sons and daughters. ¹⁴ So all the days of Cainan were nine hundred and ten years; and he died. ¹⁵ Mahalalel lived sixty-five years, and begot Jared. ¹⁶ After he begot Jared, Mahalalel lived eight hundred and thirty years, and had sons and daughters. ¹⁷ So all the days of Mahalalel were eight hundred and ninety-five years; and he died. ¹⁸ Jared lived one hundred and sixty-two years, and begot Enoch. ¹⁹ After he begot Enoch, Jared lived eight hundred years, and had sons and daughters. ²⁰ So all the days of Jared were nine hundred and sixty-two years; and he died. ²¹ Enoch lived sixty-five years, and begot Methuselah. ²² After he begot Methuselah, Enoch walked with God three hundred years, and had sons and daughters. ²³ So all the days of Enoch were three hundred and sixty-five years. ²⁴ And Enoch walked with God; and he *was not*, for God took him. ²⁵ Methuselah lived one hundred and eighty-seven years, and begot Lamech. ²⁶ After he begot Lamech, Methuselah lived seven hundred and eighty-two years, and had sons and daughters. ²⁷ So all the days of Methuselah were nine hundred and sixty-nine years; and he died. ²⁸ Lamech lived one hundred and eighty-two years, and had a son. ²⁹ And he called his name Noah, saying, “This *one* will comfort us concerning our work and the toil of our hands, because of the ground which the LORD has cursed.” ³⁰ After he begot Noah, Lamech lived five hundred and ninety-five years, and had sons and daughters. ³¹ So all the days of Lamech were seven hundred and seventy-seven years; and he died. ³² And Noah was five hundred years old, and Noah begot Shem, Ham, and Japheth.

Genesis chapter 5 gives a genealogy of Adam. It is no coincidence each name has a meaning, and when you put the names together, it has a message for us. The Gospel is written in Genesis 5, and Jesus will now fulfill that His death with bring comfort and rest to the despairing:

Adam	--Man (is)
Seth	--Appointed
Enosh	--Mortal
Cainan	--Sorrow (but)
Mahalalel	--The Blessed God
Jared	--Shall come down
Enoch	--Teaching
Methuselah	--His death shall bring
Lamech	--The Despairing
Noah	--Comfort, Rest

For the Joy Set Before Him

For the joy that is set before Him, for it is “now” finally time..... to redeem man:

Hebrews 12:1–2 (NKJV) ¹ Therefore we also, since we are surrounded by so great a cloud of witnesses, let us lay aside every weight, and the sin which so easily ensnares us, and let us run with endurance the race that is set before us, ² looking unto Jesus, the author and finisher of *our* faith, who for the joy that was set before Him endured the cross, despising the shame, and has sat down at the right hand of the throne of God.

Jesus Sang

Verse 26, “when they had a sung a hymn” – Jesus sang on such a night, indeed.

For Our Prayer – Get a Vantage Point Above / Look Back – Look Ahead

And I see two things very significant that has high application for us in our prayer and that is there's a place where

- we have to get above the moment, get above the issue that is before us, get above that thing that is crushing, that is a problem.
- And secondly then is to put it into its perspective of what I call the panoramic view.

Jesus has the big picture as he's up here on the Mount of Olives. He can see all the picture before him, not just the one thing the cross only. He's seen all of these things that I just described. And like all of us when we look out over things and we ponder what do we do? We look backwards and we look forward. We look at what has happened in the past, what we call historic, and then we also can look to the future if we can bring ourselves to that. What does the future hold? And Jesus would be able to look back and see the whole history that brought him to this point. When I look back I can see God's faithfulness, I can see how He has been shaping, molding, leading and guiding every step of my life, and has been so faithful to me. I can see that this moment, this place in time I am at, that what God has done in the past is demonstration of what He will do today. That He will be glorified, in this time, this moment, and I trust Him enough to say..... Let Your will be done. And, I can look forward to the future, that Lord this moment, this place that I am at, and when I am through this, I can point people to this moment, and tell them, what great things you have done.

We can be in the middle of that moment, and have tunneled-vision, and thus I encourage us to have the panoramic view in our prayers..... giving God glory while in the midst of this trial, of how great He has been in the past, and giving God praise and thanks, of what He will do in the future.

Mark 14:27 Then Jesus said to them, "All of you will be made to stumble because of Me this night, for it is written: 'I will strike the Shepherd, And the sheep will be scattered.'

Mark 14:28 "But after I have been raised, I will go before you to Galilee."

A Conversation Ensues

Jesus took His disciples after they'd celebrated Passover, sang a hymn, and exited the upper room; as they walked out into the night, a conversation ensued...

Death – Always Context of Resurrection

Verse 28, as always when Jesus speaks of his death he always speaks of his resurrection. He never speaks of death apart from the resurrection and we should do the same Christian.

- And when we talk to people and share the Gospel, when we talk of the death always include the resurrection for that's the power of the Gospel. When we talk as someone passing and dying, one of our brothers or sisters in the Lord always talk about the resurrection and the glory that follows. When we talk to somebody of the details of the Gospel we error when we just say, "Man dies because many people just take that to mean I die and when I'm dead it's over. And so, live now for all I can and then when I die into the dust and ground I go." We need to tell him there is a resurrection of the dead.
 - And I know it's scary, we're afraid of confrontations. We should be more excited about the potential. Somebody can be set free and have new life today. And you know what? I just find it easier to tell people, "I'm a follower of Jesus Christ. And if I truly believe what I believe I need to tell you and share that with you." And so, start off with that or work that in when you talk. Just tell them, "If I believe what I believe it's up to me to tell you. How could I not tell you if I truly believe this gospel."
 - And here I am right now as I minister the gospel of Jesus Christ to ask anyone the question if you were to die tonight would you be sure that you would go to heaven? Based on what? Has Jesus Christ taken your sin and put it away that you cannot be judged by it? The good news, your sin separates you from a holy God but God provided a way. He's made a bridge over that sin to put that sin under the bridge and that bridge is his only begotten son Jesus Christ. And you can take that bridge, clean and forgiven, clothed in a white robe, and come before him perfect and spotless just like the Son. But it's a choice, it's a decision, it's a trade. You trade your sin with Jesus, and Jesus takes your sin to the cross for the punishment, and you get to become a son or

daughter, and you get to come into God's presence. But like that bridge, and there's only one bridge and there's only one way. And when you cross that bridge there's a direction that you do follow and it's a continual following after the Lord. It's not a statement that you make. It's a life that is changed.

- Now for you who are believers, spiritually when we die to ourselves we should always have that in the picture of that there's a resurrection to follow. We should have the panoramic view of what it is when we die to ourselves and we look and we see that the power of the resurrection that comes through death, death always precedes the resurrection. There is going to be what's called the white throne judgment (Revelation 20) and every man will be judged on one thing, what has he done with Jesus Christ? We have already, who have received Christ, made that declaration. We skip the white throne judgment, our judgment as saints is called the bema seat judgement (2 Cor 5) and it's where we will receive our rewards for how we ministered and served the Lord. And so, there's a strong word there for anyone who says, "I have received Christ, that's enough." There's a place in heaven called the bema seat where he acknowledges what we did for the kingdom and his sake. And there's a reward that comes.

2 Corinthians 5:9–11 (NKJV) ⁹ Therefore we make it our aim, whether present or absent, to be well pleasing to Him. ¹⁰ For we must all appear before the judgment (bema) seat of Christ, that each one may receive the things *done* in the body, according to what he has done, whether good or bad. ¹¹ Knowing, therefore, the terror of the Lord, we persuade men; but we are well known to God, and I also trust are well known in your consciences.

Revelation 20:11–15 (NKJV) ¹¹ Then I saw a great white throne and Him who sat on it, from whose face the earth and the heaven fled away. And there was found no place for them. ¹² And I saw the dead, small and great, standing before God, and books were opened. And another book was opened, which is *the Book of Life*. And the dead were judged according to their works, by the things which were written in the books. ¹³ The sea gave up the dead who were in it, and Death and Hades delivered up the dead who were in them. And they were judged, each one according to his works. ¹⁴ Then Death and Hades were cast into the lake of fire. This is the second death. ¹⁵ And anyone not found written in the *Book of Life* was cast into the lake of fire.

There is a Future after Failure

So Jesus says, "After you have failed, after my resurrection, I will come to you." And there's a beautiful picture here in that there's a future after our failures. And so, many times we think the failure is the end. Our future has ended. We now just have a meager spiritual existence and yet God speaks it and declares it so clearly here to us even after a failure. And if the greatest failure, look at what these men would do, they would flee their Lord in this greatest moment there upon the cross and not a man would be found. And yet Jesus would say, "After failure, yes even great failures, there is a future."

We Must Learn how to Deal with Failure

And Christian understand this. This is important for your understanding today. We have to learn how to handle failure. People come with their stained-glass masquerade like everything is fine because that's the face that we put on continually like everything is fine. We have no problems, we have no failures, and because of that then we don't face our problems and we don't speak of our problems, we don't seek help to deal with our problems. We don't bear our problems with other people because we think we're the only ones with problems. And then, when our problems become failures, not only do we not share them we go into hiding and we go into separation. We go into some type of protection mode. We don't want anyone to know that we failed, that we're failures. And a key to the Christian life is learning how to deal with failures. And the key to dealing with failures is to see that there's a future after the failure.

Peter will Strengthen the Brethren

In this story of Peter Jesus will say, "After you failed, after I restore you, you shall and you will strengthen the brethren." Peter's failure will be used to strengthen the failure of other brothers and sisters and therefore Peter had a future even after a failure. And if you have had a failure use it then to strengthen your brethren, come alongside of him and say, "I understand. I have been there. I know where you're at. Let me tell you, there is a future after the failure."

Luke 22:31–34 (NKJV) ³¹ And the Lord said, "Simon, Simon! Indeed, Satan has asked for you, that he may sift *you* as wheat. ³² But I have prayed for you, that your faith should not fail; and when you have returned to *Me*, strengthen your brethren." ³³ But he said to Him, "Lord, I am ready to go with You, both to prison and to death." ³⁴ Then He said, "I tell you, Peter, the rooster shall not crow this day before you will deny three times that you know *Me*."

Mark 14:29 Peter said to Him, "Even if all are made to stumble, yet I will not be."

No Self-determination / Must be Supernatural

No amount of passion, no amount of self-will, no amount of self-determination, and no amount of natural ability can keep us and make us faithful in our walk with the Lord. It takes a supernatural work of the Holy Spirit that comes after the resurrection when the spirit was given. The day of Pentecost, when the spirit of God takes up residence within a man, a woman. And the spirit of God supplies and gives the ability to live the victorious Christian life and no self-willed self-determination can do that. It takes the work of the Holy Spirit.

And so, for you today maybe that's all you've been continuing to do is work in your natural ability trying to keep the rules, trying to please the Lord, trying to keep the faith. There is a place where you just have to get alone with the Lord and say, "Give me a supply Lord. Baptize me. The word means to immerse me in your Holy Spirit. So that I might live the faithful walk that you've called me to do." And we'll find that it won't be by works, it will be by the work of the spirit and it's so much easier, so much more relaxing, so much more enjoyable to walk in the spirit than to walk in our flesh. Have you asked the Lord for that baptism of the Holy Spirit? Have you waited for the baptism of the Holy Spirit? You may feel something, you may not, but you simply ask to receive and he will give as a good father does.

Zechariah 4:6 (NKJV) ⁶ So he answered and said to me: "This is the word of the LORD to Zerubbabel: 'Not by might nor by power, but by My Spirit,' Says the LORD of hosts.

Acts 1:8 (NKJV) ⁸ But you shall receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you; and you shall be witnesses to Me in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the end of the earth."

How Quickly we Change

Verse 29, it's amazing how quickly we can change. Peter, just a short while ago, he questioned if he had it in him to betray Jesus. He actually thought, "It's possible that I can betray him. Is it I along with all of the other disciples." But here he is in a moment later saying, "No far be it, never be me." Somehow he goes from no assurance to total assurance, so full of confidence that it could never be him. And boy Peter do I know you well. I see you every time I stand before the mirror.

Mark 14:30 Jesus said to him, "Assuredly, I say to you that today, even this night, before the rooster crows twice, you will deny Me three times."

Mark 14:31 But he spoke more vehemently, "If I have to die with You, I will not deny You!" And they all said likewise.

Peter's Pride

Peter's problem was pride and self-assurance. Notice Peter's boast, "Even if all are made to stumble, yet I will not be." He's compares himself with the other disciples. Peter was proud and cocky... and what did Jesus promise a cocky Peter... Before the cock (or rooster) crows twice, Peter will deny Jesus three times. Beware of spiritual pride - putting your confidence in the flesh - of believing in yourself and your abilities. My faith is not in my ability to stand, but in God's ability to prop me up. At crunch time - in essence, when the rooster crows, we all tend to act chicken.

Jesus said, "I am the way, the truth, and the life." But Peter, like us, we can think our way is the way, our truth is the truth, and the way we live this life and I praise God for rescuing me from my way. It was so misdirected from my truth. It was so wrong. Most of it would fall under the lie of the devil. And my life, I thank him because it was empty, and shallow, and prideful.

Psalm 46:10 says, "Be still." Do you know what Christian there is a place. Just be still. It means make a great calm and wait upon the Lord. Because you know what? If you're not still you'll find yourself making great claims such as Peter. You'll find yourself chopping an ear off as you wield and let it fly. Like Peter you'll find yourself anathema I'll never know. I never knew you. We'll find ourselves failing the Lord because so full of our own confidence. There's a place Christian, just be still and know that I am God.

There's a time to quit talking, to quit moving, to quit planning, and just be still, to be quiet for but a moment. And watch in your life when you do how peace, and clarity, and rest falls upon you.

Psalm 46:10 (NKJV) ¹⁰ Be still, and know that I am God; I will be exalted among the nations, I will be exalted in the earth!

Psalm 46:10, the word still, to let go, to be alone, to be idle, to cease, to relax, to withdrawal, to let drop, to leave alone. And it's a word that has a derivative of it that is in the word "healed". This is the word we use often called Rapha. We call him Jehovah Rapha, the Lord God who heals. That's from Exodus 15:26. Psalm 147 verse three says, "He heals the broken heart and binds up wounds." And that's what happens when we're still. He can heal us and he can bind up our wounds. And that word it says know, it means to understand and to be made known. This is what the Lord says when there is a time when you're just still, it's when you'll come to know me.

I have Never Heard God Speak – have You Stopped to Listen

God is always wanting to speak to us, just as I always want to be speaking to my wife just as I always want to be speaking to my sons, just as I always want to be speaking and sharing with you, God wants to speak to us. And oftentimes people will say, "I've never heard God speak to me." And I think my first thing that I always ask is, "Have you slowed down enough to hear him? Have you come to a place to be still and simply wait on him?" For you see we have so much busy-ness and stimuli going on around us and it's hard to hear.

Psalm 46:10 (NKJV) ¹⁰ Be still, and know that I am God; I will be exalted among the nations, I will be exalted in the earth!

The Still Small Voice / 1 Kings 19 / When I Whisper – You have to be Still to Hear Me

I remember in First Kings 19 the great wind, and the shaking of the earth, then a great fire, and in all of them God's voice wasn't in any of those. He was in the still small voice. The context is Elijah is on the run, Jezebel has put a hit on his life for killing the 850 (450 Baal and 400 Asherah) prophets of the false god Baal and Asherah. When God meets him, Elijah tells him about all the work and zeal he has been doing for the Lord (all alone he thinks). And I think sometimes we expect God to speak through all this noise and yes sometimes he does but most of the time he does not. We think God's going to speak and the earth is going to shake and to move and sometimes he does but most of the time not. He simply speaks in a still small voice. And if you're going to hear me as right now as I whisper to you, you have to stop moving you have to stop flipping your papers, squeezing your water bottles, unwrapping your breakfast bars, all of those things, and then you have to lean forward and listen. If I was to start whispering right now, if you were to hear my voice, and that is very much a place for us as the example for us to hear the voice of God.

1 Kings 19:11–12 (NKJV) ¹¹ Then He said, "Go out, and stand on the mountain before the LORD." And behold, the LORD passed by, and a great and strong wind tore into the mountains and broke the rocks in pieces before the LORD, *but* the LORD *was* not in the wind; and after the wind an earthquake, *but* the LORD *was* not in the earthquake; ¹² and after the earthquake a fire, *but* the LORD *was* not in the fire; and after the fire a still small voice.

1 Kings 19:1–10 (NKJV) ¹ And Ahab told Jezebel all that Elijah had done, also how he had executed all the prophets with the sword. ² Then Jezebel sent a messenger to Elijah, saying, "So let the gods do *to me*, and more also, if I do not make your life as the life of one of them by tomorrow about this time." ³ And when he saw *that*, he arose and ran for his life, and went to Beersheba, which *belongs* to Judah, and left his servant there. ⁴ But he himself went a day's journey into the wilderness, and came and sat down under a broom tree. And he prayed that he might die, and said, "It is enough! Now, LORD, take my life, for I *am* no better than my fathers!" ⁵ Then as he lay and slept under a broom tree, suddenly an angel touched him, and said to him, "Arise *and* eat." ⁶ Then he looked, and there by his head *was* a cake baked on coals, and a jar of water. So he ate and drank, and lay down again. ⁷ And the angel of the LORD came back the second time, and touched him, and said, "Arise *and* eat, because the journey *is* too great for you." ⁸ So he arose, and ate and drank; and he went in the strength of that food forty days and forty nights as far as Horeb, the mountain of God. ⁹ And there he went into a cave, and spent the night in that place; and behold, the word of the LORD *came* to him, and He said to him, "What are you doing here, Elijah?" ¹⁰ So he said, "I have been very zealous for the LORD God of hosts; for the children of Israel have forsaken Your covenant, torn down Your altars, and killed Your prophets with the sword. I alone am left; and they seek to take my life."

1 Kings 19:11–18 (NKJV) ¹¹ Then He said, "Go out, and stand on the mountain before the LORD." And behold, the LORD passed by, and a great and strong wind tore into the mountains and broke the rocks in pieces before the LORD, *but* the LORD *was* not in the wind; and after the wind an earthquake, *but* the LORD *was* not in the earthquake; ¹² and after the earthquake a fire, *but* the LORD *was* not in the fire; and after the fire a still small voice. ¹³ So it was, when Elijah heard *it*, that he wrapped his face in his mantle and went out and stood in the entrance of the cave. Suddenly a voice *came* to him, and said, "What are you doing here, Elijah?" ¹⁴ And he said, "I have been very zealous for the LORD God of hosts; because the children of Israel have forsaken Your covenant, torn down Your altars, and killed Your prophets with the sword. I alone am left; and they seek to take my life." ¹⁵ Then the LORD said to him: "Go, return on your way to the Wilderness of Damascus; and when you arrive, anoint Hazael *as* king over Syria. ¹⁶ Also you shall anoint Jehu the son of Nimshi *as* king over Israel. And Elisha the son of Shaphat of Abel Meholah you

shall anoint *as* prophet in your place. ¹⁷ It shall be *that* whoever escapes the sword of Hazeal, Jehu will kill; and whoever escapes the sword of Jehu, Elisha will kill. ¹⁸ Yet I have reserved seven thousand in Israel, all whose knees have not bowed to Baal, and every mouth that has not kissed him."

He Spoke Vehemently

He spoke more vehemently. The verb is imperfect, "He kept on speaking." The word "vehemently" is ekperissōs (ἐκπερισσως), "abundantly in matter and manner, with vehemence and iteration."

- Wuest, K. S. (1997). *Wuest's word studies from the Greek New Testament: for the English reader* (Vol. 1, p. 263). Grand Rapids: Eerdmans.

They All Spoke It / But God Knows Our Heart / Lord Search Me

Verse 31, they all said never. Peter is the one who gets the fame for saying it but they all said it too. They truly didn't know themselves. They truly didn't know that at the core of themselves who they really were and capable of, and capable what not of. But these verses are huge for all of us for it shows and declares God knows, God knows us totally, every detail of us, and there is a peace and a power especially in your prayer life when you just come and say, "Lord, you know me. I'm just going to be open and honest with you. What can I possibly hide from you? You know everything about me."

These disciples, they did good when they said, "Is it I?" But only a moment later it says, "Not I." There's a place for all of us. Psalm 139 verse 37, "Search me, and try me, and know me God."

Psalm 139:23–24 (NKJV) ²³ Search me, O God, and know my heart; Try me, and know my anxieties; ²⁴ And see if *there is any* wicked way in me, And lead me in the way everlasting.

Notice Difference Between Responses Before Crucifixion and After the Resurrection

But I want you to notice Peter's responses before the resurrection. Look at these verses. It's all an I, an I, and a I, and there's no quoting of the word of God. Notice Jesus's response when he's in his trial. It's always with the word, with the word, with the word, it was pointing to Jesus, not himself.. Peter responds with the Word, not emotions. And now notice Peter's response after the resurrection. Look at him on the day of Pentecost, look at him. The word, the word, the word, everything is based on the word. What a difference it makes when we take every action and go, "Here's what the word says. Here's what the word says about me. Here's what the word says that I'm to do. Here's what the word says I'm not to do. And here's what the word I give to a person. My word is not going to change anyone but when I speak the word of God there's a power behind it because it's living and it's powerful." Speak the word to people. That's why we need to stay in the word daily.

Acts 1:15–17 (NKJV) ¹⁵ And in those days Peter stood up in the midst of the disciples (altogether the number of names was about a hundred and twenty), and said, ¹⁶ "Men *and* brethren, this Scripture had to be fulfilled, which the Holy Spirit spoke before by the mouth of David concerning Judas, who became a guide to those who arrested Jesus; ¹⁷ for he was numbered with us and obtained a part in this ministry."

Acts 2:14–17 (NKJV) ¹⁴ But Peter, standing up with the eleven, raised his voice and said to them, "Men of Judea and all who dwell in Jerusalem, let this be known to you, and heed my words. ¹⁵ For these are not drunk, as you suppose, since it is *only* the third hour of the day. ¹⁶ But this is what was spoken by the prophet Joel: ¹⁷ 'And it shall come to pass in the last days, says God, That I will pour out of My Spirit on all flesh; Your sons and your daughters shall prophesy, Your young men shall see visions, Your old men shall dream dreams.

Acts 3:4–7 (NKJV) ⁴ And fixing his eyes on him, with John, Peter said, "Look at us." ⁵ So he gave them his attention, expecting to receive something from them. ⁶ Then Peter said, "Silver and gold I do not have, but what I do have I give you: In the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth, rise up and walk." ⁷ And he took him by the right hand and lifted *him* up, and immediately his feet and ankle bones received strength.

Acts 3:11–13 (NKJV) ¹¹ Now as the lame man who was healed held on to Peter and John, all the people ran together to them in the porch which is called Solomon's, greatly amazed. ¹² So when Peter saw *it*, he responded to the people: "Men of Israel, why do you marvel at this? Or why look so intently at us, as though by our own power or godliness we had made this man walk? ¹³ The God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, the God of our fathers, glorified His Servant Jesus, whom you delivered up and denied in the presence of Pilate, when he was determined to let *Him* go.

Strike the Shepherd – Only Worked for 3 Days

After three and a half years of walking with him, all they had been through, imagine what these words sounded like, "That you're all going to stumble." Verse 27 says all, not just some. Verse 27, "Strike the shepherd." Now that plan of the devil thinking, "I'll strike the shepherd then the sheep will scatter." He probably thinks total victory but boy that plan really backfired on the devil now didn't it? It worked of all three days and now look what it did. The sheep will regather after the resurrection and believe the power of the resurrection and they will turn the world upside down. There is a future after failure!

Acts 17:6 (NKJV) ⁶ But when they did not find them, they dragged Jason and some brethren to the rulers of the city, crying out, "These who have turned the world upside down have come here too."

Walk with God

As we looked at Genesis 5, I want to close with a word about that, as a point to turning the world, at least our homes, our neighborhood, our church, our lives, upside-down. There have been great building projects in the world and the Bible, the Temple was considered one of the greatest wonders of the world, people would travel from far lands to see it, to see its magnificence. We are told it was built in just 7 years, and the expansion of it in the times of King Herod was 46 years, but still there was a greater building project seen in the Bible, and that was the building of the ark by Noah, 120 years. One man, and three sons, hired labor who knows, build the greatest building project in the history of the world. And here is the key to how it was done, and same for you and I on whatever the Lord has called us to do, whether physically or spiritually. First Noah found grace in the sight of God, then Noah walked with God (Genesis 6:9), then God told him how build it (Gen 6:15). So often, and too often, we try to work, then walk, and things become laborious and tiring and frustration, whereas if we first just stopped to walk, to wait upon the Lord, to rest in the Lord, to be healed by the Lord, to be still before the Lord, that thing, those things before us (whether job employment, ministry, marriage, childrearing, personal spiritual growth), will come together, will come to fruition and fruitfulness, if we will first walk with the Lord, the work with the Lord.

1 Kings 6:37–38 (NKJV) ³⁷ In the fourth year the foundation of the house of the LORD was laid, in the month of Ziv. ³⁸ And in the eleventh year, in the month of Bul, which is the eighth month, the house was finished in all its details and according to all its plans. So he was seven years in building it.

John 2:19–22 (NKJV) ¹⁹ Jesus answered and said to them, "Destroy this temple, and in three days I will raise it up." ²⁰ Then the Jews said, "It has taken forty-six years to build this temple, and will You raise it up in three days?" ²¹ But He was speaking of the temple of His body. ²² Therefore, when He had risen from the dead, His disciples remembered that He had said this to them; and they believed the Scripture and the word which Jesus had said.

Genesis 6:7–8 (NKJV) ⁷ So the LORD said, "I will destroy man whom I have created from the face of the earth, both man and beast, creeping thing and birds of the air, for I am sorry that I have made them." ⁸ But Noah found grace in the eyes of the LORD.

Genesis 6:9 (NKJV) ⁹ This is the genealogy of Noah. Noah was a just man, perfect in his generations. Noah walked with God.

Genesis 6:14–15 (NKJV) ¹⁴ Make yourself an ark of gopherwood; make rooms in the ark, and cover it inside and outside with pitch. ¹⁵ And this is how you shall make it: The length of the ark *shall be* three hundred cubits, its width fifty cubits, and its height thirty cubits.

Genesis 6:22 (NKJV) ²² Thus Noah did; according to all that God commanded him, so he did.

Beloved, walk with God, and He will tell you how to make it.

But first, like Noah, and like Peter, we need to live and fully rest in this one thing first, the grace of God.

You can't work for God in any type of success or rest, unless and until, you are working for Him by and in His grace. How by walking with Him.

Christian today, "Be Still and Know He is God"

Psalms 46:10 (NKJV) ¹⁰ Be still, and know that I am God; I will be exalted among the nations, I will be exalted in the earth!

Closing Prayer

God Says Come

Today we come and are gifted this Word from God Himself, His very heart opened before us, the calling to come near, be drawn to Him.

Matthew 11:28 (NKJV) ²⁸ Come to Me, all you who labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest.

The Word of God is Living and Powerful, and is ready, and will do a mighty work in our lives.

Hebrews 4:12 (NKJV) ¹² For the word of God is living and powerful, and sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing even to the division of soul and spirit, and of joints and marrow, and is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart.

In Every Study

- Who Is God? (How Great is He?)
- What Does He Think of Me? (How Wonderful Are His Thoughts Towards Me?)
- What Does He Want Me to Do?
- What Can I Boldly Request of Him?
- What Do I Need to Be on Guard of When I Leave Here Today?

Boldly come to the throne of grace, ask God to reveal Himself in a mighty way to you, and to do I might work in you, and through you.

Hebrews 4:16 (NKJV) ¹⁶ Let us therefore come boldly to the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy and find grace to help in time of need.

End of Study

Mark 14:32-42

Well, I sat there yesterday, looking at that passage before us, and said myself, and the Lord, can I really teach this. Part of me felt like trying to explain the anguish of the cross, is actually easier than trying to explain the anguish of the garden. Part of me said who is worthy to teach such a passage, to which the answer is always the same, whether this passage or any other, only the Holy Spirit, for He has preserved just such a passage so That we might know.....

- Who Is God? (How Great is He?)
- What Does He Think of Me? (How Wonderful Are His Thoughts Towards Me?)
- What Does He Want Me to Do?
- What Can I Boldly Request of Him?
- What Do I Need to Be on Guard of When I Leave Here Today?

Oh the depth we will go in the passage before us.....

Today's Passage

Mark 14:32-42 (NKJV) ³² Then they came to a place which was named Gethsemane; and He said to His disciples, "Sit here while I pray." ³³ And He took Peter, James, and John with Him, and He began to be troubled and deeply distressed. ³⁴ Then He said to them, "My soul is exceedingly sorrowful, even to death. Stay here and watch." ³⁵ He went a little farther, and fell on the ground, and prayed that if it were possible, the hour might pass from Him. ³⁶ And He said, "Abba, Father, all things are possible for You. Take this cup away from Me; nevertheless, not what I will, but what You will." ³⁷ Then He came and found them sleeping, and said to Peter, "Simon, are you sleeping? Could you not watch one hour?" ³⁸ Watch and pray, lest you enter into temptation. The spirit indeed is willing, but the flesh is weak." ³⁹ Again He went away and prayed, and spoke the same words. ⁴⁰ And when He returned, He found them asleep again, for their eyes were heavy; and they did not know what to answer Him. ⁴¹ Then He came the third time and said to them, "Are you still sleeping and resting? It is enough! The hour has come; behold, the Son of Man is being betrayed into the hands of sinners. ⁴² Rise, let us be going. See, My betrayer is at hand."

Introduction

It is the Day of the crucifixion, it is somewhere around midnight (give or take a few hours before or a few hours after), in just a few short hours Jesus will be betrayed into the hands of the enemy, and by 9am He will be nailed to the cross, and then 6 hours later at twilight He will breath His last, and say..... It is Done.

Jesus and 11 of the 12 (Judas has left to do his evil deed) have left the Passover Meal, and are arriving at the Garden of Gethsemane. Let pick up there in verse 32.

God Says Come

Today we come and are gifted this Word from God Himself, His very heart opened before us, the calling to come near, be drawn to Him.

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In Every Study

- Who Is God? (How Great is He?)
- What Does He Think of Me? (How Wonderful Are His Thoughts Towards Me?)
- What Does He Want Me to Do?
- What Can I Boldly Request of Him?
- What Do I Need to Be on Guard of When I Leave Here Today?

Boldly come to the throne of grace, ask God to reveal Himself in a mighty way to you, and to do I might work in you, and through you.

Hebrews 4:16 (NKJV) ¹⁶ *Let us therefore come boldly to the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy and find grace to help in time of need.*

Jesus Prays in the Garden of Gethsemane (14:32-42)

Mark 14:32 Then they came to a place which was named Gethsemane; and He said to His disciples, "Sit here while I pray."

Mark 14:33 And He took Peter, James, and John with Him, and He began to be troubled and deeply distressed.

Mount Olives

It's called the Mount of Olives because it was filled with olive trees and where all the trees were is where the olive tree press would be to crush the olives and to make this olive oil and hence why it's called the place of crushing.

Just be with Me

Facing spiritual and physical suffering more intense than anything we can imagine, Jesus went to the garden to pray—and asked Peter, James, and John to accompany Him. He didn't ask them to pray with Him—simply to be with Him. I find it interesting that during the most intense time of His whole life, Jesus would want human companionship. There is no shortage of people who will say, "Lord, I'll work for You." But I wonder how many say, "Lord, I'm taking some time just to be with You."

- *Courson, J. (2003). Jon Courson's Application Commentary (p. 281). Nashville, TN: Thomas Nelson.*

He Takes the 3

Now the question is often asked why these three? Jesus takes these three as an inner circle they have become to be known as. Some people them in as Jesus' favorite, which I don't ascribe to. I believe that Jesus had these three, as they would become the pillars and foundation of the church in leadership we will see, but pillars and foundations in the church in "teaching", as Peter and John would write powerful portions of the New Testament.

Now one thing the disciples had asked of Jesus, because they saw that Jesus' power source, was through prayer with the Father, and of all the things they asked Jesus to teach them, they asked Him to teach them how to pray. They didn't ask Him to teach them how to organize so they can have a church structure, they didn't ask how to get people to come to the meetings, or how to raise money, or how to do miracles, or heal, or walk on water..... only one place we find where they said Lord teach us, and that was Lord teach us to pray. For they saw that everything else, came out of Jesus' prayer connection with the Father. So I believe Jesus took these three, so it could be observed, then recorded (someone passed this account on to the Gospel writers, right?), so we could learn how to pray. We see Jesus praying, we learn in this prayer, real life how to pray, as we watch Jesus pray, and that was prayer in not just a, but "the", extreme pressing situation. This passage is a passage on who God is and what does He think of us, as we see the depth and anguish He would go for us; but it is also, what does He want us to do, what and how can we boldly ask Him, and what do we need to be on guard about. He teaches us in this passage, how to pray.

Luke 11:1-4 (NKJV) ¹ *Now it came to pass, as He was praying in a certain place, when He ceased, that one of His disciples said to Him, "Lord, teach us to pray, as John also taught his disciples."* ² *So He said to them, "When you pray, say: Our Father in heaven, Hallowed be Your name. Your kingdom come. Your will be done On earth as it is in heaven."* ³ *Give us day by day our daily bread.* ⁴ *And forgive us our sins, For we also forgive everyone who is indebted to us. And do not lead us into temptation, But deliver us from the evil one."*

P-R-A-Y

Here's a little acronym for "pray" for us today and the P is priority. When we think of the word prayer, when we think of the activity prayer, we need to think of it as an activity.

- **Priority** - Prayer is the place that we come to seek first the Kingdom of God and his righteousness, and then all of these things will be added unto us. Prayer, when it's made a priority, becomes a priority and there will be power in making it a priority.
- **Routine** - And the R is for routine and see that I didn't say the word ritual. There's no power in a ritual, but there's power in the routine when we make it inseparable with the priority. Every day, I'm going to have this time of prayer with the Father, and it's part of my daily routine. If I can prioritize that I have to go to work every day because that's how I make my living or I have to go to school every day because that's how I get my education, we have to make prayer part of our routine because that's where the power is, and that's where the connection is.

- Everything Jesus did we see through his life, the miracles and the miraculous working were all through his connection with the Father in prayer, and it's interesting to me that he would say to Peter, "Couldn't you pray just one hour?" And if you consider that, just one hour, the greatest event in the history of mankind is about to happen on this day, and Jesus suddenly said, "Couldn't you pray for just one hour?" He didn't say, "Hey, we need to get six days of prayer in for what's coming up here upon the cross."
- How long Jesus prayed, I'm not sure if it was one hour or all night, until the betrayal, which would make it a couple hours, but what's clear to me is it wasn't days, at most a few hours, several hours at the max. And you know why, even though the greatest event in the history of mankind is about to happen, and Jesus is praying about God's will to be done, and his role in the will of God? See, Jesus didn't need six days set apart because he had, as he said, that he does, and as he encouraged us to do, without much prayer and fasting, kinds like these will not come out.
- Jesus lived a life of prayer and fasting, and when it came down to his crushing time, his prayer life was part of his routine. It was his priority in life, and he didn't need days upon days to sort through his flesh and days upon days to try to connect through all the pieces. He had lived daily in the presence of his Father through prayer that when it came time for this pressing, this crushing place of decision, he was so connected with the Father it literally, even with drops of blood sweating from his brow, it became something that he heard from the Father in quick manner and it's because of his priority of prayer and the routine of prayer, thus the continual connection to the Father.
- Attitude - And A goes right along with that, attitude. Prayer has to be an attitude, folks, an attitude of gratitude. That's a nice rhyme. An attitude that there's power in prayer, an attitude that we put in our mind and that's what attitude means, to settle, that we settle in our mind that prayer does matter, that prayer has a power, that prayer has a purpose and that prayer does change things. It changes us. It brings us in harmony with the Lord, and thus we need to have an attitude of prayer that it matters, and when we have that attitude, we will see how the priority becomes forefront and the routine becomes something that's embedded in our life.
 - Here is one for me, maybe you too, have you ever prayed for the lost with an attitude in your prayer, that salvation is on the line? Do I pray with an attitude for them, lost and perish, like my prayers matter. The disciples said, Lord teach us to pray, and here He is teaching them to pray not from a classroom setting, but a setting where life and death are on the line.
- Yourself - And lastly, the Y stands for yourself. I see a lot of new young people here today, as you moved up from the children's church into the adult church, prayer for you and for all is for yourself. It can't be someone else's. It's not for the church to be praying for your prayer needs. It's not for your parents to be praying for your prayer needs. It's now for yourself. This is something now between you and the Lord. You'll have glorious times where the church comes alongside you and prays, your parents comes alongside you and prays, but daily for routine, the priority is for yourself, and after you walk it out and live it out and start seeing that connection with the Father, how you hear his voice so intimately, you start seeing the power that comes with it in your life to overcome sin, to hear the heart of God and respond in your ministry, to have God come alongside you and aid you in that work that you're doing for him. When you see what prayer is for yourself, it will become priority, continual routine that is unmovable because you'll have an attitude of the power of it.

Oh Lord, teach us to pray. Lord, teach all of us to pray.

Mark 14:34 Then He said to them, "My soul is exceedingly sorrowful, even to death. Stay here and watch."

Mark 14:35 He went a little farther, and fell on the ground, and prayed that if it were possible, the hour might pass from Him.

Distressed/Heavy – Feel Away from Home

The word distressed (heavy is word used in OKJV) back in verse 33, means to feel away from home. Here, we see the beginning of Jesus, and what's heavy upon his heart is being separated from the father.

"To be heavy" is adēmoneo (ἀδημονεο), from a word adēmon (ἀδημον), which means "uncomfortable," as one not at home. It speaks of an experience of which one is not familiar, in which one does not feel at home, that is, at rest, and which distresses him

- Wuest, K. S. (1997). Wuest's word studies from the Greek New Testament: for the English reader (Vol. 1, p. 264). Grand Rapids: Eerdmans.

Exceedingly Sorrowful – Hemmed In

The word there, exceedingly sorrowful, means to be hemmed in. Jesus is saying, "I'm totally hemmed in by sorrow, even so heavy is my sorrow, the pain of this, that I feel as if my heart is going to stop and I could die." Oh, the taxing upon Jesus' heart in this prayer. Yet, he still continued on, even knowing everything about me, all that I would be guilty of, even all of my shame, even after I'm saved. Yet, he keeps following, he keeps praying.

"Exceedingly sorrowful" is perilupos (περιλυπος), lupos (λυπος) meaning "grief," and peri (περι), "around," thus, "encompassed with grief," thus, "very sad." Grief enveloped Him, surrounded, saturated His consciousness.

- Wuest, K. S. (1997). Wuest's word studies from the Greek New Testament: for the English reader (Vol. 1, p. 264). Grand Rapids: Eerdmans.

He Fell on the Ground – There is No Other Way for Ray

And the deeply disturbing and pressing troubling pressure that's upon Jesus is beyond the physical pain that's going to come at the cross. But the emotional, as he will be for the first time separated from the Father. It's hard for us to comprehend what that means but as far as we can look back is to the beginning of creation. But before that, beyond anyone's ability to comprehend all the way to the vanishing point is God, the Father, Son and Holy Spirit, one God in three persons and here, Jesus, the Son will be separated from the Father.

That is the great pressing upon Jesus, to be separated from his Father and he will cry out, "My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?" God will turn his back when he takes on the sin of the world. For God is too holy to look upon sin and he must turn his back from sin. And if your sin is still upon you, God must turn his back on your sin at death. He cannot look upon sin. Sin cannot enter into heaven. It must be washed away, dealt, and here, Jesus is doing something about it there upon the cross.

Jesus doesn't kneel down. It says that he falls down. Can you sense and gather and experience the anguish that is upon him? Of what is before him? I'm going to be separated from my father for Ray, and then he would go and do that, for you.

It says Jesus fell, and it's in an imperfect tense, meaning that there was this continual fall, such as he fell on his knees, then he fell on his face, then he totally falls, his whole body out. That's the way the whole verb tense is all the way through this regarding prayer, it's in the imperfect tense. It's a continual praying, or a continual supplication before God.

He falls on the ground. Oh, Father, there is no other way. There's no other way to get Ray. The damnation of his sin that's upon him, there is no other way. We can't fully grasp the gravity and the depths of this but can we not at least grasp the gravity and the depths to some degree as you would consider it and think of him walking into the garden in the darkness. A full moon is out casting a light, and dropping in the agony. There is no other way. Father, is there any other way? No, there is no other way. We don't do this. There is no way for Ray. His eternity is set to eternal separation and damnation.

Named Gethsemane (Historic Present)

In our passage here is the word **Gethsemane** is used, and it is clarified to us "named" Gethsemane. The word "named" is verb tense that's called the historic present. The idea behind it is that the writer is trying to bring us into the moment as if we were there. Even though it's history, he writes it as if it's present, and he's drawing us, Mark is, into this moment. Jesus comes and literally falls down in the anguish that is upon him. What we read is, our hero is all alone, no one is standing beside him. He is praying this all alone, and we read three times the disciples just sleep three times. The author is saying, "Come, experience this moment."

I pray to the living God that I can teach this passage as a living moment, not a historical pass. That we can be drawn in and through the spirit of God he would speak to us. This is what happened, this is what happened because of

you and your sin, and this is what happened for you, the value that you are to me, the willingness to endure this and not walk away, but walk into, because God loves you. God loves you, he's calling your heart today to share his heart, that he might touch your heart, and that you might know the treasure that you are. You might know the holiness of God, you might know the depths of his love, that the holy God would become sin for you, and be separated from his father, and the agonizing pain of that, so that he might redeem you. When Jesus told them to watch and pray, you think they'd go, "Maybe we should watch and pray, because he just a little bit ago told us that the shepherd is going to be hit, and that we're all going to scatter. Maybe there's something to be said here about those words, and maybe we should pray so that we're ready."

Our High Priest

So here Jesus is up the Mount of Olives now in the garden of Gethsemane, and as we looked at last week, he has the vantage point and the panoramic view of Golgotha before him but Jerusalem, the apple of God's eye, the panoramic view of the history of mankind, the history when God himself intervene in the affairs of man and showed himself, made his presence known from creation to Melchizedek, the high priest, to Jacob's ladder. Here he is our high priest who will not only make the sacrifice but be the sacrifice, exactly as Genesis 22 said that he would be. Christian, do you believe that Jesus Christ is your high priest because the role of a high priest was not only to make sacrifices on behalf of the people, but the role of a high priest was to live and make intercession for the people.

The high priest would have on his shoulders the ephod, and that was a gem, and this six names of each of the tribe of Israel was on each of the stones for a total of 12 and the shoulders are a picture of bearing burdens as God himself would bear the burden of our sin. Now, he bears the burden of us living in a fallen sin-filled world. On the heart of a high priest was the ephod holding the breastplate, and on the breastplate was 12 unique gems with just one name of each of the tribe of Israel.

We see a picture that man is on God's heart, so he doesn't just bear their burdens as a work, but he bears their burden because they're on his heart, in his great love. So Christian, I again ask, do you believe that Jesus Christ is your high priest and he lives to make intercession for you? If that be the case, if we truly believe that, then can we not let go of trying to carry our own burdens and trust that the Lord is praying for us and interceding for us and therefore he's going to do the work for us.

Hebrews 2:17-18 (NKJV) 17 Therefore, in all things He had to be made like His brethren, that He might be a merciful and faithful High Priest in things pertaining to God, to make propitiation for the sins of the people. 18 For in that He Himself has suffered, being tempted, He is able to aid those who are tempted.

Hebrews 12:2 (NKJV) ² looking unto Jesus, the author and finisher of our faith, who for the joy that was set before Him endured the cross, despising the shame, and has sat down at the right hand of the throne of God.

Mark 14:36 And He said, "Abba, Father, all things are possible for You. Take this cup away from Me; nevertheless, not what I will, but what You will."

Abba Father

Jesus says, "Abba father." The word abba, the tenderness, and the sweetness of the relationship. We say, "Dad," Jesus is saying, "Abba." It's an endearing word. Consider it Jesus' breaking his heart is in depths of sorrow, the pain before him and the separation ahead of him. Yet, consider the father, that he's willing to give his only begotten son. He's willing to allow this to happen to his son, whom he's well pleased with. Imagine the father hearing the words of Jesus saying, "Abba, is there any other way?" And to remain silent, or to speak the words, "There is no other way." We know he did now answer in this first, or second, Jesus is all alone. The father is all alone.

Verse 36. Jesus calls Him Abba Father. There's our location and address of where we're sending our prayer, the Christian power of prayer. He's your Father in Heaven and you can ask yourself, "Is he my Father in Heaven?" When you settle in on that, and you're warned by your heart, of course He is. Then you can say, "Of course then. I know my Father was going to do according to all that's in His heart and His will for me."

Cup of Blessing – Not a Euphuism

In 1 Corinthians 11, Paul speaking in the context of communion, says the words “the cup of blessing”. The “cup of blessing” to us sounds like a euphuism, Paul speaking poetically about the partaking of communion, but oh it is much deeper than that, and the people of Corinth would be fully aware of what the “cup of blessing” meant.

Normally in the Seder meal (the Jewish celebration of Passover) there are 4 different cups that are served. The Four Cups represent the four expressions of deliverance promised by God Exodus 6:6-7: "I will bring out," "I will deliver," "I will redeem," and "I will take."

1 Corinthians 10:16–17 (NKJV) ¹⁶ The cup of blessing which we bless, is it not the communion of the blood of Christ? The bread which we break, is it not the communion of the body of Christ? ¹⁷ For we, *though many*, are one bread *and* one body; for we all partake of that one bread.

Exodus 6:6–7 (NKJV) ⁶ Therefore say to the children of Israel: 'I am the LORD; I will bring you out from under the burdens of the Egyptians, I will rescue you from their bondage, and I will redeem you with an outstretched arm and with great judgments. ⁷ I will take you as My people, and I will be your God. Then you shall know that I am the LORD your God who brings you out from under the burdens of the Egyptians.

1st Cup (I will bring out): This consisted of a solemn blessing (Kiddush) pronounced over the 1st cup of wine which was followed by a dish of bitter herbs. (This reminded them of their bitterness of Egyptian bondage). There are a few variations, of how this blessing would go, but it has its basis of remembering who the Lord is, the mighty God, the Creator of Heaven and Earth, all that is seen and unseen.

Genesis 2:1–3 (NKJV) ¹ Thus the heavens and the earth, and all the host of them, were finished. ² And on the seventh day God ended His work which He had done, and He rested on the seventh day from all His work which He had done. ³ Then God blessed the seventh day and sanctified it, because in it He rested from all His work which God had created and made.

Here is an excerpt from one Jewish rabbi on what is/was to be said after the reading of the Scripture:

Blessed are You, Lord our God, King of the Universe, Who sanctified us with His commandments, and hoped for us, and with love and intent invested us with His sacred Sabbath, as a memorial to the deed of Creation. It is the first amongst the holy festivals, commemorating the exodus from Egypt. For You chose us, and sanctified us, out of all nations, and with love and intent You invested us with Your Holy Sabbath.

2nd Cup (I will deliver): The Passover narrative (the retelling of the story of God delivering them from Egypt) is recited after which the "Little Hallel" Ps 113 was sung. This cup is then drunk following the psalm. The psalm reminds the hearer who has the power, and the heart, to deliver them. This would have been the cup they took in Luke 22.

Psalm 113:1–9 (NKJV) ¹ Praise the LORD! Praise, O servants of the LORD, Praise the name of the LORD! ² Blessed be the name of the LORD From this time forth and forevermore! ³ From the rising of the sun to its going down The LORD's name is to be praised. ⁴ The LORD is high above all nations, His glory above the heavens. ⁵ Who is like the LORD our God, Who dwells on high, ⁶ Who humbles Himself to behold The things that are in the heavens and in the earth? ⁷ He raises the poor out of the dust, And lifts the needy out of the ash heap, ⁸ That He may seat him with princes— With the princes of His people. ⁹ He grants the barren woman a home, Like a joyful mother of children. Praise the LORD!

Luke 22:17 (KJV 1900) ¹⁷ And he took the cup, and gave thanks, and said, Take this, and divide it among yourselves:

3rd Cup (I will redeem): The main meal was served consisting of lamb and unleavened bread which preceded the drinking of the 3rd cup known as the "cup of blessing". It is the blessing after the meal, which is a little different for us as we only say a blessing before the meal. The Scripture reference is Deuteronomy 8:12. The heart of the blessing is to praise God for all His goodness, for bringing, for delivering, and for redeeming – all His provisions both miracle wise and physically. The cup that Jesus blessed and distributed is identified as the 3rd cup of the Passover meal. This is apparent from the singing of the Great Hallel which immediately follows (see Mk 14:26). Paul identifies this cup of blessing with the cup of the Eucharist (see 1Cor 10:16).

Deuteronomy 8:10 (NKJV) ¹⁰ When you have eaten and are full, then you shall bless the LORD your God for the good land which He has given you.

Here is an excerpt (just one paragraph) from one Jewish rabbi on what is/was to be said

Blessed are You, Adonai, our God, King of the universe, who sustains the entire universe with Your goodness, grace and mercy. You provide for all, and prepare the food for each of Your creations that You have created. Blessed are You, Adonai, who sustains all.

Here is what Jesus said:

Mark 14:22–25 (NKJV) ²² And as they were eating, Jesus took bread, blessed and broke it, and gave it to them and said, "Take, eat; this is My body." ²³ Then He took the cup, and when He had given thanks He gave it to them, and they all drank from it. ²⁴ And He said to them, "This is My blood of the new covenant, which is shed for many. ²⁵ Assuredly, I say to you, I will no longer drink of the fruit of the vine until that day when I drink it new in the kingdom of God."

4th Cup (I will take): Finally the climax of the Passover came with the singing of the "Great Hallel" Psalms 114-118. This is succeeded by the drinking of the 4th cup of wine called the "cup of consummation." How picture perfect this has been of Jesus being our Passover. But how the picture gets even more amazing.

1 Corinthians 5:7 (NKJV) ⁷ Therefore purge out the old leaven, that you may be a new lump, since you truly are unleavened. For indeed Christ, our Passover, was sacrificed for us.

Hallel Song – but no Cup

The 4th cup was to be taken after the singing of the Hallel song, and Jesus and the disciples that night sang them we read in Mark.

Mark 14:26 (NKJV) ²⁶ And when they had sung a hymn, they went out to the Mount of Olives.

Any other way to Take Them

But this fourth cup, how amazing, as we read of Jesus saying Father is there any other way to "take them, bring them into the family", and there was no other way except by divine blood, the perfect Lamb of God who would take away the sins of the world so God could take us as His own, to call us sons to call us daughters.

Matthew 26:42 (NKJV) ⁴² Again, a second time, He went away and prayed, saying, "O My Father, if this cup cannot pass away from Me unless I drink it, Your will be done."

Luke 22:41–42 (NKJV) ⁴¹ And He was withdrawn from them about a stone's throw, and He knelt down and prayed, ⁴² saying, "Father, if it is Your will, take this cup away from Me; nevertheless not My will, but Yours, be done."

No Answer from Heaven

Notice here that as Jesus says that there'd be any other way, there is no response, no recorded response from Heaven. The only thing we know of regarding Heaven was as Luke tells us, an angel came and ministered unto him and strengthened his body, that he might carry forth with what was set before him. I might say to add on to that, that is so true. I don't know how many times I found myself totally wearied and worn down, feeling like I can't go another step. My body literally, physically is spent, how can then I carry forth and carry the load that I feel that has been called upon me. Amazingly, how many times when I sit down with the Lord in prayer, heavy prayer, I find my physical body being lifted up, even though the physical and spiritual burden is still there, it has to be carried forth. But, now I'm strengthened to do it. So strength lifts the burden. The burden's the same weight, but I have now been lifted in strength to be able to lift that burden.

Luke 22:41–43 (NKJV) ⁴¹ And He was withdrawn from them about a stone's throw, and He knelt down and prayed, ⁴² saying, "Father, if it is Your will, take this cup away from Me; nevertheless not My will, but Yours, be done." ⁴³ Then an angel appeared to Him from heaven, strengthening Him.

There was no answer. Can this stuff pass over me? No voice that we read or told. But, Jesus starts with the answer truly. Is there any other way besides this cup that is before me. This is what set before me, the cross. The no answer was the answer. We don't know what the conversation was between the father and the son, but we can see through the scriptures. No answer was given for our sake of understanding. Sometimes, Christian, no answer is the answer. We already know. It's good to go and get confirmation, but in a no answer there still becomes a confirmation. I know what is set before me, and I will go do it. Nothing has changed, so now it's time.

Mark 14:37 Then He came and found them sleeping, and said to Peter, "Simon, are you sleeping? Could you not watch one hour?"

After my Nap

About an hour ago Peter said, "I'll die for you if it needs be. It's going to have to wait until I've finished my nap," is what we're reading now here in verse 37.

There is a Future After Failure

Christian we are not home yet, we as long as we are in this fallen body, will continue to have our failures. But see here, as yet another place to see, there is a future after a failure. The reason, is because God is GRACE.

Noah found grace in the sight of God and Christian, the vitalness of understanding our position of grace because, see, I don't want to walk with anybody, I don't want to have dinner with them, I didn't want to have phone calls with them, I don't want to go on walks with them if I think that they don't like me or they're upset with me or they have some type of resentment against me. I want to walk with, I want to have dinner with, I want to have phone calls with people who I know love me, who receive me, understand my frailty. I'm not asking them to overlook my offenses by any means. In fact, by all means I would receive it because I know that they love me, I know that they receive me, I know that this thing, if it was some type of offense, wouldn't separate our friendship, wouldn't end our friendship.

They would work it through and walk it out with me, but someone who I know you just don't like me or I know you're critical, I don't want to be with them and I don't want to walk with them. It's vital, Christian, that you understand grace. God's riches at Christ's expense, he loves you because he loves you, not because of you. He's not going to love you more if you do this, he's not going to love you less if you do this. He loves you because he loves you, because God is love and he can receive you fully because of the finished work of the cross.

And if you don't understand that grace, if you haven't considered that grace, if you're not living in that grace, it's more likely and most likely you're not going to walk with him today. You might even be here, but you're here because this is what you do. Maybe it's because it's a family thing and God wants to break through that, and God wants to tell you something today. "I love you because I love you. I receive you because of grace, and now come and walk with me." When we know it's grace, we won't hide from him. We won't go through some motion with him. We will fully walk and enjoy him. In fact, we will be still and know where it comes to a personal knowledge, that word "know", and know him because we're looking forward for what he'll do in our walks, in our talks.

And when you fully embrace and understand this grace, oh what you will get accomplished because of the sweetness of your oneness together. He'll say, "I want you to do this," and before we even have time to get stressed, he'll go, "And here's how you do it."

Genesis 6:7–8 (NKJV) ⁷ So the LORD said, "I will destroy man whom I have created from the face of the earth, both man and beast, creeping thing and birds of the air, for I am sorry that I have made them." ⁸ But Noah found grace in the eyes of the LORD.

Genesis 6:9 (NKJV) ⁹ This is the genealogy of Noah. Noah was a just man, perfect in his generations. Noah walked with God.

Genesis 6:14–15 (NKJV) ¹⁴ Make yourself an ark of gopherwood; make rooms in the ark, and cover it inside and outside with pitch. ¹⁵ And this is how you shall make it: The length of the ark shall be three hundred cubits, its width fifty cubits, and its height thirty cubits.

Genesis 6:22 (NKJV) ²² Thus Noah did; according to all that God commanded him, so he did.

Mark 14:38 Watch and pray, lest you enter into temptation. The spirit indeed is willing, but the flesh is weak."

Mark 14:39 Again He went away and prayed, and spoke the same words.

Mark 14:40 And when He returned, He found them asleep again, for their eyes were heavy; and they did not know what to answer Him.

Jesus Appears to Them – Covered in Blood

Consider, Jesus is covered with blood, at one of these returns to them, He is covered with blood. The bleeding for my sin and your sin has already begun, hours before the beatings the blood has begun to flow. You can be sure the blood is visible, especially when it comes from the forehead mixed with sweat. Yesterday I was working on my deck at the house, and I was using my screw gun, and I was leaning into a piece of wood I was holding, and the screw hit the bottom and if you use a screw gun you have experienced the place where it kicks back on you, and the heavy screw gun kicked back, with my head over the boards, and hit me in the head, and within seconds, blood mixed with sweat, started to flow all down my face. Even after holding a paper towel on it, it just kept flowing, and it was a very small cut. Jesus is appearing with blood before these disciples, as the blood has already begun to flow. What is there to answer, a person is truly left speechless when they see the price of sin, and what Jesus was willing to pay.

Luke 22:41–44 (NKJV) ⁴¹ And He was withdrawn from them about a stone's throw, and He knelt down and prayed, ⁴² saying, "Father, if it is Your will, take this cup away from Me; nevertheless not My will, but Yours, be done." ⁴³ Then an angel appeared to Him from heaven, strengthening Him. ⁴⁴ And being in agony, He prayed more earnestly. Then His sweat became like great drops of blood falling down to the ground.

Named Gethsemane (Historic Present)

In our passage here is the word **Gethsemane** is used, and it is clarified to us “named” Gethsemane. The word “named” is verb tense that's called the historic present. Even though it's history, he writes it as if it's present, and he's drawing us, Mark is, into this moment. Jesus comes and literally falls down in the anguish that is upon him. What we read is, our hero is all alone, no one is standing beside him. He is praying this all alone, and we read three times the disciples just sleep three times. The author is saying, "Come, experience this moment."

I pray to the living God that I can teach this passage as a living moment, not a historical pass. That we can be drawn in and through the spirit of God he would speak to us. This is what happened, this is what happened because of you and your sin, and this is what happened for you, the value that you are to me, the willingness to endure this and not walk away, but walk into, because God loves you. God loves you, he's calling your heart today to share his heart, that he might touch your heart, and that you might know the treasure that you are. You might know the holiness of God, you might know the depths of his love, that the holy God would become sin for you, and be separated from his father, and the agonizing pain of that, so that he might redeem you. When Jesus told them to watch and pray, you think they'd go, "Maybe we should watch and pray, because he just a little bit ago told us that the shepherd is going to be hit, and that we're all going to scatter. Maybe there's something to be said here about those words, and maybe we should pray so that we're ready."

Strength in Fasting

It's amazing to me how many times, when my body is beat down, worn down, I feel like the body can't carry and bear to go on anymore, the Lord would say, "Come away with me for a time of fasting and prayer, whether today, two, or three, or more." Yet, I'm amazed how he sustains me during the fast, even with a tired body, and then even strengthens me during the fast.

Mark 14:41 Then He came the third time and said to them, “Are you still sleeping and resting? It is enough! The hour has come; behold, the Son of Man is being betrayed into the hands of sinners.

Mark 14:42 Rise, let us be going. See, My betrayer is at hand.”

Persistent Prayer

Some people will say you shouldn't pray more than one time for something because that's a lack of faith Jesus has prayed three times so that would dispel that. We're told to pray like that persistent widow. You keep knocking until you get the answer. The Lord loves your company by the way.

They Failed – Because Didn't Pray

Verse 38. Peter failed. They all failed because they didn't pray. The flesh was the forefront, not the spirit. The reason being is they didn't pray.

3 Kinds of Giver

Many times we think that we have to somehow convince God to help us. So now we have to beg God for his power, and if we can say the right things and present the right kind of a case, that perhaps God will see it our way and pour out his spirit upon our lies and we can begin to experience the real power of God. In reality, God is looking for lives through which he can work. Among men, there are probably three basic kind of givers, and of course variations within each basic type,

- but the first man is the man that has to be sold on the project. You come to him and you tell him what the project is, the benefits that will accrue to the community because of this project, and how he himself will stand to benefit from his contribution actually. He can get his picture in the paper and it'll be good publicity and advertisement, and you can sell him on the fact that he ought to contribute and he'll sit down and write out his contribution. One type of giver has to be sold.
- The second type of giver is the man that all he has to do is to be made aware of the need. He's wanting to give, he's willing to give. All he has to do is be aware of the need and as soon as he becomes aware of the need, he is ready to contribute.

- Now there is a third type of giver, and this is the man who has a vision and a burden, or a certain thing to be accomplished. He starts looking to see if there is someone who is perhaps doing the type of work that he feels ought to be done. He starts looking for a place to give. He's looking for someone who is doing this kind of work.

Several years ago in England, there was a wealthy man who had a great burden to reach the interior of China with the gospel of Jesus Christ. He just felt, "There's so many millions of people there in the interior of China who have never heard of Jesus Christ. I really feel that I would like to get the gospel to them." So he started looking around and he discovered China Inland Mission, Hudson Taylor's, China Inland Mission. He examined the work that they were doing and he found out that they were doing exactly what he was feeling ought to be done. So he donated about a million dollars to the China Inland Mission, without being solicited. He actually found them, found that they were doing what he felt ought to be done, and he invested.

Now, when we think of God's giving, which of these three do you think come closest to the way God gives? Now, there are many times we think that we've got to sell God a bill of good. So you listen to the prayers and they're a big sales job. "Now Lord, if you'll only do this, then Lord, I can do this and I'll do this and Lord, how can you lose on a deal like this? I'll make you a deal now, Lord," and we're trying to sell God on the advantages that will accrue to him and his kingdom if he'll just give to us. How much I need it, what I'll do with it.

Some people think that God is like the second giver, that he just has to be aware of the need. "So all I have to do is make God aware of my needs. I know that God is desiring to give good gifts to his children and so all I have to do is let God know what my need is." But Jesus said, "Your father knows what you have need of before you ever ask him." You see, I don't have to make God aware of my needs. He knows my needs. In fact, God knows what I'm going to be needing six months from now. I don't know what I'm going to be needing six months from now, but God already knows what I'm going to be needing six months from now.

So, prayer really isn't to inform God of my needs, God is looking for places to invest. God is looking for lives that are aligned with his purposes, that are in harmony with what he is wanting to do. God is looking around trying to find those whose hearts are in tune with what God is desiring in order that through them he might begin to pour his resources. "For the eyes of the Lord go to and fro throughout the entire earth to show himself strong on behalf of those whose hearts are perfect towards him."

God is just looking for places to work. He's looking for lives to bless. All that is necessary is for me to come into harmony with that which God wants. We've made a tragic mistake about prayer for ... we have come to think that the purpose of prayer is somehow to get my will done here on the earth, and I come to God with all of my little requests, like I would come to Santa Claus. "This is what I want God for Christmas now," and I've got my list of all of my wants and I bring them to God in prayer thinking that somehow God is the magic genie that is just waiting to grant all of my request and all of my wishes. Somehow we've felt that prayer is that agency by which we can get God to supply all of our needs and all of our wants. But in reality, the real thrust of prayer is not to fulfill my will, or to get my will done on earth, but the real thrust of prayer is to get God's will done here on the earth.

Therefore, prayer really begins with God. The purpose of God, the plan of God, the desire of God, God plants that desire in my heart and I then express it to God in prayer, opening the door for God to do that which he is wanting and desiring to do. Now, God has created us with a capacity of choice and with a capacity of self-determination. A person says, "I can do what I want to do." Well, you are so right, and God will let you do what you want to do. God's not going to force you to do anything. God does not use arm twisting techniques. God's not in the business of forcing people against their wills, because it would be totally meaningless for God to give me the capacity of self-determination, the power of choice. It would be meaningless unless God respected my choices.

Ezekiel 22:30-31 (NKJV) ³⁰ So I sought for a man among them who would make a wall, and stand in the gap before Me on behalf of the land, that I should not destroy it; but I found no one. ³¹ Therefore I have poured out My indignation on them; I have consumed them with the fire of My wrath; and I have recompensed their deeds on their own heads," says the Lord GOD.

Isaiah 6:8-9 (NKJV) ⁸ Also I heard the voice of the Lord, saying: "Whom shall I send, And who will go for Us?" Then I said, "Here am I! Send me." ⁹ And He said, "Go, and tell this people: 'Keep on hearing, but do not understand; Keep on seeing, but do not perceive.'

His Hour Has Come

We've read before, when they want to make Jesus king and he says, "No, my hour has not yet come." But, he makes it very clear, of all those moments, of which hour it is, and it's this one. Jesus is saying, "My hour has come, and literally, this is what I came for, an amazing God, the only one who ever walked this planet who was born to die. Yet he will with full surrender for his love for me and you."

Jesus has Surrendered

So here comes the betrayer. Jesus says, "Let's go." And he says, let's go because he has surrendered to the will of God and now he can get up and carry forth to what God has for him.

And when you surrender your will to God, you'll have the strength to get up and to carry forth and go do what God has called you to do.

Jesus Surrenders to Become Sin

Jesus surrenders himself to become sin. Again, it's not just the physical brutality of the cross, and we'll talk about that in future study. It is the separation from the father as God is too holy to look upon sin, and there for the consideration of what he is bearing is that he's going to become sin. He's perfect, he's holy. He's the spotless lamb of God. He was the glory of the father, who would say, "This is my son, I'm well pleased with him. I'm proud of him. Look at him, that's my son." Oh, the amazing perfection of Jesus. Then, he's going to take off his perfection, and he's going to clothe himself with the sin of the world. Name the sin, and he's going to wear it. 2 Corinthians 5:21, "For he who knew no sin became sin." As we know, for us, that we might become the righteousness of God. Jesus is going to put on righteousness, God, the father, is going to have to look and say, "I can't even look at him." And he's going to turn his back, and Jesus will cry from that cross, "My God, my God." As he takes on the sin of the world.

Takes Cup from Hand he Loves

Verse 41, Jesus has surrendered now. He's taken the cup, and it's been said and said well, because he loved the hand from which the cup has come from. He fully has trusted the father, that his will be done would be the greatest will that could ever be done.

This Where Battle Won

This is when the battle was won. It was determined here and the cross was the taking of what was determined in the garden.

It's interesting, in Genesis 3 we're told that sin, and the rule of Satan, began in a Garden called Eden. In Revelation 22, we discover that when Jesus returns, and puts an end to sin, and Satan's revolt - He will remake the earth into a beautiful garden. The story of mankind both begins and ends in a garden... And the turning point between the beginning and the end is another garden - a garden called Gethsemane. It was in this garden that the battle was fought and won that would end up wresting the world from Satan's clutches, and delivering it over into the hands of God. Gethsemane was the garden of decision. It's where Jesus overcame His pain... hurt... betrayal... struggle, and readied Himself for the cross the next day. In the garden the Father took away Jesus' cup of pain - the pain of His rejection - and replaced it with a peace

Lord Teach Us to Pray

Luke 11:1-4 (NKJV) ¹ Now it came to pass, as He was praying in a certain place, when He ceased, that one of His disciples said to Him, "Lord, teach us to pray, as John also taught his disciples." ² So He said to them, "When you pray, say: Our Father in heaven, Hallowed be Your name. Your kingdom come. Your will be done On earth as it is in heaven. ³ Give us day by day our daily bread. ⁴ And forgive us our sins, For we also forgive everyone who is indebted to us. And do not lead us into temptation, But deliver us from the evil one."

God Says Come

Today we come and are gifted this Word from God Himself, His very heart opened before us, the calling to come near, be drawn to Him.

Matthew 11:28 (NKJV) ²⁸ *Come to Me, all you who labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest.*

The Word of God is Living and Powerful, and is ready, and will do a mighty work in our lives.

Hebrews 4:12 (NKJV) ¹² *For the word of God is living and powerful, and sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing even to the division of soul and spirit, and of joints and marrow, and is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart.*

In Every Study

- Who Is God? (How Great is He?)
- What Does He Think of Me? (How Wonderful Are His Thoughts Towards Me?)
- What Does He Want Me to Do?
- What Can I Boldly Request of Him?
- What Do I Need to Be on Guard of When I Leave Here Today?

Boldly come to the throne of grace, ask God to reveal Himself in a mighty way to you, and to do I might work in you, and through you.

Hebrews 4:16 (NKJV) ¹⁶ *Let us therefore come boldly to the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy and find grace to help in time of need.*

End of Study

Mark 14:43-52

Today's Passage

Mark 14:41–49 (NKJV) ⁴¹ Then He came the third time and said to them, "Are you still sleeping and resting? It is enough! The hour has come; behold, the Son of Man is being betrayed into the hands of sinners. ⁴² Rise, let us be going. See, My betrayer is at hand." ⁴³ And immediately, while He was still speaking, Judas, one of the twelve, with a great multitude with swords and clubs, came from the chief priests and the scribes and the elders. ⁴⁴ Now His betrayer had given them a signal, saying, "Whomever I kiss, He is the One; seize Him and lead Him away safely." ⁴⁵ As soon as he had come, immediately he went up to Him and said to Him, "Rabbi, Rabbi!" and kissed Him. ⁴⁶ Then they laid their hands on Him and took Him. ⁴⁷ And one of those who stood by drew his sword and struck the servant of the high priest, and cut off his ear. ⁴⁸ Then Jesus answered and said to them, "Have you come out, as against a robber, with swords and clubs to take Me? ⁴⁹ I was daily with you in the temple teaching, and you did not seize Me. But the Scriptures must be fulfilled."

Introduction

We have come as far as verse 32 of chapter 14, and we are now at the arrest and betrayal of Jesus Christ.

- And we will see we have a High Priest who can relate to us in all our dark and lonely times;
- we have a God who knows what pain feels like, whether emotional pain or physical pain;
- and we have a God who would not turn back, nor turn His back on us, and for His love for us, faced the darkness so He might bring us into the light, the light and love of God.
- And much, much more.....

Why Me?

I had saw this news headline article. The question was being asked, "What's the number one question asked of Jesus?"

- You know how it goes, why do you allow evil on the earth?
- Why is there so much suffering?
- Where were you when this happened in my life?"

As soon as I saw that headline article, the first thing immediately my question was to Jesus Christ, "Why me? Why would you ever choose me, receive me and love me? Why me?" As I take communion as deep as it is, it's still just a glimpse. One day I'm going to get to see him and say, "Why me?" And I know what he's going to say because this Bible tells me. He is going to say, "Because I love you." That's what he says to every one of you, "Because I love you." That's it, period. "Because I love you." There's nothing more to be said when it is said, "I love you." As we take communion you can ask yourself, "Why me?" And as you take communion, you'll hear him simply say, "Because I love you. Because I love you."

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Hebrews 4:16 (NKJV) ¹⁶ Let us therefore come boldly to the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy and find grace to help in time of need.

Cross-references

Matthew 26:47–56 (NKJV) ⁴⁷ And while He was still speaking, behold, Judas, one of the twelve, with a great multitude with swords and clubs, came from the chief priests and elders of the people. ⁴⁸ Now His betrayer had given them a sign, saying, “Whomever I kiss, He is the One; seize Him.” ⁴⁹ Immediately he went up to Jesus and said, “Greetings, Rabbi!” and kissed Him. ⁵⁰ But Jesus said to him, “Friend, why have you come?” Then they came and laid hands on Jesus and took Him. ⁵¹ And suddenly, one of those *who were* with Jesus stretched out *his* hand and drew his sword, struck the servant of the high priest, and cut off his ear. ⁵² But Jesus said to him, “Put your sword in its place, for all who take the sword will perish by the sword. ⁵³ Or do you think that I cannot now pray to My Father, and He will provide Me with more than twelve legions of angels? ⁵⁴ How then could the Scriptures be fulfilled, that it must happen thus?” ⁵⁵ In that hour Jesus said to the multitudes, “Have you come out, as against a robber, with swords and clubs to take Me? I sat daily with you, teaching in the temple, and you did not seize Me. ⁵⁶ But all this was done that the Scriptures of the prophets might be fulfilled.” Then all the disciples forsook Him and fled.

Luke 22:47–53 (NKJV) ⁴⁷ And while He was still speaking, behold, a multitude; and he who was called Judas, one of the twelve, went before them and drew near to Jesus to kiss Him. ⁴⁸ But Jesus said to him, “Judas, are you betraying the Son of Man with a kiss?” ⁴⁹ When those around Him saw what was going to happen, they said to Him, “Lord, shall we strike with the sword?” ⁵⁰ And one of them struck the servant of the high priest and cut off his right ear. ⁵¹ But Jesus answered and said, “Permit even this.” And He touched his ear and healed him. ⁵² Then Jesus said to the chief priests, captains of the temple, and the elders who had come to Him, “Have you come out, as against a robber, with swords and clubs? ⁵³ When I was with you daily in the temple, you did not try to seize Me. But this is your hour, and the power of darkness.”

John 18:2–11 (NKJV) ² And Judas, who betrayed Him, also knew the place; for Jesus often met there with His disciples. ³ Then Judas, having received a detachment *of troops*, and officers from the chief priests and Pharisees, came there with lanterns, torches, and weapons. ⁴ Jesus therefore, knowing all things that would come upon Him, went forward and said to them, “Whom are you seeking?” ⁵ They answered Him, “Jesus of Nazareth.” Jesus said to them, “I am *He*.” And Judas, who betrayed Him, also stood with them. ⁶ Now when He said to them, “I am *He*,” they drew back and fell to the ground. ⁷ Then He asked them again, “Whom are you seeking?” And they said, “Jesus of Nazareth.” ⁸ Jesus answered, “I have told you that I am *He*. Therefore, if you seek Me, let these go their way,” ⁹ that the saying might be fulfilled which He spoke, “Of those whom You gave Me I have lost none.” ¹⁰ Then Simon Peter, having a sword, drew it and struck the high priest’s servant, and cut off his right ear. The servant’s name was Malchus. ¹¹ So Jesus said to Peter, “Put your sword into the sheath. Shall I not drink the cup which My Father has given Me?”

Jesus Betrayed and Arrested in the Garden (14:43-50)

Mark 14:43 And immediately, while He was still speaking, Judas, one of the twelve, with a great multitude with swords and clubs, came from the chief priests and the scribes and the elders.

Great Multitude

So a great multitude is explained further for us in John’s account, and that Judas was given a “detachment of troops”, and that word is “cohort” in the original language, and a cohort was a “tenth” part of a “legion” in the Roman army, and a legion was 6,000 men. So Judas gets 600 soldiers to come with him to take Jesus. Just imagine that scene, the sound of 600+ men walking in dirt and gravel, 600+ men with swords and clubs, the sound of 600+ men in metal body armor, probably hundreds of torches glowing and flickering. This is an invasion. The Devil is leading the invasion as we are told the devil has entered Judas at this point as Judas allowed him to. So don’t miss that this is more than Judas, this is the darkness of evil descending upon Jesus.

Luke 22:3–6 (NKJV) ³ Then Satan entered Judas, surnamed Iscariot, who was numbered among the twelve. ⁴ So he went his way and conferred with the chief priests and captains, how he might betray Him to them. ⁵ And they were glad, and agreed to give him money. ⁶ So he promised and sought opportunity to betray Him to them in the absence of the multitude.

Jesus Word of Knowledge

So verse 33 says, immediately while he was still speaking, Judas comes with the detachment to arrest Jesus and what we see here, and it is significant for us and I hope it whets the appetite for, or better said as we spoke last week it, it settles the attitude about prayer. In that Jesus, just the verse prior tells the disciples, "Okay, get up, here comes the betrayer", and immediately here they come. Jesus, we see was given the gift of the word of knowledge, which is one of the gifts that's spoken of in First Corinthians, chapter 12. And they're gifts, they're not automatic pilot, but they come as gifts. But Jesus receives a word of knowledge and we see while he was praying that now it's time to end prayer, because here comes Judas with the troops.

1 Corinthians 12:7–11 (NKJV) ⁷ But the manifestation of the Spirit is given to each one for the profit of all: ⁸ for to one is given the word of wisdom through the Spirit, to another the word of knowledge through the same Spirit, ⁹ to another faith by the same Spirit, to another gifts of healings by the same Spirit, ¹⁰ to another the working of miracles, to another prophecy, to another discerning of spirits, to another different kinds of tongues, to another the interpretation of tongues. ¹¹ But one and the same Spirit works all these things, distributing to each one individually as He wills.

And I hope that wets an appetite or settles an attitude. One of the reasons why we make prayer a priority, why we make it part of our daily routine, because you never know when you might receive such a word of knowledge from the Lord. Now I should say, you don't have to be in prayer to receive the gift of the word of knowledge, but when I'm settled in prayer, it does seem more likely that I will hear what the Lord is speaking to me. But I can say for sure, he can still give you a word of knowledge in the busy-ness and the crying and the loudness of the world.

God gives us gifts of the Spirit. Saints, we don't have to go this alone, the heavy lift isn't our responsibility, it God's, and thus He gives us gifts, at the right time, for the right situation, to help us with the heavy lifts of life and ministry.

And what is the word of knowledge is God gives you information that you would have no other way of getting, except God tells you in advance that this is what's going to happen. Or sometimes it comes in the form of the gift of discernment which resembles it closely. And in the gift of discernment, God gives us something that we would not have known had he not told us about a situation like, "Hey, beware of this situation. This person's not being forthcoming and honest with you. While the gift of knowledge is telling you something that you wouldn't know, like here comes Judas with a bunch of folks to arrest you.

So Jesus is prepared for them. He's been praying. He's been expecting them. He goes, prepares the disciples, because they weren't praying, but Jesus in His grace tells them, "Here's what's coming next guys. Let's get ready."

Jesus Loved to the End

So here's Judas coming with the multitude. It says, "Judas, one of the 12", again, such a sad statement. Judas was one of the 12, he saw all the miracles, he saw all the healings, he saw all the love, he received the love, he heard all the sermons, yet for whatever reason, in the end he chose his flesh and betrayal over the spiritual things, and faithfulness to the Lord. But I love what Jesus said at the end, or when they came into the Passover meal, it says "And Jesus, loving them until the end.". And so Jesus, he loved them, he loved them all to the end. He loves Judas. *John 13:1 (NKJV) ¹ Now before the Feast of the Passover, when Jesus knew that His hour had come that He should depart from this world to the Father, having loved His own who were in the world, He loved them to the end.*

Christian, can you love that person..... To the end? Can you hear God today saying, love them to the end, regardless!

Judas Betrays with Clean Feet / His Choice

And here as we've said, Judas will be betray Jesus with clean feet. Jesus, the king of the universe, got down and took on the role of a lowly servant there at the Passover meal and he washed Judas' feet and Judas will still go out to betray him. It is sad for Judas, but what we have here is man has given free will free choice and this is what Judas exercised. And so too, every man has their free will and their free choice, what they'll do with Jesus.

Man has free-will, and with free-will man can choose, and with choice means there is a possibility to persuade their choice. We have been given the opportunity, to persuade men with our witness, our lives, our testimony, and our prayers. Remember Paul before Agrippa? Even Agrippa said wow Paul you almost persuade me. Choices can be persuaded, so Christian, exercise your power of persuasion.

Acts 26:25–29 (NKJV) ²⁵ But he said, "I am not mad, most noble Festus, but speak the words of truth and reason. ²⁶ For the king, before whom I also speak freely, knows these things; for I am convinced that none of these things escapes his attention, since this thing was not done in a corner. ²⁷ King Agrippa, do you believe the prophets? I know that you do believe." ²⁸ Then Agrippa said to Paul, "You almost persuade me to become a Christian." ²⁹ And Paul said, "I would to God that not only you, but also all who hear me today, might become both almost and altogether such as I am, except for these chains."

2 Corinthians 5:9–11 (NKJV) ⁹ Therefore we make it our aim, whether present or absent, to be well pleasing to Him. ¹⁰ For we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ, that each one may receive the things done in the body, according to what he has done, whether good or bad. ¹¹ Knowing, therefore, the terror of the Lord, we persuade men; but we are well known to God, and I also trust are well known in your consciences.

Christian Don't Quit Ministry – Look Jesus Model for Ministry

Judas can singularly be referred to as one of the 12. And the purpose is more than just identification of who he is specifically, but the sense in the depths of this betrayal. He was one of the 12 that walked with Jesus for some three and a half years. And we've talked about that. That he's heard every sermon. He saw every miracle. He saw bread multiplied and the principles of walking on water defied.

But Judas saw something greater. He saw the heart of Jesus Christ. And he didn't just see the heart of Jesus Christ for people, he saw the heart of Jesus Christ for himself personally. And God and Jesus loved him continually all the way to the end. As we studied the Passover meal, Judas ... if he dipped in the bowl would have meant that he was probably seated next to Jesus. What a place of privilege and honor. Judas saw more than the miracles and power of Jesus. He saw the heart and love of Jesus, and yet he still chooses betrayal.

And the heart and the pain of this ... it was prophesied back in the Psalms. Jesus would know it was coming. And we talked about Judas. How could he but understand now from the aspect of Jesus how this pain pierces him as he poured in, loved Judas, gave all to Judas, and then to be betrayed and turned on by Judas? There's so much dynamics going on here. It's not just a cross. It's a friend that is in the mix of this, and heartbreak for Jesus. Jesus is anything but cold, callous, and matter-of-fact regarding Judas. Jesus's heart is breaking. Jesus calls him friend, not enemy, as we're told in the other scripture passage of the gospel.

Psalms 41:9 (NKJV) ⁹ Even my own familiar friend in whom I trusted, Who ate my bread, Has lifted up his heel against me.

And why did Judas choose to identify Jesus with a kiss, of all things? A kiss in any culture is a symbol of affection or friendship.

You know, Jesus still continues on. If you look at this, you've got disciples sleeping, leaving him totally alone. You got friends betraying him, bruising him, and hurting him. And yet he still continues on. Oh, the depths of the love of God. God is love, and God loves you because God loves you. But let me say this because it's going to apply to somebody at some point who's serious about ministry. There's many people who just quit the ministry because of one person. I'm not going to serve anymore because that one person hurt me. I gave, and I gave, and here's what they did to me. There might even be more.

There was a study that was done that said pastors quit the ministry because of seven people. Even if they have churches of hundreds, it's these seven people is what culminates them to the place of quitting. Well, it's no different for children's ministry, or usher ministry, or any type of serving ministry is people can quit because they say, "Man, I gave and I gave. And so-and-so betrayed me, turned on me, or I was left to bear it all alone. That's it. No more. I'm going to be looking out for number one."

What we have here is the ministry model, maybe the greatest ministry model of all the scriptures. As much as we look at all of these ministry models, here you have this one, probably the top of them all. Jesus continued on in the ministry that God called him to regardless of how the people responded to him. Because ministry is longer than

the moment. Just know that folks. Ministry is always longer than the moment. Ministry is not a moment but a marathon, and you got to run the whole race in order to see fruit come clean, be born.

Judas Betrays / But we can Praise

But do you know what I'm going to do in response to Judas? You know what, Judas? You betrayed Jesus with clean feet. But Jesus, I'm going to take my clean feet that you washed, and taught me how to serve, and I'm going to become servant of all. And I ask anyone today: who here will commit themselves right now and make a decision before the Lord? I'm going to become servant of all, not a servant of me. And secondly, do you know what, Judas? You can betray the Lord with a kiss, but Jesus my Lord, I'm to adore you with my kiss. I'm going to worship you, and I am going to pour love out upon you just for the very reason of because I love you. And you're worthy and I want you to receive my love. Who here will do the same?

Illegal Arrest & Trial / It's Prophetic / God is Faithful

Verse 33, "So he comes, and the great multitude comes with swords in clubs. They came from the chief priests and the scribes and the elders." So this mob that comes, they're coming with clubs and swords to so call arrest Jesus. And here is the beginning of the illegal trial of Jesus. It begins with an illegal arrest of Jesus. These religious leaders do not have the authority to arrest and hence why all this is done in the darkness.

And here is one of the most beautiful, prophetic passages, as tragic as it is, but as clear as it can be in Genesis chapter 49 it was prophesied that the scepter, and that means the ability to rule, self-govern, shall not the part until Shiloh, and that was a word for peace. And that was a picture of the Messiah, which was to come. So they're saying in that prophecy of Genesis 49, "The messiah will come before you lose your ability to self-govern." And the ability to self-govern is the ability to exact and execute judgment. And here the Jewish nation cannot exact and execute judgment, especially the death penalty because they've lost that ability under Roman occupation. Hence why they have to go and ask Rome, Pilate specifically, for the okay for Jesus to be put to death and then they have to have the Romans do it for them, because even with the Romans okay, they're not allowed to do it.

Genesis 49:8-12 (NKJV) ⁸ "Judah, you are he whom your brothers shall praise; Your hand shall be on the neck of your enemies; Your father's children shall bow down before you. ⁹ Judah is a lion's whelp; From the prey, my son, you have gone up. He bows down, he lies down as a lion; And as a lion, who shall rouse him? ¹⁰ The scepter shall not depart from Judah, Nor a lawgiver from between his feet, Until Shiloh comes; And to Him shall be the obedience of the people. ¹¹ Binding his donkey to the vine, And his donkey's colt to the choice vine, He washed his garments in wine, And his clothes in the blood of grapes. ¹² His eyes are darker than wine, And his teeth whiter than milk.

Historically, we are told there was weeping and mourning in the streets of Jerusalem about 30 years prior when the Roman government took away their right to capital punishment. They wept and mourned because they said, "But the messiah hasn't come", and they felt forsaken, and forgotten by God. Yet all the while there is a babe, born in Bethlehem, three years prior, who's now a three-year-old toddler, born to die, the Messiah, the one promised to come before the scepter departed. While they wept, the Babe slept, and they did not even know their Savior had come. God is always faithful, Christian. And even in your circumstances where it seems that you can't see all the pieces and it seems that things didn't come together, at least as you thought they were supposed to come together, you can trust in the faithfulness of the Lord's faithfulness.

I said last week, the depths of the theological statement of why God loves you, and the answer to its deepest degree is because God loves you. And why is God faithful? It's a likewise answer and the depths of it as well, because God is faithful. Love and faithfulness are his characters. It's a characteristic. It's his nature of who he is. Wherever you are today, you can trust in his love and you can trust in his faithfulness. And if you're struggling in either of those, I pray right now as I speak, that the Lord touches you and ministers to you and we'll solidify and settle, and hear his voice say, "I love you. I am faithful to you."

And when you take that into your life of everyday circumstances, and when you take that into your prayer closet and you look at that word A for attitude, knowing God's love and his faithfulness will surely settle and solidify your attitude of just getting along with him and meeting with him and spending time with him.

Anxiety of Time Constraint

I come away with a great takeaway. I don't know about you. There's got to at least be one more like me, and I struggle with prayer. When I look at a time constraint that's upon me, I got major things to pray about to think about and to seek the Lord on, but I look at the clock and I go, "I got to get up and be out of here in 30 minutes", or, "I got to get up and be out of here in 60 minutes. I got to get up and be out of here in 15 minutes", and I start feeling this pressure and an anxiety coming upon me because I'm saying to myself, there's no way that I'm going to be able to get this resolved and come away with a peace and a plan with the little bit of time I got.

But man, just look at this story with Jesus. He knows it's the day he knows it's the night. He knows when the twilight sacrifice is. And yet somehow, even with such a deadline, I don't mean that as a joke, but there was a deadline put upon him literally for his life. His life at stake, humanity, salvation on the line. And if he was able, with the little time that he did have, he was able to stand up in peace and power with a plan and a march and go forward faithfully with it. And so I again remind you the power in the routine of prayer. And I might add fasting too, whether that's skipping one meal a week or one day of food a week, whatever the Lord lays on you. But this routine of prayer and this harmony with the Lord and the connection with the Lord.

And I think additionally, just the knowledge of the scripture and hence the power of continual daily Bible reading. Because many times I come into a peace, I come into a power, I leave with my plan, because I know this is what the Lord has spoken through his word. I can just rest on his word because I rest on his faithfulness. I rest on his love and no matter what happens, whatever is handed to me, I know it's coming from a hand of love of a God who loves me and cares for me, who gave his son for me and a son who said, "Send me for Ray. I love him that much. Let me do this for him because he can't do it for himself."

Mark 14:44 Now His betrayer had given them a signal, saying, "Whomever I kiss, He is the One; seize Him and lead Him away safely."

Mark 14:45 As soon as he had come, immediately he went up to Him and said to Him, "Rabbi, Rabbi!" and kissed Him.

What a Waste – To Not Live Up to Your Calling

Verse 44 it says, "His betrayer", doesn't even naming by name at this point. That's his new name. Betrayer, traitor. He's not called Judas, whose name means praise, and as we've said, what a waste. What a wasted life to not live up to the full potential that God has given you and called you to be and to have.

The Signal - Spikenard

So here comes Judas. He said, "Here's the signal it's the one who I kiss." As we've said, Judas very well of could have said, "The signal is the one who smells of Spikenard", because just two days prior, he has been soaked in a pound of Spikenard with this deep ointment, fragrant smell, soaking into the hair follicles down into the scalp. And any of you who put oil, or shine, conditioner on your hair or on your beard, you know how it's soaks and absorbs and takes it from dry and it just pulls it all in. And here, Jesus, he smells of the fragrant spikenard do. Judas could have said, "The guy who you want, is the one that smells like Spikenard."

Mark 14:3 (NKJV)³ And being in Bethany at the house of Simon the leper, as He sat at the table, a woman came having an alabaster flask of very costly oil of spikenard. Then she broke the flask and poured it on His head.

And I imagine Jesus as he prayed in the garden, smelling the fragrant of a Spikenard even in this smell and stench of betrayal to come took a sweet comfort. It was a aroma before him of sacrifice and love of this woman who is unnamed. And I think very fitting because she then represents every one of us. And Jesus is saying, "I'll go, absolutely, I love Ray that much. I'll go", as he breathes in the fragrance of Spikenard.

Streaks of Blood - Kissed

But here's something for your consideration. As we spoke last week, Jesus sweating drops of blood, his face would be, whether soaked in blood, it would at least have streaks of blood. And here comes Judas on a full moon night, very able to clearly see Jesus in his face. And they came with torches for even more light and he would've seen that

blood. And not only would he have seen it when he kissed him, he would have kissed the blood of Jesus Christ, the very blood that was shed to redeem every man.

- To bring them from the bondage of Egypt, the world.
- To deliver them from the pharaoh, the tyrant, the evil one.
- To redeem them, to buy them back from a debt they owed, but could not pay from the one who is going
- To take the full cup of consummation. The Complete Cup of God's wrath.

The blood for Judas and the blood for mankind began the flow before the beating, before the scourging, before the cross. It flowed in the garden and here Judas kisses the blood of the savior of the world. If Judas suddenly would have said, "Me too", and Judas the before and with clean feet that Jesus just washed.

Safely – Judas Doesn't Care

Verse 44 says, "Lead him away safely." I don't believe this means that Judas is saying, "Handle him delicately. I still love him." You don't bring several hundred soldiers with swords and clubs for Jesus' sake, but for your own..... makes sure He doesn't get away, for He has demonstrated in times past that He can be quite elusive. I think Judas knows what he's doing. I think there is no doubt about it. I think he's even identifying himself. I'm not trying to be a secret snitch. He is making it clear that he is the one who's betraying him. To which I still say, I don't understand why. What a waste

God Wishes None Perish – Judas Come Away With Me

Judas was not chosen for hell by God. The Bible says that God wishes that none should perish, but that all should seek repentance. Repentance means to turn and follow. Here, Judas, he's turning away. The gift of eternal life, who's standing before him, a gift that walked with him for three and a half years, loving him until the end, calling him friend. Yet Judas in the end turns away instead of to, and to follow.

***2 Peter 3:8–9 (NKJV)** ⁸ But, beloved, do not forget this one thing, that with the Lord one day is as a thousand years, and a thousand years as one day. ⁹ The Lord is not slack concerning His promise, as some count slackness, but is longsuffering toward us, not willing that any should perish but that all should come to repentance.*

Did Judas Ever Truly Just be Still / The Watch in the Icehouse

Psalms 46:10 Be still, and know that I am God: I will be exalted among the heathen, I will be exalted in the earth.

"Before refrigerators, people used ice-houses to preserve their food. Ice-houses had thick walls, no windows, and a tightly fitted door. In winter, when streams and lakes were frozen, large blocks of ice were cut from the frozen waters, hauled to the ice-houses, and covered with sawdust. Often these ice-blocks would last well into the summer.

One man lost a valuable watch while working in an ice-house. He searched diligently for it, carefully raking through the sawdust, but didn't find it. His fellow workers also looked, but their efforts, too, proved futile. A small boy who heard about the fruitless search slipped into the ice-house during the noon hour and soon emerged with the watch.

Amazed, the men asked him how he found it.

"I closed the door," the boy replied, "lay down in the sawdust, and kept very still. Soon I heard the watch ticking." (story taken from "Directions" by James Hamilton)

So often life can become so hectic that it becomes hard to find time to sit still and just listen to what the Lord is saying. But Yeshua (Jesus) often secluded himself, so that He could commune intimately with His Father. In these days and in this hour it's so imperative that we spend time in our own prayer closets, so we can clearly hear what our Father is saying to us, through His still small voice. If we do, we may find some wonderful and valuable things that others have missed.

Ray, the question isn't whether God will speak, but whether we will take the time to be quiet and still enough to hear His voice. Let's be sure to take that time to hear what He's saying to us!

Mark 4:12 (NKJV) ¹² so that 'Seeing they may see and not perceive, And hearing they may hear and not understand; Lest they should turn, And their sins be forgiven them.'

Psalm 46:10 (NKJV) ¹⁰ Be still, and know that I am God; I will be exalted among the nations, I will be exalted in the earth!

John 3:16–21 (NKJV) ¹⁶ For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have everlasting life. ¹⁷ For God did not send His Son into the world to condemn the world, but that the world through Him might be saved. ¹⁸ "He who believes in Him is not condemned; but he who does not believe is condemned already, because he has not believed in the name of the only begotten Son of God. ¹⁹ And this is the condemnation, that the light has come into the world, and men loved darkness rather than light, because their deeds were evil. ²⁰ For everyone practicing evil hates the light and does not come to the light, lest his deeds should be exposed. ²¹ But he who does the truth comes to the light, that his deeds may be clearly seen, that they have been done in God."

You Can Walk with Jesus – Yet Still not See Him

Did Judas ever just be still? Judas gives the picture right now to every person that can hear this word right now. You can walk with Jesus for three and a half years, attend church services, see miracles, even be part of what he's doing. Yet in the end, still miss and lose eternal life and salvation. The Spirit of God says, "Come and see. Come receive." So there's a seeing, but there's a receiving. Maybe God's speaking into your heart right now that all that you've done your whole life right now is see, but you've never received and never put your faith and placed your trust in Jesus Christ to take your sin and to give you new life. I pray today that the Spirit of God is speaking to you, and that you settle the issue, and that you would turn and follow.

Mark 14:46 Then they laid their hands on Him and took Him.

I AM

In John's account, it clearly says when they ask ... when Jesus asked, "Who do you seek?" They said, "Jesus of Nazareth." Jesus answers, "I am." And your Bible will have italics 'he,' but that's actually not in the original language because it wasn't in the original account. It was added for clarity. Jesus simply answered, "I am." He's making the statement all the way back to the burning bush of Exodus chapter three, 'I am that I am. I'm the becoming one.' He is identifying himself as who he says that he is. He is God.

Sometime before when they approached Jesus, the religious leaders, Jesus had said before Abraham was, "I am," making that exact same statement. And they picked up rocks to kill him, but Jesus walked away from it. And they picked up rocks to kill him because they considered it that blasphemy because that statement can only be spoken by God himself. The God of the burning bush. I AM.

Exodus 3:13–14 (NKJV) ¹³ Then Moses said to God, "Indeed, when I come to the children of Israel and say to them, 'The God of your fathers has sent me to you,' and they say to me, 'What is His name?' what shall I say to them?" ¹⁴ And God said to Moses, "I AM WHO I AM." And He said, "Thus you shall say to the children of Israel, 'I AM has sent me to you.'"

John 8:57–59 (NKJV) ⁵⁷ Then the Jews said to Him, "You are not yet fifty years old, and have You seen Abraham?" ⁵⁸ Jesus said to them, "Most assuredly, I say to you, before Abraham was, I AM." ⁵⁹ Then they took up stones to throw at Him; but Jesus hid Himself and went out of the temple, going through the midst of them, and so passed by.

They Fell Back

In John's account, we are told that when Jesus said "I AM" so powerful were those words that the everyone fell down on the ground.

John 18:5–7 (NKJV) ⁵ They answered Him, "Jesus of Nazareth." Jesus said to them, "I am He." And Judas, who betrayed Him, also stood with them. ⁶ Now when He said to them, "I am He," they drew back and fell to the ground. ⁷ Then He asked them again, "Whom are you seeking?" And they said, "Jesus of Nazareth."

12 Legions

In Matthew's account, we are told Jesus said His Father could provide 12 legions of angels. So a legion was 6,000, and 12 legions would equal 72,000 angels, and we saw in the Old Testament (2 Kings 19), that one angel (not even an arch-angel), killed 185,000 Assyrians soldiers; so that tells us that 72,000 angels could whip 13.2 billion men, and that would be about twice the world's population. So not only does that tell us that Jesus is in total control, but that still even up to this moment, He could step out of the story, and leave us on our own..... and the Father

would have honored it, as Jesus said I “could” call My Father, and He “would” would supply, and this story of redemption would be over! Oh how God loves you, and me! Oh why me Lord????

Matthew 26:52–54 (NKJV) ⁵² But Jesus said to him, “Put your sword in its place, for all who take the sword will perish by the sword. ⁵³ Or do you think that I cannot now pray to My Father, and He will provide Me with more than twelve legions of angels? ⁵⁴ How then could the Scriptures be fulfilled, that it must happen thus?”

2 Kings 19:35 (NKJV) ³⁵ And it came to pass on a certain night that the angel of the LORD went out, and killed in the camp of the Assyrians one hundred and eighty-five thousand; and when *people* arose early in the morning, there were the corpses—all dead.

Mark 14:47 And one of those who stood by drew his sword and struck the servant of the high priest, and cut off his ear.

Peter Just Woke Up

Verse 47. What do you expect from Peter? He just woke up.

Mess when Handle Spiritual in Flesh

But here's what happens when you try to handle spiritual things in the flesh, you just make a bloody mess of it. Christian, we live in a spiritual realm even though we walk in a physical body. What I believe and I pray, the Lord is pleading with you, and the works of the flesh just make messes. We have to be thinking all of our physical actions in spiritual terms of, "What am I doing? Is it spiritual? Does it align with the spiritual things of God?"

Last Miracle – One of Grace / Jesus Cleans up Our Messes

Verse 47. We're told this servant's name was Malchus. God has made sure that he's recorded and preserved in history. He was known obviously in the High Court of the Priesthood as a servant. People would have known him as his story would come out. They would have come and asked him, "Did your ear get cut off," and he would have to testify, "It did, and Jesus put it back on." My mind has a hard time comprehending what that ear looked like laying on the ground, but Jesus picked it back up and healed him on the spot even though his betrayers at hand, they've come to kill him. Yet in his love and his grace he's going to do one last miracle.

John 18:10 (NKJV) ¹⁰ Then Simon Peter, having a sword, drew it and struck the high priest's servant, and cut off his right ear. The servant's name was Malchus.

This is the last miracle before the cross, and Jesus, he's cleaning up Peter's mess. If Jesus didn't heal Malchus, wouldn't have been a thief, two thieves to the left and right of Jesus. It would have been one thief, Jesus and Peter, for he would have been put to death for murder because this man Malchus would have bled out and died, and Jesus saved Peter from the death sentence twice. Once on the cross for his sin, and once in the garden for his flesh and impulsive behavior.

Back to Peter – Our Witness in our Actions

There's a great life application here in this action of Peter that I should spend a little time on, and that is again, that our physical actions carry spiritual significance with them. The way we respond and the things that we do, people then can evaluate that from a spiritual perspective, tying our actions to our spirit, our actions to our declaration of faith, our actions to our place of what we say we are, as we say, we're Christians.

Recently, I did business in the area and the transaction seemed to be fine. I made the payment, but then when I unloaded my product, I came to see that I was shorted the product. I called and say, "I came up short." To which the person says "No, that's right." I sent a picture clarifying, proving that I was shorted, to which the person responded, "Well, if you think that you were shorted, then I'll take care of it." Not taking responsibility saying, "You're absolutely right. You were shorted." Well, every week for a month I'm calling saying, "I'm still waiting for the rest of my product."

And I'll tell you, yes, it's a little irritating and I'll tell you, I don't like being ripped off or taken advantage of because I work hard for my wages, as do you. But here's what I constantly have to remind myself and I'm doing good on this one, but I can tell you I failed plenty of times on other ones. That at some point, when he connects and I connected it to him, that I'm a Christian, he's going to look at me, how do I behave as a follower of Jesus Christ? And if I get

rough with him, if I get short with him, if I lose my witness, then I am standing before him and I'm impacting the spiritual environment.

Do I think we are allowed to exercise our rights? Absolutely. But we have to exercise her rights within the spiritual behavior. And hence my point that I make. We must always be aware that what we say, how we say it, what we do, how we do it, when people connect that what we say, that we follow Jesus, then they will connect the two and tie the two together. Are we living up to what we say that we are?

I've had plenty of times where my prayer request is based off of this event with Peter and I've made a mess of something and I simply say to the Lord in my prayer time, "Lord, please clean up my mess. I acknowledge it. I created it. This is on me. I didn't do it wisely, but could you please just clean up my mess?" And I can tell you many times he does, because a broken, contrite, humble heart.

Jesus Leaves a Witness/Testimony Everywhere

But back to Malchus. Jesus leaves a testimony in all places. He leaves a testimony in villages. He leaves testimony on hillsides. He leaves testimonies on waters, and he leaves the testimony inside the Court of the Priests. How many people would have been coming up to Malchus that night and looking at his ear going, "Say what?" And you know Jesus leaves his testimony in his workplace, in his families, in the school campus, on the sand lot where people can come, and look, and see lives that were touched by Jesus. We can testify, "Yeah, he touched me, made me whole."

Mark 14:48 Then Jesus answered and said to them, "Have you come out, as against a robber, with swords and clubs to take Me?"

Mark 14:49 I was daily with you in the temple teaching, and you did not seize Me. But the Scriptures must be fulfilled."

Paradox's

Look at the paradox of this. You have to come with a lantern and torches to find the light of the world. You have to come with clubs and swords that take the peace, the Prince of Peace of the world.

Not in Self-Defense – But for their Sake (Every Person has to Decide for Self)

Verse 49. Jesus solidifying the scriptures. Is he saying it in self-defense? No, he doesn't need to defend himself. He's God. He is speaking to everybody who still has to make a decision. Every last person, club in hand, sword in hand, torch in hand, they will have to make a decision on who Jesus Christ is, and he speaks to them, letting them know this is what the scriptures foretold. He's letting them know all the prophecies of the Messiah to come, and that he is the I am. He's doing it for their sake, not his justification.

He speaks today to every one of you here that the scriptures might be fulfilled. As he would speak, "I am the Messiah that was promised to take your sin away, that separates you from a Holy God that sentences you to a judgment of hell and eternal damnation. But I am he who has come not to judge the world, but to save the world, and give you opportunity today that you can have new life if you'll put your faith and trust in him."

Jesus in Perfect Peace

Look in the midst of this. Several hundred soldiers with swords and torches, ears being chopped off, the chaos of men falling down and getting back up, and who knows how many small brush fires started when they fell down, lighting each other's garments on fire, and all of this chaos going on. And Jesus is at perfect peace because Jesus is their perfect surrender. Jesus knows that cup that has been ordained for him before the foundation of the world, and he loves the hand which hands him this cup. And because he trusts his father, he's at total peace of whatever is happening around him.

In Christian, that is a picture for us. If you don't have peace today, you have to go find peace. And there's a peace that can only be found through the Prince of Peace. There's a peace that he brings which passes all understanding, we're told in the scriptures. The Bible says: and that peace will come beyond all circumstances, and it will simply

come to the place of surrender and rest. Lord, I trust you. I know that you walk with me. I know that you are for me. I know that nothing can separate me from the love of Christ regardless of what I may have done. And now I can just rest in that, and you will find peace even in the midst of a harsh, chaotic environment.

Mark 14:35–36 (NKJV) ³⁵ He went a little farther, and fell on the ground, and prayed that if it were possible, the hour might pass from Him. ³⁶ And He said, "Abba, Father, all things *are* possible for You. Take this cup away from Me; nevertheless, not what I will, but what You will."

Mark 14:41–42 (NKJV) ⁴¹ Then He came the third time and said to them, "Are you still sleeping and resting? It is enough! The hour has come; behold, the Son of Man is being betrayed into the hands of sinners. ⁴² Rise, let us be going. See, My betrayer is at hand."

Mark 14:50 Then they all forsook Him and fled.

There is Future After Failure

Verse 50. They all fled, just as Jesus said that they would. Not only did they flee, they forsook, and it will continue on as Peter is staged for what we call "the anathema" where he says, "I never knew the man." We'll be getting into that in our next study. Read ahead. But just as Jesus said, "This night the shepherd will be strike, and the sheep will scatter," and here they flee just as Jesus said they would.

Mark 14:27–28 (NKJV) ²⁷ Then Jesus said to them, "All of you will be made to stumble because of Me this night, for it is written: 'I will strike the Shepherd, And the sheep will be scattered.' ²⁸ "But after I have been raised, I will go before you to Galilee."

The disciples boasted they'd never deny Jesus and saw no reason to pray. While, Jesus, the perfect man, cried out to His Father for strength in time of need. Little wonder the disciples fold under pressure, while Jesus holds it together. Peter and the other disciples, are the classic example of what happens when you trust in your own strength... Jesus was trusting in God.

But once again I want to say, "There's a future after failure, Christian." Whatever your failure is this week, maybe you forsook him, maybe you fled, maybe you did work of the flesh wielding the sword and made a mess. There's a future after your failure because God loves you, and he loves you because God loves you.

A Young Man Flees naked (14:51-52)

Mark 14:51 Now a certain young man followed Him, having a linen cloth thrown around his naked body. And the young men laid hold of him,

Mark 14:52 and he left the linen cloth and fled from them naked.

Probably John Mark

This is a strange insertion, so it would seem, until you think it through. Most Bible scholars believe the young man is John Mark is the young man, fled naked. John Mark is not an apostle, he was a ministry companion of Peter, he is the penman of this Gospel, but pretty much church history tells us he is recording the account of Jesus Christ as told by Peter. John Mark e has roots to the early church, as we see his mother's house was a place the early church met.

Acts 12:12 (NKJV) ¹² So, when he had considered *this*, he came to the house of Mary, the mother of John whose surname was Mark, where many were gathered together praying.

Mark – What a Night

This is a strange insertion, so it would seem, until you think it through. Most So he gets tagged in this story. I'm glad it's not my story haha. So John Mark penned this gospel as it was told to him by Peter. And if so, this is him putting his piece on, "Oh, I'll never forget that night. I can't tell you the chaos."

I suppose you could say, the young man barely escaped... Only barely...

Why Me?

Again, I had saw this news headline article. The question was being asked, "What's the number one question asked of Jesus?"

- You know how it goes, why do you allow evil on the earth?
- Why is there so much suffering?

- Where were you when this happened in my life?"

As soon as I saw that headline article, the first thing immediately my question was to Jesus Christ, "Why me? Why would you ever choose me, receive me and love me? Why me?" As I take communion as deep as it is, it's still just a glimpse. One day I'm going to get to see him and say, "Why me?" And I know what he's going to say because this Bible tells me. He is going to say, "Because I love you." That's what he says to every one of you, "Because I love you." That's it, period. "Because I love you." There's nothing more to be said when it is said, "I love you." As we take communion you can ask yourself, "Why me?" And as you take communion, you'll hear him simply say, "Because I love you. Because I love you."

God Says Come

Today we come and are gifted this Word from God Himself, His very heart opened before us, the calling to come near, be drawn to Him.

[Matthew 11:28 \(NKJV\)](#) ²⁸ Come to Me, all you who labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest.

The Word of God is Living and Powerful, and is ready, and will do a mighty work in our lives.

[Hebrews 4:12 \(NKJV\)](#) ¹² For the word of God is living and powerful, and sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing even to the division of soul and spirit, and of joints and marrow, and is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart.

In Every Study

- Who Is God? (How Great is He?)
- What Does He Think of Me? (How Wonderful Are His Thoughts Towards Me?)
- What Does He Want Me to Do?
- What Can I Boldly Request of Him?
- What Do I Need to Be on Guard of When I Leave Here Today?

Boldly come to the throne of grace, ask God to reveal Himself in a mighty way to you, and to do I might work in you, and through you.

[Hebrews 4:16 \(NKJV\)](#) ¹⁶ Let us therefore come boldly to the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy and find grace to help in time of need.

End of Study

Mark 14:53-65

Today's Passage

Mark 14:53–65 (NKJV) ⁵³ And they led Jesus away to the high priest; and with him were assembled all the chief priests, the elders, and the scribes. ⁵⁴ But Peter followed Him at a distance, right into the courtyard of the high priest. And he sat with the servants and warmed himself at the fire. ⁵⁵ Now the chief priests and all the council sought testimony against Jesus to put Him to death, but found none. ⁵⁶ For many bore false witness against Him, but their testimonies did not agree. ⁵⁷ Then some rose up and bore false witness against Him, saying, ⁵⁸ “We heard Him say, ‘I will destroy this temple made with hands, and within three days I will build another made without hands.’” ⁵⁹ But not even then did their testimony agree. ⁶⁰ And the high priest stood up in the midst and asked Jesus, saying, “Do You answer nothing? What *is it* these men testify against You?” ⁶¹ But He kept silent and answered nothing. Again the high priest asked Him, saying to Him, “Are You the Christ, the Son of the Blessed?” ⁶² Jesus said, “I am. And you will see the Son of Man sitting at the right hand of the Power, and coming with the clouds of heaven.” ⁶³ Then the high priest tore his clothes and said, “What further need do we have of witnesses? ⁶⁴ You have heard the blasphemy! What do you think?” And they all condemned Him to be deserving of death. ⁶⁵ Then some began to spit on Him, and to blindfold Him, and to beat Him, and to say to Him, “Prophecy!” And the officers struck Him with the palms of their hands.

Historic Present

So here Mark, he takes us in what is considered and called in the structure of these sentences, historic present. He wants to take us back to a historical event as if it was present at this very moment. Essentially, what's being said is he wants us to relive it like we're there. May we re-live this like we're there, experience it like we're there, and let it move us and let it shape us and let it change us as it's intended to do.

God Says Come

Today we come and are gifted this Word from God Himself, His very heart opened before us, the calling to come near, be drawn to Him.

Matthew 11:28 (NKJV) ²⁸ Come to Me, all *you* who labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest.

The Word of God is Living and Powerful, and is ready, and will do a mighty work in our lives.

Hebrews 4:12 (NKJV) ¹² For the word of God is living and powerful, and sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing even to the division of soul and spirit, and of joints and marrow, and is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart.

In Every Study

- Who Is God? (How Great is He?)
- What Does He Think of Me? (How Wonderful Are His Thoughts Towards Me?)
- What Does He Want Me to Do?
- What Can I Boldly Request of Him?
- What Do I Need to Be on Guard of When I Leave Here Today?

Boldly come to the throne of grace, ask God to reveal Himself in a mighty way to you, and to do I might work in you, and through you.

Hebrews 4:16 (NKJV) ¹⁶ Let us therefore come boldly to the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy and find grace to help in time of need.

Jesus' Mock Trial Before the Sanhedrin (14:53-65)

Mark 14:53 And they led Jesus away to the high priest; and with him were assembled all the chief priests, the elders, and the scribes.

Led Away

It says here they “led” Jesus away, but that is only true in action, not direction. Since up in Caesarea Philippi, Jesus has been on a steady route south, with His face set like steel, that He was coming down, so to go up, up to the cross, to rescue and redeem Ray Bolla. These men may be leading Him in this physical sense, but it is love for me and you that is leading Him in the spiritual and eternal life sense. Jesus is led by love, not these men.

Isaiah 50:6–7 (NKJV) ⁶ I gave My back to those who struck Me, And My cheeks to those who plucked out the beard; I did not hide My face from shame and spitting. ⁷ "For the Lord GOD will help Me; Therefore I will not be disgraced; Therefore I have set My face like a flint, And I know that I will not be ashamed.

Hebrews 12:1–2 (NKJV) ¹ Therefore we also, since we are surrounded by so great a cloud of witnesses, let us lay aside every weight, and the sin which so easily ensnares us, and let us run with endurance the race that is set before us, ² looking unto Jesus, the author and finisher of our faith, who for the joy that was set before Him endured the cross, despising the shame, and has sat down at the right hand of the throne of God.

John 3:16–17 (NKJV) ¹⁶ For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have everlasting life. ¹⁷ For God did not send His Son into the world to condemn the world, but that the world through Him might be saved.

Caiphas is High Priest

The high priest is Caiaphas we are told in the other Gospel accounts.

John 18:12–14 (NKJV) ¹² Then the detachment of troops and the captain and the officers of the Jews arrested Jesus and bound Him. ¹³ And they led Him away to Annas first, for he was the father-in-law of Caiaphas who was high priest that year. ¹⁴ Now it was Caiaphas who advised the Jews that it was expedient that one man should die for the people.

Caiaphas - The high priest of Israel appointed about A.D. 18 by the Roman procurator, Valerius Gratus. Caiaphas and his father-in-law, Annas, were high priests when John the Baptist began his preaching (Matt. 26:3, 57; Luke 3:2). Caiaphas also was a member of the Sadducees.

*Youngblood, R. F., Bruce, F. F., & Harrison, R. K., Thomas Nelson Publishers (Eds.). (1995). In Nelson's new illustrated Bible dictionary. Nashville, TN: Thomas Nelson, Inc.

ANNAS— one of the high priests at Jerusalem, along with CAIAPHAS, when John the Baptist began his ministry, about A.D. 26 (Luke 3:2). Quirinius, governor of Syria, appointed Annas as high priest about A.D. 6 or 7. Although Annas was deposed by Valerius Gratus, the Procurator of Judea, about A.D. 15, he was still the most influential of the priests and continued to carry the title of high priest (Luke 3:2; Acts 4:6).

After his removal, Annas was officially succeeded by each of his five sons, one grandson, and his son-in-law CAIAPHAS, the high priest who presided at the trial of Jesus (Matt. 26:3, 57; John 18:13–14). During His trial, Jesus was first taken to Annas, who then sent Jesus to Caiaphas (John 18:13, 24). Both Annas and Caiaphas were among the principal examiners when Peter and John were arrested (Acts 4:6).

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God Sends Witness Ahead to High Priest – Malchus

Verse 53 here, Jesus now is before the high priest. We see part of the religious organization to bring Jesus before the high priest would have been Malchus, the high priest's servant, and his coordinating plans with Judas. So, Malchus would have been back to the courtyard here of the high priest. It was his job to be at the beckoning call of the high priest to serve him in any way whether it goes to the arrest in the garden, or here now, this trow. So Malchus would have been standing there, is the point that is being made, and his shoulder, his robe, the side of his face, his hair would have had blood on it because of Peter lopping off his ear. Here he would have been standing in front of the high priest who surely would have recognized his blood and been saying, "What in the world happened to you?" So hear the witness of Malchus before the high priest. "My ear was cut off, and this Jesus who we brought before you put it back on."

So Jesus is sending a witness to the high priest again, along with all the streams of lepers that have come before this high priest in the past three years. Now here is his right hand servant testifying to the love and the power of Jesus Christ. Jesus is continually sending witness to all. "I love you and I'm willing to die for you that your sin may be washed away." Even the high priest who is going to condemn Him to death.

33 Years Prior – Herod's Genocide / Priest Present in this Room this Day

Now consider this with me. Herod, thirty-three years prior had gathered the chief priest and scribes, and asked where is the Christ to be born. Then Herod unleashed a genocide upon every child under the age of two who lived in that region and surrounding.

- Many of those who were called by Herod, no doubt are among these in this group tonight. Annas was high priest around 6AD history records, thus he would have been very high on the religious ladder when Herod is asking where the “king of the Jews” was to be born, and then went and killed all the babies under the age of two in Bethlehem. Caiaphas, was made high priest in 18AD, he too very well could have been among those called to Herod and personally saw the genocide.
- Genocide in a personal lifetime is not some common event, did not any of them say, remember the star, remember the genocide, remember the word of God that foretold this to come? Did any of them ask at this moment could this be Him that we waited for, could this be the one and He escaped the wrath of Herod? Did anyone say (and they did not), wait He was born in Bethlehem, of the tribe of Judea, of the lineage of David?
- Did anyone (and they did not) ask, how do you explain all these miracles? Since this man started preaching 3.5 years ago, there has been a steady stream of lepers coming to Jerusalem for inspection of the priest and being declared “clean”.

Matthew 2:1–6 (NKJV) ¹ Now after Jesus was born in Bethlehem of Judea in the days of Herod the king, behold, wise men from the East came to Jerusalem, ² saying, “Where is He who has been born King of the Jews? For we have seen His star in the East and have come to worship Him.” ³ When Herod the king heard this, he was troubled, and all Jerusalem with him. ⁴ And when he had gathered all the chief priests and scribes of the people together, he inquired of them where the Christ was to be born. ⁵ So they said to him, “In Bethlehem of Judea, for thus it is written by the prophet: ⁶ ‘But you, Bethlehem, in the land of Judah, Are not the least among the rulers of Judah; For out of you shall come a Ruler Who will shepherd My people Israel.’”

Matthew 2:16–18 (NKJV) ¹⁶ Then Herod, when he saw that he was deceived by the wise men, was exceedingly angry; and he sent forth and put to death all the male children who were in Bethlehem and in all its districts, from two years old and under, according to the time which he had determined from the wise men. ¹⁷ Then was fulfilled what was spoken by Jeremiah the prophet, saying: ¹⁸ “A voice was heard in Ramah, Lamentation, weeping, and great mourning, Rachel weeping for her children, Refusing to be comforted, Because they are no more.”

News article – When will the Messiah Come?

People today still ask, when will the Messiah come? Would we think it be different 2,000 years ago, in the place the very Messiah was to come? There is a reported news article just last month that President Trump sent a delegation of his advisors to go to Jerusalem and ask the leading rabbi when the Messiah would come. Israel and the religious people of Israel have been asking that question or 4000 years. They are still asking today, as they were 2000 years ago. And here the Messiah is standing before them and they totally miss Him. They miss Jesus because of greed, lust of the flesh, and the riches of the world.

Isaiah 9:6–7 (NKJV) ⁶ For unto us a Child is born, Unto us a Son is given; And the government will be upon His shoulder. And His name will be called Wonderful, Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace. ⁷ Of the increase of His government and peace There will be no end, Upon the throne of David and over His kingdom, To order it and establish it with judgment and justice From that time forward, even forever. The zeal of the LORD of hosts will perform this.

Isaiah 7:14 (NKJV) ¹⁴ Therefore the Lord Himself will give you a sign: Behold, the virgin shall conceive and bear a Son, and shall call His name Immanuel.

Micah 5:2 (NKJV) ² “But you, Bethlehem Ephrathah, Though you are little among the thousands of Judah, Yet out of you shall come forth to Me The One to be Ruler in Israel, Whose goings forth are from of old, From everlasting.”

How About You Today

I believe without a doubt right here, right now, Jesus is standing before someone, saying I am He..... will You receive Me today. Today is the day, I pray you hear the Spirit calling you. You will die in your sin unless you do something about it! And Jesus is what you do about it!

2 Corinthians 6:2 (NKJV) ² For He says: “In an acceptable time I have heard you, And in the day of salvation I have helped you.” Behold, now is the accepted time; behold, now is the day of salvation.

Mark 14:54 But Peter followed Him at a distance, right into the courtyard of the high priest. And he sat with the servants and warmed himself at the fire.

Always Bad – When Follow at Distance

It will always turn out bad Christian when you follow Jesus at a distance

Mark 14:55 Now the chief priests and all the council sought testimony against Jesus to put Him to death, but found none.

Need Blasphemy and Treason

The Jewish council, they want to lay charge of Jesus for blasphemy, saying that he's God. Now, the Romans are not going to crucify Jesus for being God, and the Jews know that so they have to change the story, to twist the story, to get Jesus for treason or rebellion against Rome, and hence why they will turn this story around to indict Jesus for treason.

The Spotless Lamb

The Lamb had to be without spot or blemish, and it was the responsibility of the priests to inspect the lamb before it was to be a sacrifice. If the priests found any fault the lamb was to be rejected. The priest found no fault with Jesus.

John 1:29 (NKJV) ²⁹ The next day John saw Jesus coming toward him, and said, "Behold! The Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world!

Mark 14:56 For many bore false witness against Him, but their testimonies did not agree.

Law of Moses – Must have 2 Witnesses

So the law of Moses stated that no one could be found guilty of any charge unless there was at least two witnesses. And of course, their testimony would have to agree together. And so they can't even get two witnesses in accordance with the law of Moses. So once again, the illegal trial that is happening here. So illegal is this trial, that the false witnesses should have been killed (according to the Law – Dt 19), but they are let go, thus amplifying how illegal this trial is.

Deuteronomy 19:15–20 (NKJV) ¹⁵ "One witness shall not rise against a man concerning any iniquity or any sin that he commits; by the mouth of two or three witnesses the matter shall be established. ¹⁶ If a false witness rises against any man to testify against him of wrongdoing, ¹⁷ then both men in the controversy shall stand before the LORD, before the priests and the judges who serve in those days. ¹⁸ And the judges shall make careful inquiry, and indeed, if the witness is a false witness, who has testified falsely against his brother, ¹⁹ then you shall do to him as he thought to have done to his brother; so you shall put away the evil from among you. ²⁰ And those who remain shall hear and fear, and hereafter they shall not again commit such evil among you.

Jewish Nation – Valued Life

And in this hearing the reason they wouldn't have a trial by night was to make sure. It wasn't at night was so that witnesses could come and there could be no collaboration in the darkness. And so deeply did the nation hold the value of life and how far United States of America has gone on the value of life, whether it's in the womb or on the streets of Baltimore. So greatly did they value life that if on the procession to the death, whatever means that would have been, that if someone stepped out of the crowd and said, "I find this man innocent," the whole procession would have to stop. And it was a return to another trial hearing, and the whole process would begin all over. And it was recorded that sometimes this would happen four or five times before the final decision was carried out. And so may I make the point here. It is dark, but the next day, Pilate himself will say, "I find no fault in this man." That by Jewish law, they should've went back to the beginning and said, "Let's review this case all over again."

Mark 14:57 Then some rose up and bore false witness against Him, saying,

Mark 14:58 "We heard Him say, 'I will destroy this temple made with hands, and within three days I will build another made without hands.' "

Mark 14:59 But not even then did their testimony agree.

Misquote Jesus

They misquote Jesus, as many people do, saying that Jesus said he'd destroy that physical temple, but Jesus was referring to his body. And so they misrepresent that statement.

John 2:19–21 (NKJV) ¹⁹ Jesus answered and said to them, "Destroy this temple, and in three days I will raise it up." ²⁰ Then the Jews said, "It has taken forty-six years to build this temple, and will You raise it up in three days?" ²¹ But He was speaking of the temple of His body.

Only Truth

Only the Truth can withstand cross-examination.

Mark 14:60 And the high priest stood up in the midst and asked Jesus, saying, “Do You answer nothing? What is it these men testify against You?”

Notice the Ploy of Enemy – Self-Indict

Verse 60, a typical human ploy of when you know you don't have a solid case. What you try to do then is take the person and put them on their heels and try to get them to self-indict themselves. To say something that you could then manipulate and make it mean something that the person is totally not saying. This is what the high priest is trying to do at this point because the mouth of the witnesses is not building a case at all.

Why do they even need a case, you may ask? They've already determined that he needs to die. Well, they need the case to present it to the world, and in this case, the world is the Romans. You need to build this case to get the Romans to agree with you because you've lost the power to enact capital punishment, to carry out death via capital punishment. So they need to make some type of case to present it to the Roman government that would sway them to kill Jesus. That's why this is called a mock trial.

This play by the high priest to get Jesus to speak so he can manipulate what Jesus says to take it out of context or to swing it to say and mean something completely opposite is no different than what continually happens today. As Christians are definitely put on this hot seat, they're put on the back of their heels, and they keep getting goaded, and goaded, and goaded until they make that one statement that does come out as critical, or unloving, or judgmental. The other 99 statements that were made that were loving and truthful, they all get overwritten and overrode by this one statement. So Christian, be careful how you respond to these hot topic issues of today. Recognize many of these challenges are just mere and pure setups to get you to speak and say something that that one Tweet, that one post, that one statement then is the one that is pointed back to you over, and over, and over.

When they have no case, they try to put the ownership back on you to prove your innocence. When they can't prove you guilty, then they try to switch it and turn it, and make you try to prove that you're innocent. Many Christians fall for it because they allow them to put them in the place that they're viewed as guilty and they try to prove their innocence. So be careful. Be very wise on how you respond.

Once again as we talk about ministry model, every physical action carries a spiritual witness with it to those who are looking on at you. Peter, his action in the flesh would carry a spiritual consequence as the witness because he's identified himself as a follower of Christ.

So notice Jesus doesn't respond to all the false accusations. He just remains silent and there's a great application of wisdom for us. Don't get into responding to foolishness. Better to remain silent then try to respond to foolishness. Argue with a fool, and you've just entered yourself into a conversation with a fool.

Mark 14:61 But He kept silent and answered nothing. Again the high priest asked Him, saying to Him, “Are You the Christ, the Son of the Blessed?”

Jews Believed – Messiah to be Son of God

Hey, catch what's being said here real clear in verse 61. they believe that the Messiah, the Christ, would be the son of God, the blessed. So they know that Messiah would be the son of God.

Isaiah 9:6–7 (NKJV) ⁶ For unto us a Child is born, Unto us a Son is given; And the government will be upon His shoulder. And His name will be called Wonderful, Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace. ⁷ Of the increase of His government and peace There will be no end, Upon the throne of David and over His kingdom, To order it and establish it with judgment and justice From that time forward, even forever. The zeal of the LORD of hosts will perform this.

Isaiah 7:14 (NKJV) ¹⁴ Therefore the Lord Himself will give you a sign: Behold, the virgin shall conceive and bear a Son, and shall call His name Immanuel.

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Mark 14:62 Jesus said, "I am. And you will see the Son of Man sitting at the right hand of the Power, and coming with the clouds of heaven."

Every Person will See Jesus in Power

Now verse 61, this question he answers very directly because this is pure truth. "Yes, I am the Christ. I am the son of the blessed." Then he adds that with power, the consequences of the rejection or the acceptance of that statement. To one seeing him come, verse 62, in power gives great power. To another who rejects the position, the power will be revealed. It just will not be in their favor and for their deliverance. So that's the same power, but one power is to be feared and one power is to be praised, and Jesus gives everyone the opportunity to choose but the fact is, everyone will see him coming in his power as we're told in the Epistles. That the name of Jesus Christ, every knee will bow and every tongue will confess. That's rather you confess to him as savior, every man will confess him as the Christ but sadly, some will be too late to claim him as the savior. For that decision is made here now in this breath and this moment of life.

Philippians 2:9–11 (NKJV) ⁹ Therefore God also has highly exalted Him and given Him the name which is above every name, ¹⁰ that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of those in heaven, and of those on earth, and of those under the earth, ¹¹ and that every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father.

But Why Wait

But if you are a Christian here today, why wait to see His power. He offers you His power today, to live the victorious, exciting, Christian life. You don't have to endure this world, you can thrive, experience God, be used by God. The purpose of life is to not arrive at death safely, but live life in its fullness.

John 10:10 (NKJV) ¹⁰ The thief does not come except to steal, and to kill, and to destroy. I have come that they may have life, and that they may have it more abundantly.

Mark 14:63 Then the high priest tore his clothes and said, "What further need do we have of witnesses?

Mark 14:64 You have heard the blasphemy! What do you think?" And they all condemned Him to be deserving of death.

Be Accused of the Truth

In verse 64, "I say, you're going to falsely accuse me, and falsely accused me on the truth."

Not to be Put to Death on Same Day

Now, what the Jewish law and government had shaped into this law of Moses was that their law said you could not put someone to death on the same day that they were found guilty of a crime that was meant to death. So if there was a crime and there was a vote and it was found guilty, they had all agreed that you would not put the person to death on the same day and that everyone was to go home by themselves, sleep on it, think on it, and come back and confirm that they were still all in agreement. And what it did was remove emotion and gave time to simmer and to think things over.

And Christian, if I could encourage you greatly today, what a wonderful application for all of us today. When you feel someone needs to be put to death, and I mean with your tongue, with your correction, with your rebuke, that you would go home and sleep on it and then you would come back and you would be sure that you were in the right manner and that your heart was right. And that you weren't responding to emotion and being quick with the sword. Like Peter, I see a great application here.

Mark 14:65 Then some began to spit on Him, and to blindfold Him, and to beat Him, and to say to Him, "Prophecy!" And the officers struck Him with the palms of their hands.

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So here Mark, he takes us in what is considered and called in the structure of these sentences, historic present. He wants to take us back to a historical event as if it was present at this very moment. Essentially, what's being said is

he wants us to relive it like we're there. May we re-live this like we're there, experience it like we're there, and let it move us and let it shape us and let it change us as it's intended to do.

Slaps – With Hands Held Together by Jesus

Palms of their hands, and it could also be translated equally so in the original language to mean “with clubs in their hands”. The scriptures tell us that Jesus holds all things together. By all things they were made and by all things they're held together. And Jesus still allows these rods to be held together while they beat and they pulverized him.

Colossians 1:15–17 (NKJV) ¹⁵ He is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn over all creation. ¹⁶ For by Him all things were created that are in heaven and that are on earth, visible and invisible, whether thrones or dominions or principalities or powers. All things were created through Him and for Him. ¹⁷ And He is before all things, and in Him all things consist.

Beaten Beyond Recognition

And so with this bag over his head, they are beating him. They are beating him. They are beating him, they are beating him and the blows just keep coming and yet he still won't stop.

Isaiah tells us so beaten was he that his appearance was beyond recognition. No one could recognize who he was after this beating, but of course knew it was Him.

Isaiah 52:14 (NKJV) ¹⁴ Just as many were astonished at you, So His visage was marred more than any man, And His form more than the sons of men;

These Stones Would Cry Out

So when Jesus came in on the triumphal entry at the beginning of the week, the crowds cheered, "Hosanna, Hosanna. Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord," and the religious leaders, these religious leaders all say to Jesus, "Tell your disciples to be quiet," to which Jesus answered and said, "If they were to remain silent, these very rocks would cry out." And it makes me think about that the God of wonders, who created the heavens and the earth, who holds all things together in his hands, it says, "All of creation groans waiting for his return." And here is the God of wonders, the Son of the Blessed being beaten, pulverized by his very creation, and I wonder how creation groaned as they watched this beating take place.

Luke 19:40 (NKJV) ⁴⁰ But He answered and said to them, "I tell you that if these should keep silent, the stones would immediately cry out."

Romans 8:22–23 (NKJV) ²² For we know that the whole creation groans and labors with birth pangs together until now. ²³ Not only that, but we also who have the firstfruits of the Spirit, even we ourselves groan within ourselves, eagerly waiting for the adoption, the redemption of our body.

I wonder how the heavens groaned as they watched this beating taken place. The angels of heaven watching the Son of the Blessed being beaten for a crime he did not commit. The father watching, weeping as his son is beaten and pulverized by the very creation that he created. Beyond my comprehension, sometimes I just have to read it and just be quiet before it. Sit and dwell and meditate on it, and be still before it. And when I do, I will know that he is God, and I will know what my value and worth is to him. If he was willing, he the Son of the Blessed Father, Lord of all creation, if he was willing for me, that's how far you would go for me. The amazing thing, it's not even daybreak. This is only the beginning. We got to at least nine more hours of our Lord being brutalized and beaten, for the price of sin is no cheap payment, but he, as we're told in John 13, loved them to the end.

John 13:1 (NKJV) ¹ Now before the Feast of the Passover, when Jesus knew that His hour had come that He should depart from this world to the Father, having loved His own who were in the world, He loved them to the end.

God of Wonders

We sing God of Wonders, and this is what the God of Wonders is enduring.

God of Wonders

By Third Day

Lord of all creation

Of the water, earth and sky

The Heavens are Your Tabernacle

Glory to the Lord on high

God of wonders, beyond our galaxy
You are holy, holy
The universe declares Your majesty
You are holy, holy

Lord of Heaven and Earth
Lord of Heaven and Earth

So Early in the morning
I will celebrate the light
And as I stumble into darkness (I will call Your name by night)
I will call Your name by night

God of wonders, beyond our galaxy
You are holy, holy
The universe declares Your majesty
You are holy, holy

Lord of Heaven and Earth (Lord of Heaven and Earth)
Lord of Heaven and Earth (Lord of Heaven and Earth)

Hallelujah to the Lord of Heaven and earth
Hallelujah to the Lord of Heaven and earth
Hallelujah to the Lord of Heaven and earth

Sing God of wonders

God of wonders, beyond our galaxy
You are holy, holy
Precious Lord reveal your heart to me
Father holy, holy (Oh God almighty)
The universe declares Your majesty (You are holy)
You are holy, holy (yes You are)
holy, holy, holy, holy

Hallelujah to the Lord of Heaven and earth
Hallelujah to the Lord of Heaven and earth

World Still Beats – But I will Praise

The world still beats Him, but may we as those saved by grace, worship and praise Him

How do I Respond

Verse 65, what Jesus would go through, what a humbling place that he allowed himself to become, what a brutal place he would allow himself to go so that I might be a forgiven person today, so that I might be set free today, that I might have eternal life today and likewise for you. What he was willing to endure, the son of the blessed. He would say, "Yes, I am the son of the blessed. I am the son of God," and he was, and they would beat him. They would punch him and they would pulverize him, the son of the blessed. He was, he is, and he always will be the blessed God, and when he lowered himself to be, to partake, so that I might be a forgiven person.

How do I respond to this? I think there's only one way to respond and that is to give my whole life and say, "Here I am, Lord. Take me, do with me what you want. I'm yours and all that I have is yours."

Oh God, here's my Bible, Here's my money. Here's me. Use me, God - Gladys Aylward

Gladys Aylward

I love the Gladys Aylward quote of her giving herself completely and fully. What a demonstration of a life. Who was she? She was a missionary in the early 1900s who wanted to be a missionary in China, but the China Mission Society says, "You're not qualified." So she went and stopped in at the travel agent and says, "How much for a ticket to China?" To which they said, "You don't want to go there. You'll get killed. There's a war going on between China and Russia right now." She says, "I don't care," and she put a down payment, 40 pounds, English money. She put a down payment of a dollar, one pound down. And every month, every week after working and scrubbing floors and cleaning houses, she'd go and put another pound down, another dollar, another two pounds, another lump of down payment until she finally had the money. And she got on a train, and who knows how long that train ride was, a couple of months to get to China and she has an amazing story of being used in China because she would not retract what God had put on her heart because God had changed her heart and changed her life, and she loved her Lord and she just wanted to serve her Lord. I see that picture for me. How do I respond to anything other than to give my whole life to him and to serve him, to worship him?

Many Give Jesus Their Sin – But not thier Lives

I have no problem to say it and say it boldly. Lots of people want to give Jesus their sin, but they don't want to give Jesus their life. They're more than happy to say, "Here. Yeah, you take my sin, and go get beat and spit upon, pummeled and shamed, son of the blessed, the blessed. But to give you my whole life, I've got things to do. My life, I own it. It's my body. I own it. It's my money, I own it." Lots of people want to give Jesus their sin, but they don't want to give him their lives.

And don't you worry about qualifications. There's only one qualification you need, and that is to be his fully and he'll do the rest from there. Some people won't give themselves fully. They'll give reasons why they can't, and why they won't serve and pour themselves out. I love again what this woman, Gladys Aylward, said in that she goes, "I know I God's first choice. It was probably some man, highly equipped and gifted, but he said no so God just went down until he found someone who said yes."

I wasn't God's first choice for what I've done in China...I don't know who it was...it must have been a man...a well-educated man. I don't know what happened. Perhaps he died. Perhaps he wasn't willing...and God looked down...and saw Gladys Aylward...and God said, 'Well, she's willing.'

When the war broke out between the Japanese and the Chinese, after this tension with the Russians, she was able to trek 100 orphans three weeks through the mountainous regions of China to get them to safety and did not lose one of them, with no food, with no money. Yet, somehow she got 100 orphans out of a war zone of a town that was destroyed and got them to safety. Then she would say, "I wasn't God's first pick. It was probably some man, gifted and talented, but God went down the list until he found someone who said yes and 100 lives and then some changed."

Moravian Missionaries

I'm reminded of two Moravian dear saints and missionaries. They heard of an island that had 600 slaves on it, a plantation, a working plantation, a harsh working plantation, and they wanted to reach those 600, the burden that was upon their heart, for them to know the truth of Jesus Christ, but they were declined to come. There was only one option for them if they wanted to reach these 600, and that was to sell themselves as slaves to this plantation owner and become a slave and live among the slaves, do the hard work like the slaves, sleep in the harsh condition, live on the scarcity of food and clothing, to give up their rights to have spouses and children and the comfort of the great place that they lived. And yet they did it, sold themselves as slaves to go reach those who would never have heard.

Worship Opens Floodgates

Christian, before you can work and serve the Lord, you truly have to be a worshipper. That's what the world will be drawn to, peoples whose heart are simply poured out in worshipping him, lifting his praise and his goodness, repeating his words. This is the son of the blessed. This is the Christ who loves you, came for you, offered his life for you, who when we continually think of who he is and praise lifts out of our hearts and we just live this life of overflowing beauty and love. Praise to me is like the floodgate, and many times my heart is locked up and shut up like a gate is upon it because I am so busy planning on what's the next work to be done or what's the next thing for me, for my personal wellbeing. And as good as those things may be, they get to be the priority, and then when I sit and I just put that on the side. One of the things I've learned to do is keep a little scrap of paper next to my desk so, "Oh, this thought's important. I'm just going to write it down and put it over here, and I'll deal with it later," and that frees me up of saying, "I better deal with it now before I forget." Well, I just wrote it down. I'll take care of it later, but for now I'm just sitting before the Lord.

I take a passage and I look for praise, I look for reasons to exalt him, and I look at this passage and I just zero in on this word, son of the blessed. And I say, "You are the son of the blessed. Oh the Lord God on high, worthy to be praised. And then all of a sudden I find my heart just opening up. I just find myself, praise just flowing out of me, and when praise flows out of me, it's just love gushing. It's washing over me and it's amazing how then, I can then let the floodgate continually flow as I reach out to minister to others. I'm now just letting that love flow from me onto them, and I see them for their need and their place, not as something to fear or get anxious about sharing the love of Christ, but the excitement. They can be set free. They can have hope. They can be a forgiven person tonight. Praise opens the floodgate.

Gift of Tongues

Oh, I hear continually people desiring the gift of tongues. They think the gift of tongues then is the most spiritual gift of all, which is not in accordance with the scripture. The gift of tongue is just one of the gifts of the Holy Spirit, but our brother Paul says, "Above all things, seek love. Love is the preeminent that you and I are to be seeking from the Lord, of the Lord, and to have." Love is the greatest gift. Jesus Christ is love. Jesus Christ is God's gift to man.

So there's often confusion on tongues. Well, let me just explain it simply. Tongues is different from prophecy, and prophecy you'll know when someone says, thus says the Lord. It's a word from the Lord to the people. But tongues as we're told in the scripture is man speaking to God. Prophecy is God speaking to man; tongues is man speaking to God. And so anytime you hear someone so-called speak in tongues and then the interpretation goes, thus says the Lord, you know someone's off and it's really both of them because neither of them should have spoke. But tongues is man speaking to the Lord. Tongues is a prayer language to the Lord. Tongues is the place of praise to the Lord, to which I say to any and to all, it's good you seek gifts and you want this gift. Just look at it that it is a gift. It's not in your control to have any gift. It's given by the giver if he so chooses.

But what you do have that you can exercise right now is prayer and is praise in the language, in the tongue that you know, and what I say to some people, and maybe someone here needs to hear it, some people, they want to speak in tongues, but they won't speak in English. They won't pray in English and they won't pray in English. I just say to you, you can exercise this floodgate of praise and worship and adoration, speaking unto the Lord and glorifying the Lord in the language that you do know and he's worthy. He's so worthy.

1 Corinthians 12:28–31 (NKJV) ²⁸ And God has appointed these in the church: first apostles, second prophets, third teachers, after that miracles, then gifts of healings, helps, administrations, varieties of tongues. ²⁹ Are all apostles? Are all prophets? Are all teachers? Are all workers of miracles? ³⁰ Do all have gifts of healings? Do all speak with tongues? Do all interpret? ³¹ But earnestly desire the best gifts. And yet I show you a more excellent way.

1 Corinthians 13:1–3 (NKJV) ¹ Though I speak with the tongues of men and of angels, but have not love, I have become sounding brass or a clanging cymbal. ² And though I have *the gift of* prophecy, and understand all mysteries and all knowledge, and though I have all faith, so that I could remove mountains, but have not love, I am nothing. ³ And though I bestow all my goods to feed *the poor*, and though I give my body to be burned, but have not love, it profits me nothing.

1 Corinthians 14:1–2 (NKJV) ¹ Pursue love, and desire spiritual *gifts*, but especially that you may prophesy. ² For he who speaks in a tongue does not speak to men but to God, for no one understands *him*; however, in the spirit he speaks mysteries.

Conclusion

God Says Come

Today we come and are gifted this Word from God Himself, His very heart opened before us, the calling to come near, be drawn to Him.

Matthew 11:28 (NKJV) ²⁸ Come to Me, all you who labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest.

The Word of God is Living and Powerful, and is ready, and will do a mighty work in our lives.

Hebrews 4:12 (NKJV) ¹² For the word of God is living and powerful, and sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing even to the division of soul and spirit, and of joints and marrow, and is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart.

In Every Study

- Who Is God? (How Great is He?)
- What Does He Think of Me? (How Wonderful Are His Thoughts Towards Me?)
- What Does He Want Me to Do?
- What Can I Boldly Request of Him?
- What Do I Need to Be on Guard of When I Leave Here Today?

Boldly come to the throne of grace, ask God to reveal Himself in a mighty way to you, and to do I might work in you, and through you.

Hebrews 4:16 (NKJV) ¹⁶ Let us therefore come boldly to the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy and find grace to help in time of need.

End of Study

Mark 14:66-72

There is a Future After Failure

Mark 14:66–72 (NKJV) ⁶⁶ Now as Peter was below in the courtyard, one of the servant girls of the high priest came. ⁶⁷ And when she saw Peter warming himself, she looked at him and said, "You also were with Jesus of Nazareth." ⁶⁸ But he denied it, saying, "I neither know nor understand what you are saying." And he went out on the porch, and a rooster crowed. ⁶⁹ And the servant girl saw him again, and began to say to those who stood by, "This is one of them." ⁷⁰ But he denied it again. And a little later those who stood by said to Peter again, "Surely you are *one* of them; for you are a Galilean, and your speech shows *it*." ⁷¹ Then he began to curse and swear, "I do not know this Man of whom you speak!" ⁷² A second time *the* rooster crowed. Then Peter called to mind the word that Jesus had said to him, "Before the rooster crows twice, you will deny Me three times." And when he thought about it, he wept.

In all 4 Accounts - Recorded for a Reason – There is a Future after Failure

This account of Peter's denial is recorded in Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John. All four Gospel accounts record this, and there's a reason for it, and it's because God wants you and me to know that there's a future after failure. And we're going to see that in the life of Peter, obviously.

God Wants and Gives Fellowship

In 1st John 1, we read of the fellowship that is ours with God and in God. And the word there for fellowship (koinonia) in the original language is quite rich and quite deep. It speaks of a relationship that is one. It speaks of a relationship that communes. It speaks of a relationship that shares life. And in that relationship, is where "joy" can be had.

1 John 1:1–4 (NKJV) ¹ That which was from the beginning, which we have heard, which we have seen with our eyes, which we have looked upon, and our hands have handled, concerning the Word of life—² the life was manifested, and we have seen, and bear witness, and declare to you that eternal life which was with the Father and was manifested to us—³ that which we have seen and heard we declare to you, that you also may have fellowship with us; and truly our fellowship *is* with the Father and with His Son Jesus Christ. ⁴ And these things we write to you that your joy may be full.

This word for fellowship literally means without walls and without borders. It means, communion, oneness, sharing, distribution, joint participation, and various other words with that same meaning. When we go and we look at the Book of Acts and we see the early church and it says that they had fellowship one with another, and they brought all things that they possessed and shared with one another, and gave for the benefit of one another, the early church had no walls and no boundaries.

2842 κοινωνία [koinonia /koy-nohn-ee-ah/] n f. From 2844; TDNT 3:797; TDNTA 447; GK 3126; 20 occurrences; AV translates as "fellowship" 12 times, "communion" four times, "communication" once, "distribution" once, "contribution" once, and "to communicate" once. 1 fellowship, association, community, communion, joint participation, intercourse. 1A the share which one has in anything, participation. 1B intercourse, fellowship, intimacy. 1B1 the right hand as a sign and pledge of fellowship (in fulfilling the apostolic office). 1C a gift jointly contributed, a collection, a contribution, as exhibiting an embodiment and proof of fellowship.

Strong, J. (1995). *Enhanced Strong's Lexicon*. Woodside Bible Fellowship.

Here in 1st John, that picture carries over. And as we see the early church in their oneness and their sharing and their boundaries, the giving of themselves and the giving of their possessions, and then we read that this is what God speaks to us in the fellowship that He calls for us with Him. I look at God and say, "Here's what I can give you," which we can all be honest and say, "Well that falls so short, does it not?" But the point God is making to us is He shares all things with us. The riches of His inheritance that He gives to the saints, and He says to us, "I share all things with you. I share my love. I share my very heart with you, and all the spiritual blessings. What I share you, what I give unto you has no borders. It has no boundaries. It's who I am. It's the relationship that I've entered into with you. It's the covenant that I made with you to share all things with you."

Acts 4:32–35 (NKJV) ³² Now the multitude of those who believed were of one heart and one soul; neither did anyone say that any of the things he possessed was his own, but they had all things in common. ³³ And with great power the apostles gave witness to the resurrection of the Lord Jesus. And great grace was upon them all. ³⁴ Nor was there anyone among them who lacked; for all who were possessors of lands or houses sold them, and brought the proceeds of the things that were sold, ³⁵ and laid *them* at the apostles' feet; and they distributed to each as anyone had need.

Many times we look at this account of Peter's denial. Here we look at the life of Peter and we look at his failure. And right upfront, let it be known that failure is not a wall. It's not a separation from God, because that would break and defy the very covenant that God has made with His people. He shares all things. The picture is set for us as we read this passage today. We see Peter's denial. We see God's faithfulness. What we see is God's unfailing love for Peter, therefore, a picture of His unfailing love for us and God's heart to share all things with Peter, and God's heart to share all things with us. And Peter will be restored, and Peter will be empowered because that's what God does.

If You are Here Today – Failure Does Not Separate

So if you're here today and you've lived in failure, you've failed in some form or fashion, the Lord, or your family, yourself, God speaks to us today through the life of Peter. It does not separate. It does not put a wall up between you and I. I will see you restored. I will come to you and I will share life with you, communion, fellowship.

I am a broken man and it wasn't until I realized that I was broken, that I was finally made whole. Every day I live in the brokenness, and everyday then I can live in power. The power is in knowing weakness. The power is knowing who restores and makes new, and that that promise is new every morning, and great is His faithfulness every morning and every day. And I will live in a broken state until that day calls me home.

In my ministry, I preach and teach the broken. One of the things I've found in my ministry over the years, that the people who are so strong, feel they're so perfect, and feel that they're so whole, I find that fellowship with them is sparse and rare because they're looking for something and expecting something that I can never give them. But those who are broken, those who know they are broken, they come, and they are ministered to by the word of God that heals and restores and strengthens, just as he says here for Peter.

God Says Come

Today we come and are gifted this Word from God Himself, His very heart opened before us, the calling to come near, be drawn to Him.

[Matthew 11:28 \(NKJV\)](#) ²⁸ Come to Me, all you who labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest.

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- [Who Is God? \(How Great is He?\)](#)
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Peter Denies Jesus (14:66-72)

Mark 14:66 Now as Peter was below in the courtyard, one of the servant girls of the high priest came.

Courtyard Access through John

We're told in the other Gospel accounts that Peter is able to gain access inside the walls of the courtyard here at the high priest's home through his relationship with John. And John had a relationship with the high priest through the family fishing business. So it's John's father who has a relationship there with Caiaphas.

[John 18:15-17 \(NKJV\)](#) ¹⁵ And Simon Peter followed Jesus, and so did another disciple. Now that disciple was known to the high priest, and went with Jesus into the courtyard of the high priest. ¹⁶ But Peter stood at the door outside. Then the other disciple, who was known to the high priest, went out and spoke to her who kept the door, and brought Peter in. ¹⁷ Then the servant girl who kept the door said to Peter, "You are not also one of this Man's disciples, are you?" He said, "I am not."

And it's interesting, there's really no mention of what John is doing at this time. There's no mention of him around the fire, there's no mention of him being able to see what's going on. It's not recorded anywhere. And it's Peter's eyewitness account that is what is being passed on. So it's just interesting.

Interesting how God Arranged Pieces

But that's interesting to me how God moves pieces and arranges pieces of the world that someone that needs to in here with an eyewitness account and way back before, God is arranging the pieces and he does so through this fishing business that gains access into the courtyard for John and Peter. Smelly fisherman, that is what goes with fishing, smelling like fish. Imagine the jokes about them. When I was in college in Florida studying for my aviation degree the only job that fit my school schedule was being a busboy, I cleaned table scraps and smelled like fish. Cats would follow me home every night. In the morning at dawn fishing boats would be anchored outside the trailer I lived in. If I stopped by a friend on the way home eventually, they would say, what is that smell? It was after din and I came in, I cleaned the cups I cleaned the plates, with me you didn't have to wait..... I was a busboy, I cleared the dishes, and smelled like fishes. I had to make jokes about myself, so when my friends made fun of me, I could join in, and we could all have a laugh together.

Christian, wherever you are, embrace it, because you are an eyewitness of who Jesus is, what He thinks of man, and the plans He has for all who will come to Him. God arranges the pieces to put you where you are, for His glory. Even if you..... end up smelling like a fish 😊. I would gladly give smelling like a fish, to see the glory of God, as He will say not a word, not dime us out for our sin that He was taking, take the beating and the brutality, for me, so that I might be rescued, redeemed, saved from my sin! He did it for me! And I know all the details about it, because Peter was there to see it, and could retell every detail about it, all because John's family sold fish.

Not Here by Accident

And know this, each and every person here today, you are not here by accident today, maybe this is your first time in church, first time dialing in on this radio station, it is by no accident, God is dialing you in, YOU need a Savior, You need forgiveness of sin, and God has arranged for you to be here, to hear, this eyewitness account, of what God has done for you, and God's love for you!

Mark 14:67 And when she saw Peter warming himself, she looked at him and said, "You also were with Jesus of Nazareth."

Mark 14:68 But he denied it, saying, "I neither know nor understand what you are saying." And he went out on the porch, and a rooster crowed.

Always Bad – When Warm Fires of World

It will always turn out bad Christian when you follow Jesus at a distance and warm yourself by the fires of the world.

Roosters Unclean

There is a writing in a Jewish history book (The Mishnah, the earliest compilation of rabbinic oral law), (Baba Kama 82b) from the 1st century AD, while the Temple was still standing, so hence the time of Jesus, and it stated that due to the mess that roosters made, they were not allowed in the city of Jerusalem. So that's what makes this even more interesting and fascinating, is there should have been no roosters inside the city walls.

So we like to say the rooster crows before dawn and those type of things, but it's fascinating in there shouldn't have been any roosters inside Jerusalem, especially around the high priest's home.

But I love what I see in a rooster, by the way, as I think about the rooster. When they see the sun rise, they crow. And if they could speak a language of English, what they would be saying is, "I see the light. I see the light." And so here, a beautiful parallel encounter to the rooster for our application is though we were once fearful, maybe as a Peter, we've now seen the light and God is giving us a calling when we see the light to tell the people, to point to people and say, "I see the light, I see the light."

No Normal Night – 3 Years in Making

Now understand the scene and put yourself into the scene, this is no normal night in Jerusalem. And though there's all these people that we're reading about, servants and door servants and maids and people around the fire, it's the middle of the night and the reason that it's so populated and busy is because this is not a normal night. This is an exclusive night and the courtyard of the high priest is abuzz because what they've been talking about for three years has finally come to pass. "How do we get rid of this man? How do we stop this man called Jesus?" And so, the whole atmosphere is abuzz. Everybody knows something unusual is happening and everybody knows that this night is not going to be like any other night of any past Passovers of years past.

They all Talking – Did you Hear about 600 Soldiers / Road to Emmaus - Haven't you Heard

And so they would be talking. They would be engaging. "Did you hear what happened at the garden? 600 soldiers were sent to arrest this man, Jesus. To bring him here. This miracle worker." All of Israel knows Jesus and have heard about Jesus. When the disciples on the road to Emmaus were walking and Jesus comes alongside of them, this is after the resurrection, and Jesus says, "What are you guys talking about?" Their response is literally, "What do you mean what are we talking about? Haven't you heard? The one we thought was the Messiah, the Jesus, he's been killed. He's been crucified." And they're talking like, "What are you? From some other planet? Everybody is talking about this." So this isn't an isolated event. This is what is central going on in Jerusalem at this moment on this Passover.

Luke 24:13–24 (NKJV) ¹³ Now behold, two of them were traveling that same day to a village called Emmaus, which was seven miles from Jerusalem. ¹⁴ And they talked together of all these things which had happened. ¹⁵ So it was, while they conversed and reasoned, that Jesus Himself drew near and went with them. ¹⁶ But their eyes were restrained, so that they did not know Him. ¹⁷ And He said to them, "What kind of conversation is this that you have with one another as you walk and are sad?" ¹⁸ Then the one whose name was Cleopas answered and said to Him, "Are You the only stranger in Jerusalem, and have You not known the things which happened there in these days?" ¹⁹ And He said to them, "What things?" So they said to Him, "The things concerning Jesus of Nazareth, who was a Prophet mighty in deed and word before God and all the people, ²⁰ and how the chief priests and our rulers delivered Him to be condemned to death, and crucified Him. ²¹ But we were hoping that it was He who was going to redeem Israel. Indeed, besides all this, today is the third day since these things happened. ²² Yes, and certain women of our company, who arrived at the tomb early, astonished us. ²³ When they did not find His body, they came saying that they had also seen a vision of angels who said He was alive. ²⁴ And certain of those *who were* with us went to the tomb and found *it* just as the women had said; but Him they did not see."

Talking Around Fire – Look up See Peter / Peter Denies

And they'd be sitting around talking about Jesus. And then they look up and they go, "Hey, look at this guy, smell this guy," Peter a fisherman, "he's one of them." So Peter then speaks, "I'm not one of them. I don't even know who this guy is." Says that he swears what he's doing. He's doing what man often does and isn't this interesting, when somebody gets put into a jam, backed into a corner and they want to defend their innocence or try to escape their guilt, they say, "I swear to God." And that's what Peter's doing here. He's literally saying, "I swear to God." And there's God right before him, being beaten and spit upon, Jesus Christ, God himself. It's what we call an anathema. So Peter is swearing, "I don't know him." But the people around the fire goes, "You look like one of his followers. You're known." People have seen Jesus and they see who's hanging with Jesus, and Peter, you were definitely one of them, though they may not by name, they know him by face.

I Love Fires

So there are a couple things I absolutely love and that's going for walks. And I find that one of the sweetest times of communion with the Lord, we just walk, and I think, and I talk, but my other one, and it's probably equally so, is sitting in front of the fire. And I shared with you my building project that I am still in work on a year later, building a fireplace on to the end of my deck, it's an elevated fireplace off the ground. But I love sitting in front of that fire. It's been a ton of work but it's been a ton of blessings.

And of course, to go along with the fireplace, I need firewood and I'm sure my wife thinks some somewhat odd, but I always got to have a supply of wood. I always am calculating how much wood I'm burning and therefore, how much wood I need to have in stores of my backyard seasoning so when this stack of wood is burned up, the other wood is seasoned and ready to burn cause that's how many fires we burn. We burn long fires, we'd burn big fires. When people came to see my fireplace project, one of the questions that was almost always asked is, why is the

fireplace so big? To which I smile in that, this isn't the biggest one I could have got, it's the biggest one that I could fit. If I could have fit bigger, I would even got bigger cause I like to burn big fires.

This week I've been camping up at the campground, and of course, one of my favorite parts of camping ... my ultimate favorite part of camping is the campfire. And I like to build big campfires and when I walk through the camp ground and I see that people have packed up and left, if they left firewood, I'm picking it up and I'm bringing it and throwing it all on my fire because I'm like, free firewood, that's a bigger fire I can build for free and my wife will see me coming with an arm full of wood and she'll say, you didn't steal that wood did you? I would say it is not stealing..... it is recycling. So, we have a laugh about that.

But one of the things I find about the fire is I get to spend a lot of time to think. Sometimes it seems like that fire is literally burning right through my soul as I ponder things, and think on things, and process things because I'm not running, I'm not going a hundred miles an hour, I'm just stopping, sitting, literally nowhere to go, nothing to do but to think. And as the flames burn, I can't tell you how many times they burned through my heart. And sometimes I see good, sometimes I see bad, sometimes I have love blooming in my heart, and sometimes it is dark as the devil, sometimes I know where I am going, and sometimes sweet Jesus I am totally lost and lonely.

I think Peter is doing more than warming himself here at this fire inside the high priest courtyard. I think he's doing a lot of thinking and I think, like any fire, that flame that he's thinking through is burning through his soul. And I would think Peter does what very many times I find myself doing as I sit in front of the fire and I think, many times I'm asking, what will I do next? Many times I'm asking, what just happened? Lord, I don't understand. I don't understand why this is happening. I don't understand what's going on. Lord, this isn't how I thought things were going to turn out. Lord, all that I was sure of I'm totally unsure of now. Where are you? What's happening?

And you can imagine Peter, he was so sure of all these things. He was so bold in all of these things and yet now here he is sitting in front of the fire and the fire burning through his thought life right now saying, I don't understand. How did we get here? How did this happen? Everything seemed so sure. I thought I knew exactly what was going to happen next. I don't understand how it turned to this.

Follow Progression

And if you can follow the progression through with Peter,

- He knew the hostility of these religious leaders, but he's still always seeing Jesus come out in power. So the arrest can happen and 600 soldiers can be intimidating, he rises up in power, Jesus is still controlling power, healing the ear that Peter just lopped off, and
- then things start to get confusing when they bind Jesus and they lead him away and he's like, wow, what's going on here? You've always walked away from these things. This time you're not walking away, you're bound and led away.
- And then into the courtyard and he's over here and he's hearing these accusations, this are false lies being spoken of the Lord and Peter is not just an eyewitness, he's an ear witness of what's happening. He's later going to record it and retell it for us. And yet even as he hears these things, he's hearing, okay, they have no evidence, they have no basis, and he could still find himself being sure that Jesus is going to walk away from this.
- As he hears the cases falling apart with the false witnesses, he can still find himself in assurance. Then he can hear those words, are you the Christ, the son of the blessed? And then he'll hear Christ speak, I am and you shall see the son of man coming in power in the clouds and Peter would be sitting there, that's right and I'm going to be with him. Peter probably still full in the sure of himself, and we're going to see Jesus coming in power, seated at the right-hand throne of God, and second to him is me seated at the right hand throne of God in power.
- And then all of a sudden it changes in a blink, in a flash, and they start to slap Jesus. They start to beat on Jesus. They start to brutalize Jesus. They start to pluck out his beard at some point we're told, by Isaiah. Now Peter is surely, I don't understand this, what's happening? How did this just turn? You're the Christ. You're the son of God. You have the power to stop this, to walk away from this. Remember the 12 legions

of angels that you can call, just call one of the angels. In him alone 185,000 Assyrians were killed. Just call one of them and this is over and we can establish your kingdom, and your power, and your glory.

- But instead he hears slaps, and he hears this regurgitating of spit, the ultimate humiliation when a man spits in another man's face and now Peter goes into, how did this happen? What's going on here? As the fire burns through his heart. I don't understand these things. I thought we were going to be establishing the kingdom. I thought I was going to be seated on the right hand of the power and the throne of God.

Sometimes God has to Burn our Way to Ground / Sometimes we Have to See our Dreams Die - Burn

Christian, there's a time where we can be so sure of things and God will let things utterly burn down. I think Peter has a dream that he's going to be at the right hand of the throne of God, arguing with the other disciples, thinking that he's a shoe in for sure to sit at the right hand or the left hand. And what's happening before Peter right now is he's watching his dream burn down and he doesn't understand it. And what I need to tell you, Christian, sometimes God will burn your dreams down so that your dream will be in ashes, so when it does come to pass, you will know there's only one reason that it came to pass.

He will burn down every self-assurance. He will burn down every pride in you. He will burn down everything that you are sure of in yourself until you have nothing but ashes left and then when he starts to rebuild, you'll know there's only one thing that it's built upon, the solid rock of Jesus Christ. Peter will see his dream come, but he won't be sitting in pride and arrogance, he's going to be in humility and reliance upon the Lord.

I hadn't been saved six months and the Lord literally gave me a vision. Oh, I remember it like it was yesterday, and it was some 27-28 years ago. I was in a church service, the pastor was preaching, and a vision was given to me and there I saw as the vision was focusing in a man on a stage teaching the word of God and the vision faded. But I knew, even though I didn't see the face of the man preaching, that, that man was me, and that God spoke to me, even as a new believer, just happy to go to church, no vision of ministry or anything else and he focuses in and I knew in my heart that was my calling and that someday I would teach God's word. And I became sure of that vision.

But you know what happened before the vision came to pass, that dream if you would, it totally got burned up. I won't go into details of all the failures in between and before, but there were many. And with each failure, each claim, the dream seemed to burn and turn to ashes. That I reach a point saying, was this my dream or is this God's dream? Was this something I conjured in my mind or is this something of the Lord? And when the dream was finally burned down and all of my self assurance was burned up, all my self-reliance was burned up, that's when the Lord could start to rebuild.

The Lord will do that in Peter's life. He's going to come, is going to restore Peter. Peter is going to be given the honor to preach the first sermon of the new church under the new covenant, become a leader, a pillar in the church, but everything had to burn down first. I know the significance of the fire that Peter is staring into right now.

And maybe that's where someone is today in this church. There was a dream that you were given and it all seems like it's burned to the ground. It's just ashes. You're wondering, how can this be? I pray that you're in front of the fire right now and it burning through to your heart, and that you're getting encouraged and strengthened in this word of God as you look at Peter, as you share my story. That sometimes you have to die to your dream, you have to have your dream burned down before God will rebuild it from the ashes.

Joseph's Dream

Joseph had a dream, saw his brothers bowing down to him. Was so sure of his dream. Joseph had to watch his dream die, burn. When he was in the pit, surely going, this wasn't part of the dream. When he ended up at the palace maybe thought, this is more like it. I can see how things could work out from here, and then to prison. That's the dream die and let it burn, but then God rebuild it from there. It's been estimated that Joseph was in prison for 10 years. I'm not exactly sure to be honest with you. But every day the dream would die until there was

no dream left and then one day, God rebuilt the dream and then it would come to pass his brothers, his family would come and bow down. That might be where God has you.

There's a Future After Failure

But there's a future after failure. But there'd be no mistake in this passage for anyone here today. And I don't think there's a person here today that this word is not applicable to and for because life is filled with plenty of failures, but God is faithful in the failures. Great is thy faithfulness, amazing faithfulness, amazing grace.

**Mark 14:69 And the servant girl saw him again, and began to say to those who stood by, "This is one of them."
Mark 14:70 But he denied it again. And a little later those who stood by said to Peter again, "Surely you are one of them; for you are a Galilean, and your speech shows it."**

Funny Thing About Darkness

Funny thing about fires in the middle of the night is that you think you're all alone and you're hidden in the darkness, but truly the fire is like a spotlight. It totally defines into deep 3D images every feature of the person who is standing or sitting around the fire, and Peter can think that he's hiding in the darkness, but the fire is illuminating him, making him stand out.

Speech Betrays Us

As Peter discovered, our attempts to warm ourselves by the world's fires always backfire. As believers, our accent betrays us. We don't laugh as hard as we once did; we don't enter in as freely as we used to because although we have too much of the world to enjoy the Lord, we also have too much of the Lord to enjoy the world.

I find a great power in witnessing for Christ, letting the world know I am a Christian, so when the thought of going to the furies of the world, I am reminded, the whole world will say what are you doing here, and that is enough for me to say to myself..... cant go there.

God doesn't Want Us Blending into Darkness

I believe the Lord looks upon us, and as Christians he doesn't want us blending into the darkness and he will put a spotlight on us and have us stand out, and sometimes it will be in the most uncomfortable ways as our faults are exposed, but then in other times it will be as a trophy with a light spotlight at that put upon it to show his trophies of grace, and his trophies that display his faithfulness and his love.

**Mark 14:71 Then he began to curse and swear, "I do not know this Man of whom you speak!"
Mark 14:72 A second time the rooster crowed. Then Peter called to mind the word that Jesus had said to him, "Before the rooster crows twice, you will deny Me three times." And when he thought about it, he wept.**

Jesus Looked at Him

Says, Jesus looked at Peter, and the word there is to look into the, look into the depths to examine. It's like this fire that Peter's looking into. Jesus is looking into the depths of Peter. It's not a depth of disgust, but at that's of love. I believe Jesus' heart is breaking for Peter right now because he knows how Peter's heart is going to break at the ultimate failure. Jesus knows Peter's going to be broken and he will. We're told in the other gospels account when the rooster crows, Peter will weep bitterly. Jesus is looking in and he's having heartbreak for Peter because he knows what this failure's going to feel like to Peter.

Luke 22:60–62 (NKJV) ⁶⁰ But Peter said, "Man, I do not know what you are saying!" Immediately, while he was still speaking, the rooster crowed. ⁶¹ And the Lord turned and looked at Peter. Then Peter remembered the word of the Lord, how He had said to him, "Before the rooster crows, you will deny Me three times." ⁶² So Peter went out and wept bitterly.

Satan was Sifting Peter – he Desires to Sift you Today

But Jesus' has already told him, Satan desires to sift you, but I've prayed for you and when you return, go strengthen the brothers, the brethren. Jesus knows that Peter's going to fail. Peter doesn't know that he's going to fail, but Jesus knows that Peter will be restored in faith as he'll rise, but after Peter fails, he won't know that at the moment. Amazing dynamics as we look and consider these things, What I want you to know and consider this; he

who sifted Peter, as he who sifted Jesus, is he who desires to sift you. Recognize there's a sifting that is desired upon you and recognize that Jesus prays for you, and if you've failed and you've been restored, now go strengthen your brethren, but notice this also as the model for us in ministry. We have a calling, each and every one of us. When we see Satan trying to sift one of our brothers or sisters, we need to go and pray and intercede for them. We need to give them words of strength and encouragement, even in their failure, after their failure. We have the ministry of intercessory prayer. Every adult in this sanctuary, do you realize that Satan desires to sift every one of these youth? What does that mean to you? What are you going to do about it?

Luke 22:31–34 (NKJV) ³¹ And the Lord said, "Simon, Simon! Indeed, Satan has asked for you, that he may sift you as wheat. ³² But I have prayed for you, that your faith should not fail; and when you have returned to Me, strengthen your brethren." ³³ But he said to Him, "Lord, I am ready to go with You, both to prison and to death." ³⁴ Then He said, "I tell you, Peter, the rooster shall not crow this day before you will deny three times that you know Me."

The Roaring Lion

Peter will tell us in his epistle, watch out for the devil. He's like a roaring lion seeking who he may devour. Well, Peter can tell the story probably better than anybody, can he not?

1 Peter 5:8 (NKJV) ⁸ Be sober, be vigilant; because your adversary the devil walks about like a roaring lion, seeking whom he may devour.

Seeing into the Courtyard

So what we know from historical writings and architectural dig sites is that from the outer courtyard you could see into the inner courtyard, and this is where they are with Jesus. There's a reason that Peter can give an eyewitness account, and that is because he is seeing this. This isn't an inspired, "Here's what happened," mystical revelation. Peter's writing under the inspiration of the Holy Spirit. John Mark is the recorder of this. Peter will confirm much of these things in his epistles but Peter's an eyewitness account. So what this means is Peter sees the pummeling and the beating that Jesus is enduring. I want you to consider that, what that means to his heart as he watches this, and then still yet his denial.

What Happened When Peter Saw Jesus Bloodied

What happened in Peter's heart when He saw Jesus coming out from inside this hall where He was being beaten. What happened in Peter's heart when He saw He whom He loved, beaten beyond recognition.

Failure Always has a Progression

Here we find Peter tasting the bitter tears of failure. I think that most Christians have tasted those same tears as we go through the growth process. Peter had just failed His Lord big time, But such failure is seldom just occur at the spur of the moment, there are often steps that lead to failure. As we look at this story, let us follow the steps that led to his denial of His Lord, with cursing and swearing. Pastor Chuck Smith had a great teaching on this so let me just highlight his teaching. Let's look at the danger signs that lead Peter to his failure:

1. The first sign of danger was boasting in himself. vs29

A. He was setting himself above the others, when he declared, "Though all shall be offended, yet not I."

1. There had been an ongoing dispute among the disciples as to which of them would have the greatest positions, when the Lord set up His kingdom.

2. James and John had the gall to recently ask the Lord if one could sit at His right hand, and the other at His left when He set up the kingdom.

3. This rivalry had been going on, and I believe that Peter was seeking to make a subtle point, you may not be able to count on them, in a crisis, but you can always count on the rock.

B. Paul had the right evaluation of himself.

1. I know that in me, that is in my flesh, dwelleth no good thing.

2. He wrote to take heed when you think that you stand lest you fall.

3. He said, not that we are sufficient of ourselves to think anything as of ourselves; but our sufficiency [is] of God;

C. The world seeks to teach you self-confidence, but in spiritual things the Bible tells us to have no confidence in our flesh.

1. Jesus said, "Apart from Me, you can do nothing."
2. Paul said, "I can do all things through Christ, who strengthens me."

2. The second sign of danger, arguing with the Lord, and with the scriptures. Vs.31.

A. If you find yourself arguing with the Lord or challenging the scriptures, know this, "You are wrong."

1. It is amazing how that some people seem to think that they have some kind of special case so that the plain teaching of the word does not govern their particular situation.
2. God wrote this for others, but it does not apply to my case, and we begin to put up an argument.

B. The Greeks had a saying, "The dice of the god's are loaded." That is, you cannot go against the gods and win. Their concepts of God were wrong, but the conclusion was correct.

1. The minute you go against the word of God, you are going to lose.
2. The prophet Isaiah said, "Woe unto Him who strives with His maker."
3. You are in a no-win situation when you strive with God, for if you do win, if you refuse to surrender to His love and stubbornly resist His grace, then you have truly lost.

3. The third sign of danger, sleeping instead of praying. vs.37

A. Jesus had positioned the disciples in the garden, and had brought Peter, James and John a little closer.

1. Perhaps feeling the weight of the hour, knowing that before this day would be over, He would be hanging on the cross. He was bringing them closer to Him for prayer support. He had said, "My Soul is sorrowful, even unto death."
2. After an hour when He came to them and found them asleep, He asked, "Peter, are you sleeping, could you not watch one hour?"

B. I believe that one of the greatest weaknesses in the church today is in the lack of prayer. I believe that when a person is in prayer and in the word, that he has a first line of defense against the enemy. I believe that Satan realizing the power of prayer does all in his power to keep you from prayer.

1. We are in a spiritual war, and prayer is the deciding factor in the spiritual conflict.
2. Ephesians the spiritual armor, when you have put on the whole armor, he then tells us to, "Pray, with all prayer and supplication in the Spirit."
3. Writing to the Corinthians he said, "For the weapons of our warfare are not carnal, but mighty through God to the pulling down of the strongholds of the enemy."

C. The song, "What A Friend We Have in Jesus." The one line declares "O what needless pain we bare, all because we do not carry everything to God in prayer."

4. Fourth sign of danger was using carnal weapons in a spiritual battle.

As they were arresting Jesus, Peter drew his sword and began swinging away.vs47

- A. He was seeking to use carnal weapons in a spiritual battle.
- B. He had failed at prayer, now he will strike out with the sword.
- C. So often our reverting to carnal methods is the result of our failure to walk in the Spirit and to keep in the word and prayer.

5. The Fifth sign of danger was seeking to follow the Lord afar off. vs.54

A. This is a mistake that people often make, they want to be in the Lord's secret service.

1. "I believe in Jesus; I just don't want everybody to know it."
2. They are unwilling to confess Christ publicly.

3. Jesus said, that if we would confess Him before men, He would confess us before His Father in heaven, but the other side of the coin is that if we deny Him before men, He will deny us before the Father.

B. Following the Lord afar off is never successful.

1. You need to stick as close to Him as possible, the closer the better.
2. Some are always testing as to how close they can live to the world and still be a Christian, they are always asking about questionable things. Can I still be a Christian and do this or that?
3. My desire is not to see how close I can live to this world, but how close I can live to Jesus.

6 The sixth sign of danger we find Peter warming himself next to the fire that the enemies of Christ had built.

A. Trying to find warmth by the enemy's fire is always a sign of having moved away from the warmth of His love.

1. Some of you who are seeking again to find warmth in the things of the world, are close to the denial of your Lord.

2. As you are among the worldly crowd, doing the worldly things, sitting there at the bar some little maiden will come up and declare, "Someone said that you were a Christian, what are you doing here?"

a. After swallowing hard, and a little stuttering, you may hear yourself saying, "O yeah, I went down to the church for a while, I was just checking it out, but I don't really believe that stuff."

b. It may be that the Spirit will convict you and you will feel immediate repentance. You will excuse yourself and go out into the night and weep. I hope so. For in repentance is forgiveness.

I think of the fires of the world, and as I walk or drive through the neighborhoods in the evening, I always see the glow emanating from within the home, the glow of the television, the glow of the computer screen, and many of those glows are the fires of the world that people come and warm themselves next to but are so far in distance from the things of the Lord.

B. Many in the hour of pressure as Peter are guilty of denying the Lord by our words or actions.

1. Peter's denial did not surprise the Lord; He had predicted it.
2. It was a surprise and disappointment to Peter. He thought he was above that.
3. All like Peter can fail in the hour of testing, but as Peter we must repent and confess our sin, and we will find Him faithful and just to forgive us our sin.

C. There is one thing about failing a test, you will have to take it over again.

1. In Acts we find Peter again in the presence of the priests and the religious authorities.
2. This time he is on trial before those who condemned His Lord to death.
3. This time we see the man God had seen before the foundations of the world.

There is a Future after Failure

Verse 72, tears of failure. But let it be noted. There's a future after failure and after when Peter would be restored as Jesus said that he would be, when the day of Pentecost came, Peter was the one who was tapped to stand up and preach to the 3000. See, Christian, there is a future after failure. And I want to tell you, anyone who truly recognizes their failure and repents of it, there comes a power with it. Because you can preach and proclaim forgiveness. You can preach and proclaim restoration. You can preach and claim that his love never fails. It never gives up. You can preach and proclaim love because you experienced it.

Acts 2:13–16 (NKJV) ¹³ Others mocking said, "They are full of new wine."¹⁴ But Peter, standing up with the eleven, raised his voice and said to them, "Men of Judea and all who dwell in Jerusalem, let this be known to you, and heed my words. ¹⁵ For these are not drunk, as you suppose, since it is only the third hour of the day. ¹⁶ But this is what was spoken by the prophet Joel:

Acts 4:13 NKJV Now when they saw the boldness of Peter and John, and perceived that they were uneducated and untrained men, they marveled. And they realized that they had been with Jesus.

Grand Canyon

The Grand Canyon Park bookstore operated by the National Park Service found itself in the midst of some controversy a few years ago when they were selling a book written by creationists much to the ire of the National Center for Science Education.

The book detailed how the Grand Canyon could have been formed from a "catastrophic" event -- a catastrophe such as the flood of Noah's day. Imagine that, it may have been a catastrophe that created such beauty!

Nearly 2000 years ago, the disciples witnessed a catastrophe -- the crucifixion of our Lord. But the Lord used this tragedy to redeem all mankind. This great catastrophe was turned to ultimate beauty.

Each of us has experienced tragedy in our lives. Inevitably the question arises -- Why? Let's be encouraged by one of God's most beautiful masterpieces. The Lord can turn our great catastrophes into great beauty -- into great victory!

Beloved, let's turn to the Lord with our catastrophes. He can turn the most difficult tragedy into an incredible work of art!

Conclusion / Comparison of Judas and Peter

Now compare Judas and Peter and the difference between them, and it was godly sorrow produces repentance. We can be sorry for an action that we did, but godly sorrow produces a changed life. Peter didn't quit, he rose up. [2 Corinthians 7:10 \(NKJV\)](#) ¹⁰ *For godly sorrow produces repentance leading to salvation, not to be regretted; but the sorrow of the world produces death.*

Bitterness of Betrayal makes Friendships even Sweeter

Betrayal is bitter, and thus makes friendships that are true ever so sweet. Peter may deny, but he will not betray. Understand the difference between betrayal and failings in the flesh.

Conclusion / Recorded as Greatest Failure – NOT SO – Greatest Faithfulness

The rooster crowing at dawn has been recorded as the greatest failure revealed in the scriptures, to which I absolutely disagree with. I believe the rooster crowing at dawn reveals the greatest faithfulness in all the scriptures. As Jesus looks upon Peter, what is being revealed is his faithfulness to Peter and to each and every one of us. God is faithful. He loves to the end, and he will love us to the end, and he'll be faithful to us to the end. You can rest in his faithfulness, whether you're triumphing or whether you're falling, you can rest in his faithfulness. The rooster crows at dawn, if this rooster could speak, he'd be screaming Lamentation Chapter Three, Great Is Thy Faithfulness. Morning by morning, new mercies each morning.

[Lamentations 3:22–24 \(NKJV\)](#) ²² *Through the LORD's mercies we are not consumed, Because His compassions fail not.* ²³ *They are new every morning; Great is Your faithfulness.* ²⁴ *"The LORD is my portion," says my soul, "Therefore I hope in Him!"*

Sing the song Great Is Thy Faithfulness and let it sweep over your heart. Leave here with his faithfulness sewn in and secured, that he's going to be faithful, because he is faithful. It's his very nature.

Peter

- might be the only disciple that sank, but he's also the only disciple that walked on water.
- might be the only disciple that lopped off an ear, but he's also the only disciple that fought for his Lord, might be the only one that the rooster crowed, but also he's the only one that stayed.

We know the other nine have fled. We know that only Peter and John are inside the courtyard, but we have no record of where John is. We don't know what he sees, what he hears, and so that does leave us, where is Judas? Did he come back to the court card? At some point he will leave himself and take his own life.

You know what, Christian? If you don't want to sink, just stay in the boat. You know what? If you don't want to be lopping off ears, just stay out of the fight. And if you don't want the rooster to crow, just stay out of the courtyard.

As the proverb says, the righteous man may fall seven times, but he gets up.

[Proverbs 24:16 \(NKJV\)](#) ¹⁶ *For a righteous man may fall seven times And rise again, But the wicked shall fall by calamity.*

My power, your power is in his faithfulness, and when I can draw on his faithfulness, then I am tapping into the depths. That there is no limit of his power, when I simply know his faithfulness, that it's his nature and his faithfulness is laid on the foundation of his love. His love for me, his love for you.

Christian, can you leave here today in the knowledge of his faithfulness? Can you leave here today knowing that nothing can separate you from his love? Because if you can, then there is nothing that you cannot overcome in your life.

When we are faithless, he is still faithful because great is his faithfulness. Lord, unto thee.

2 Timothy 2:8-13 (NKJV) ⁸ Remember that Jesus Christ, of the seed of David, was raised from the dead according to my gospel, ⁹ for which I suffer trouble as an evildoer, even to the point of chains; but the word of God is not chained. ¹⁰ Therefore I endure all things for the sake of the elect, that they also may obtain the salvation which is in Christ Jesus with eternal glory. ¹¹ This is a faithful saying: For if we died with Him, We shall also live with Him. ¹² If we endure, We shall also reign with Him. If we deny Him, He also will deny us. ¹³ If we are faithless, He remains faithful; He cannot deny Himself.

Closing Prayer

God Says Come

Today we come and are gifted this Word from God Himself, His very heart opened before us, the calling to come near, be drawn to Him.

Matthew 11:28 (NKJV) ²⁸ Come to Me, all you who labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest.

The Word of God is Living and Powerful, and is ready, and will do a mighty work in our lives.

Hebrews 4:12 (NKJV) ¹² For the word of God is living and powerful, and sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing even to the division of soul and spirit, and of joints and marrow, and is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart.

In Every Study

- Who Is God? (How Great is He?)
- What Does He Think of Me? (How Wonderful Are His Thoughts Towards Me?)
- What Does He Want Me to Do?
- What Can I Boldly Request of Him?
- What Do I Need to Be on Guard of When I Leave Here Today?

Boldly come to the throne of grace, ask God to reveal Himself in a mighty way to you, and to do I might work in you, and through you.

Hebrews 4:16 (NKJV) ¹⁶ Let us therefore come boldly to the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy and find grace to help in time of need.

End of Study

Mark 15

Mark 15:1-20

What Will You do with Jesus

We have come as far as chapter 15 today. We will cover verses 1-20 in our study today. Let's read verses 16-20 to set the tone of the passage.

Mark 15:16–20 (NKJV) ¹⁶ Then the soldiers led Him away into the hall called Praetorium, and they called together the whole garrison. ¹⁷ And they clothed Him with purple; and they twisted a crown of thorns, put it on His head, ¹⁸ and began to salute Him, "Hail, King of the Jews!" ¹⁹ Then they struck Him on the head with a reed and spat on Him; and bowing the knee, they worshiped Him. ²⁰ And when they had mocked Him, they took the purple off Him, put His own clothes on Him, and led Him out to crucify Him.

Holy ground for sure. God says come, to each and every one of you today.

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Jesus Taken before Pilate (15:1-5)

Mark 15:1 Immediately, in the morning, the chief priests held a consultation with the elders and scribes and the whole council; and they bound Jesus, led Him away, and delivered Him to Pilate.

Led by love

Jesus was bound not by puny ropes, but by cords of love. As Creator of the ropes, He could have burst them easily. As the Lamb of God, He chose to be bound by them willingly.

Time / Sun Rising on Some – Setting on Others

It is about 5 or 6 in the morning, the sun is rising for the rooster has crowed. The Sun is rising on some, and setting on others. Some will see the Savior today and receive Him, some will reject the Savior and His free gift, and be separated from God for eternity.

Recap

Jesus was arrested in the Garden of Gethsemane in the evening or late night, and immediately brought before Caiaphas the high priest and some of the rulers where they held an illegal night tribunal. And they tried to develop charges that they could bring against Jesus before the Roman court because they were determined that Jesus must be put to death. But they did not have the power of condemning a prisoner to death. That was Rome's power. So, their trial against Jesus was basically a religious trial. And they had many witnesses that came; none of them could agree together. And finally, the high priest said directly to Jesus, "I adjure you by the living God, tell us, are you the Son of God?" And Jesus answered in the affirmative and said, "Henceforth you're not going to see Me until you see Me in the right hand of power." And the high priest tore his clothes and he said, "What need we of any further

witnesses?" In other words, "We don't need a witness. This guy has witnessed against Himself. What do you think of this?" And they all said, "It's blasphemy!" "What shall we do to Him?" "Let Him be put to death." Well, there's no way the Roman court is going to put a man to death for blasphemy against the Jewish religion. So they had to develop other charges when they brought Jesus before Pilate because their religious charges would not hold any credence in a Roman court.

Charges of Insurrection / Get Their Story Straight

Now, no doubt the charges that they brought against Jesus were charges of insurrection against Rome, claiming that He was a king. And they did throw in the charge, though it was a false charge that He said they should not pay taxes to Caesar. So basically, the only charges that they could bring against the Rome court against Jesus would be insurrection against Rome. And these would be capital offenses for which He could be put to death. So this gathering together by all the council is for them to "get their story straight" that they plan to tell Pilate.

Mark 15:2 Then Pilate asked Him, "Are You the King of the Jews?" He answered and said to him, "It is as you say."

Pilate's Home

Pilate's home is in Caesarea, but he is in Jerusalem for the Passover. Quite interesting again to me how God moves the pieces and makes sure that Pilate is in Jerusalem and not a few days away in Caesarea, for Jesus must be crucified today, when all the other Passover lambs are to be sacrificed, to fulfill the prophecies perfectly. If he was not in Jerusalem at this very moment, then this trial could have been delayed several days, and of course, prophecy not fulfilled. God is in control; can you trust that He is Christian? God has arranged for you to be here today, that I am sure of, nothing is by chance, he has brought you here today so that He may speak His heart to you today, to which I pray you hear His heart beat, for it beats love for you. Just read this story today, and there be no doubt about it.

Pilate – Archeology

So we find the account of Jesus before Pilate. For many years there were certain Bible critics that found what they felt to be a discrepancy in the scriptural record because of the reference to Pilate. And within the Roman records that have been discovered up to that point, there was no record of any man named Pilate ever being a governor over Judea. And so those Bible critics who are so willing and ready to find some discrepancy in the Bible began to aver with all of their scholastic pomp that the Bible was not a credible record at all because it listed people who never did exist, people whose names were absent from any other record or any other source. And because there was no other source naming Pilate as a Roman governor, then surely the Bible account has to be spurious and you cannot rely or trust in the Bible. And these men gained great notoriety by their proclamations and the papers were only too happy to publish them and their findings. However, when excavations were being done in Caesarea, they happened to cross an interesting stone that had the record of Pilate inscribed upon it, "The Governor of Judea," and telling a little bit about his office as governor. And so all of the scholars and all of their discrediting of the Bible was, of course, discredited itself and the Bible stood once more as an anvil, as the hammers that were beaten against it were worn out and tossed aside. And now it is thoroughly recognized and there has been much more discoveries by the archaeologists that have proved that Pilate did indeed live and govern over Judea. In fact, we know quite a bit about Pilate's history now. But it's interesting how that people are so ready to find fault with the Word of God, or so ready to discredit it. And how much publicity they can get on any statement discrediting the Bible. Yet when they found this stone of Pilate, very little was mentioned about it in the press. You know, the guys just sort of bow their heads and put their tail between their legs and slink away and hope that people will forget their asseverations that Pilate was not a real person.

Ask Jesus Honest Question – He will Answer

Jesus answers when asked about who He is, just as He did when the religious leaders asked Him. We continually see this response of Jesus, lay foolish charges and remarks about Him and He answers nothing, but ask Him an honest question, and He answers with truth. Many people, Christians alike, are often afraid to ask Jesus an honest question, because they are afraid of the honest answer He will give. Beloved, how real do you get with Jesus, God,

each day? Do you ask Him probing questions, with depth, looking for honest answers, that will change your life because all truth will change lives (good when applied, bad when rejected), or do you talk to Him at a superficial level, so He never gets down to the core issue of your life, and you like it like that, because you don't want to change.

Mark 14:61–62 (NKJV) ⁶¹ But He kept silent and answered nothing. Again the high priest asked Him, saying to Him, "Are You the Christ, the Son of the Blessed?" ⁶² Jesus said, "I am. And you will see the Son of Man sitting at the right hand of the Power, and coming with the clouds of heaven."

John 18:33–38 (NKJV) ³³ Then Pilate entered the Praetorium again, called Jesus, and said to Him, "Are You the King of the Jews?" ³⁴ Jesus answered him, "Are you speaking for yourself about this, or did others tell you this concerning Me?" ³⁵ Pilate answered, "Am I a Jew? Your own nation and the chief priests have delivered You to me. What have You done?" ³⁶ Jesus answered, "My kingdom is not of this world. If My kingdom were of this world, My servants would fight, so that I should not be delivered to the Jews; but now My kingdom is not from here." ³⁷ Pilate therefore said to Him, "Are You a king then?" Jesus answered, "You say rightly that I am a king. For this cause I was born, and for this cause I have come into the world, that I should bear witness to the truth. Everyone who is of the truth hears My voice." ³⁸ Pilate said to Him, "What is truth?" And when he had said this, he went out again to the Jews, and said to them, "I find no fault in Him at all."

Mark 15:3 And the chief priests accused Him of many things, but He answered nothing.

Mark 15:4 Then Pilate asked Him again, saying, "Do You answer nothing? See how many things they testify against You!"

Mark 15:5 But Jesus still answered nothing, so that Pilate marveled.

Jesus is More Than King of Jews – He is King of Glory

Jesus is accused of being the King of the Jews. But He's more than that. He's the King of Glory. But Jesus did not defend Himself. Now in Isaiah it said, "And as the sheep before her shearers is dumb, so He openeth not His mouth."

Isaiah 53:7 (NKJV) ⁷ He was oppressed and He was afflicted, Yet He opened not His mouth; He was led as a lamb to the slaughter, And as a sheep before its shearers is silent, So He opened not His mouth.

Slander

So once again we see a life example for us to model, and that is the silence when people falsely accuse us of things, and try to tear down and destroy our character. The more we defend, the more we fuel their fire. As we say, you take care of your character, and God will take care of your reputation.

1 Peter 2:21–23 (NKJV) ²¹ For to this you were called, because Christ also suffered for us, leaving us an example, that you should follow His steps: ²² "Who committed no sin, Nor was deceit found in His mouth"; ²³ who, when He was reviled, did not revile in return; when He suffered, He did not threaten, but committed Himself to Him who judges righteously;

Matthew 5:11–12 (NKJV) ¹¹ "Blessed are you when they revile and persecute you, and say all kinds of evil against you falsely for My sake. ¹² Rejoice and be exceedingly glad, for great is your reward in heaven, for so they persecuted the prophets who were before you.

But, there is a flipside of character assignation, and that is the person who is the attacker. And as we see here, many times it is the "religious" persons who are doing the character attack. In the Bible the word is reviler, we often call it slander, and that is what reviler means. Revile means to "vilify" someone, aka – make them out to be a villain. As always, in order to revile, they have to add lies to make their story stick, just as they do here to Jesus, and thus to revile and to lie always go together. And here is the serious word of the Lord..... even for those who are religious, claim their salvation, the Bible says "revilers" and "liars" will not inherit the kingdom. So any person who makes another into a villain, needs to do a serious heart check to see if they are truly saved, because those who practice such a lifestyle will not inherit the kingdom of God, so you may be deceiving yourself in your very salvation. Revelation says that those who practice a lie, will not be in the Kingdom but outside. And of course, if you are a listener, you need to separate from that person, for they will draw you into their lie and poison, just as these "religious" people do to this crowd.

1 Corinthians 6:7–11 (NKJV) ⁷ Now therefore, it is already an utter failure for you that you go to law against one another. Why do you not rather accept wrong? Why do you not rather let yourselves be cheated? ⁸ No, you yourselves do wrong and cheat, and you do these things to your brethren! ⁹ Do you not know that the unrighteous will not inherit the kingdom of God? Do not be deceived. Neither fornicators, nor idolaters, nor adulterers, nor homosexuals, nor sodomites, ¹⁰ nor thieves, nor covetous, nor drunkards, nor revilers, nor extortioners will inherit the kingdom of God. ¹¹ And such were some of you. But you were washed, but you were sanctified, but you were justified in the name of the Lord Jesus and by the Spirit of our God.

Revelation 22:12–15 (NKJV) ¹² "And behold, I am coming quickly, and My reward is with Me, to give to every one according to his work. ¹³ I am the Alpha and the Omega, the Beginning and the End, the First and the Last." ¹⁴ Blessed are those who do His commandments, that they may have the right to the tree of life, and may enter through the gates into the city. ¹⁵ But outside are dogs and sorcerers and sexually immoral and murderers and idolaters, and whoever loves and practices a lie.

The Multitude Takes Barabbas Over Jesus (15:6-15)

Mark 15:6 Now at the feast he was accustomed to releasing one prisoner to them, whomever they requested.

Mark 15:7 And there was one named Barabbas, who was chained with his fellow rebels; they had committed murder in the rebellion.

Mark 15:8 Then the multitude, crying aloud, began to ask him to do just as he had always done for them.

Mark 15:9 But Pilate answered them, saying, "Do you want me to release to you the King of the Jews?"

Mark 15:10 For he knew that the chief priests had handed Him over because of envy.

Mark 15:11 But the chief priests stirred up the crowd, so that he should rather release Barabbas to them.

Pilate sees their Deceit / Career Decision

So Pilate sees through their deceit, and lies, he knows it is out of envy they want to kill Jesus. But Pilate is making a "career decision", so he thinks, not realizing he is really making a "life decision". Do you realize Christian, all your decisions matter?

Barabbas the Murderer

Now we find the charge against Barabbas was insurrection. That would not be a bad or evil thing as far as the Jew was concerned. In fact, this was a common problem that Rome had with Judea, the many insurrections. For there were many zealots who hated that Roman occupation of their land. And they were constantly having uprisings against the Roman occupiers. And there was, of course, this man Barabbas. It could be that to the people he was a national hero because he dared to stand up against Rome.

There are many times those who say, "Well, now look at the fickleness of the crowd; just the few days before they were saying 'Hosanna, hosanna! Blessed is He who comes in the name of the Lord!' And now they're crying, 'Crucify Him!'". So that we so oftentimes hear Barabbas cast in an evil light, "How would they choose this man who was a murderer and insurrectionist and all?" Well, it's because he was an insurrectionist that they sort of admired him. And he could have been a real people's hero as far as insurrection against Rome was concerned. Nonetheless, however it may be, the people chose a lawless man over the law, over a man who was obedient to the law. Their choice was a sad choice indeed, and it so often reflects the attitude of people of choosing lawlessness over the law.

Jesus the Defeated Man

When they bring Jesus before the crowd, they see a beaten and blood man, to many, no doubt a defeated man, and the religious leaders will use that no doubt to swing the crowd to their favor.

Yell Louder / Stirred (Earthquake)

There's a story of a preacher who after he completed his sermon over on the right side of the page in his margins, he would write down what he thought the gesture should be, to give him a cue such as to laugh or to smile or to pause or to hold his head this way or put his arms another way. And in one of his sermons near the end of it, he had written in the margins next to the text he would be coming upon in his points that he was going to be making, he wrote, "Yell like crazy because this point is very weak."

And so often that's what people, when their point is weak, they just yell. And you can see that in our everyday lives. When people are losing the battle or when people have a weak point, what they do is then they just start yelling louder and louder and louder. And for many purposes people then because of the yelling, start to believe it, even though the point is weak. And here these religious leaders, their point is weak. They have no case, so what they resort to is the mob mentality, to stir the mob, to get the mob incited and start the earth to quake through the mob and get them riled up. And it will no longer be about reason, it will no longer be about what's right. It will all come down to that they have been stirred emotionally.

Post-Riot

And there would be those in this crowd who are yelling, "Crucify," who no doubt when they see Jesus hanging on the cross will go, "I can't believe I said that. I can't believe I was part of that." And the good news is Jesus will say, "You can still come to me, not just in seven days but anytime in your life." And you can say, "Forgive me, restore me, give me restoration." And the Lord will say, "And there will be no retribution brought upon you. There will be no judgment brought upon you for that. You will be forgiven and your sins will be cleansed." And as we always say, and I pray it has got deep into your heart, there's always a future after a failure.

Mark 15:12 Pilate answered and said to them again, "What then do you want me to do with Him whom you call the King of the Jews?"

What Will You Do with Jesus?

Pilate asked them a question that is a question that is very relevant to each one of us, "What will you then that I shall do unto Him whom you call the King of the Jews? What shall I do with this man?" That's something that every one of you have to determine in your own hearts. What are you going to do with Jesus who is called the King of the Jews? You see, you've got to do something with Him. He is a radical, and as a radical you cannot be neutral towards Him. You've got to have some kind of an opinion. You've got to do something with Him. And you see, you've got to either believe Him or not believe Him. You've got to receive Him or reject Him. Now, not to believe in Him is to not believe in Him. In other words, you can't be neutral; you've got to take a stand one way or the other. You either believe or you don't believe. You can't be neutral. Not to receive Him is to reject Him. Not to confess Him is to deny Him. And each of you must determine what you are going to do with this man Jesus who is called the King of the Jews. For you either confess or deny, you receive, or you reject, you believe, or you don't believe.

Pilate was the judge. He is asking the people to give him direction for his decision, a very unusual move on the part of the judge. But yet, in this case, it's a significant move because really, it's the people's choice. It's a personal choice. And each man must make the decision for himself; you can't leave it up to Pilate to make the decision for you. You make the decision for yourself and you are responsible then for that decision that you make.

In a sense, each of you stand as the judge of Jesus Christ. Was He really the Son of God, or was He a charlatan and a fake? Did He really die for the sins of the world? Was He really risen from the dead? Or is it all a farce, a hoax? And each of you must stand as judge of the facts of history to determine whether or not these are accurate or inaccurately reported to you. So you must finally decide and determine what you are going to do with this man Jesus, who is called the Christ, the King of the Jews. But the ironic twist of the whole thing...your being the person who must judge for yourself concerning Jesus Christ, the ironic twist is that your decision concerning Him has absolutely nothing to do with His destiny. Though you have to judge, you are not determining His destiny; but in reality, you are determining your destiny. To believe in Him, to receive Him, to confess Him is to receive eternal life. To not believe in Him is to receive eternal damnation. And thus, you as the judge are determining your own destiny when you make your determination concerning Jesus Christ. It's a very heavy thing. I am the judge, but yet it is my fate that is being determined by the judgment that I make. What Jesus is, He is. You can't change it. What He is He has always been and will always be. Your decision concerning Him will not affect Him at all. But it will determine where you spend eternity.

Mark 15:13 So they cried out again, "Crucify Him!"

Mark 15:14 Then Pilate said to them, "Why, what evil has He done?" But they cried out all the more, "Crucify Him!"

The Spotless Lamb

Every Passover lamb had to be spotless and without blemish. The Passover Lamb was to be inspected by the priest to verify the Lamb was spotless and qualified to be the Passover sacrifice. Here we see time and time again, Jesus is inspected, and verified, that He is THE spotless Lamb of God, and is qualified to take away the sin of the world.

John 1:29 (NKJV) ²⁹ The next day John saw Jesus coming toward him, and said, "Behold! The Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world!"

Exodus 12:5 (NKJV) ⁵ Your lamb shall be without blemish, a male of the first year. You may take *it* from the sheep or from the goats.

Exodus 12:1–10 (NKJV) ¹ Now the LORD spoke to Moses and Aaron in the land of Egypt, saying, ² “This month *shall be* your beginning of months; *it shall be* the first month of the year to you. ³ Speak to all the congregation of Israel, saying: ‘On the tenth of this month every man shall take for himself a lamb, according to the house of *his* father, a lamb for a household. ⁴ And if the household is too small for the lamb, let him and his neighbor next to his house take *it* according to the number of the persons; according to each man’s need you shall make your count for the lamb. ⁵ Your lamb shall be without blemish, a male of the first year. You may take *it* from the sheep or from the goats. ⁶ Now you shall keep it until the fourteenth day of the same month. Then the whole assembly of the congregation of Israel shall kill it at twilight. ⁷ And they shall take *some* of the blood and put *it* on the two doorposts and on the lintel of the houses where they eat it. ⁸ Then they shall eat the flesh on that night; roasted in fire, with unleavened bread *and* with bitter *herbs* they shall eat it. ⁹ Do not eat it raw, nor boiled at all with water, but roasted in fire—its head with its legs and its entrails. ¹⁰ You shall let none of it remain until morning, and what remains of it until morning you shall burn with fire.

Exodus 12:13 (NKJV) ¹³ Now the blood shall be a sign for you on the houses where you *are*. And when I see the blood, I will pass over you; and the plague shall not be on you to destroy *you* when I strike the land of Egypt.

Exodus 12:11 (NKJV) ¹¹ And thus you shall eat it: *with* a belt on your waist, your sandals on your feet, and your staff in your hand. So you shall eat it in haste. *It is* the LORD’s Passover.

Exodus 12:29–30 (NKJV) ²⁹ And it came to pass at midnight that the LORD struck all the firstborn in the land of Egypt, from the firstborn of Pharaoh who sat on his throne to the firstborn of the captive who *was* in the dungeon, and all the firstborn of livestock. ³⁰ So Pharaoh rose in the night, he, all his servants, and all the Egyptians; and there was a great cry in Egypt, *for there was* not a house where *there was* not one dead.

Moved by the Crowd / The Crowd Can’t Make Your Decision

There are some who feel that these are two different crowds from the ones who said, "Hosanna, hosanna, save now," and the one here that says "Crucify." Some think this crowd has come because it's early in the morning and they've come in support of Barabbas, but I don't think so. I think the word here that says that they stirred up the crowd, that's where we get our word seismic, and it's where we get our word earthquake. These religious leaders have turned the crowd against Jesus, and they've rallied, and got them all fired up, and yet many don't even know why. And we've seen that behavior in riots and chaos, where people just follow the crowd.

But let it be known today, the crowd can't make your decision of who Christ is, and many people want to follow the crowd. Maybe the crowd's roaring or maybe the crowd's quiet, and people will follow the crowd because they don't want to go against the crowd. But the crowd can't make your decision for you, you have to make that decision. And you can't let the crowd influence your decision, you have to make the decision as an individual, because your eternal state rest on it.

All That Mattered was Blood over the Door – Emotions didn’t Matter

Hearing the haunting cries of Egyptian parents who realized death had struck their homes, perhaps God’s people were afraid. Perhaps they doubted. But guess what. It mattered not whether they were at peace or feeling anxious, whether they were rejoicing or worried greatly. All that mattered was that the blood was on the door. No matter what they felt emotionally, it was all about the blood singularly. (Courson)

Note:

While Pilate questions Jesus (Matthew 27:11 - 14, Mark 15:2 - 5, Luke 23:2 - 4, John 18:29 - 30) he discovers he is from Galilee and sends him to Herod Antipas (Tetrach of Galilee and son of Herod the Great) for judgment. Herod questions him but receives no answers. Herod and his soldiers mock him, put a splendid robe on him, and send him back to Pilate (Luke 23:5 - 12). At roughly 8 a.m. Pontius Pilate tells the Jewish religious leaders that he and Herod Antipas find Jesus innocent. Pilate wishes to release him (Luke 23:13 - 15, John 18:31 - 38). Unable to do so because of the crowds, he releases the prisoner Barabbas. He then has his soldiers severely beat and scourge Jesus.

Luke 23:1–25 (NKJV) ¹ Then the whole multitude of them arose and led Him to Pilate. ² And they began to accuse Him, saying, “We found this *fellow* perverting the nation, and forbidding to pay taxes to Caesar, saying that He Himself is Christ, a King.” ³ Then Pilate asked Him, saying, “Are You the King of the Jews?” He answered him and said, “*It is as* you say.” ⁴ So Pilate said to the chief priests and the crowd, “I find no fault in this Man.” ⁵ But they were the more fierce, saying, “He stirs up the people, teaching throughout all Judea, beginning from Galilee to this place.” ⁶ When Pilate heard of Galilee, he asked if the Man were a Galilean. ⁷ And as soon as he knew that He belonged to Herod’s jurisdiction,

he sent Him to Herod, who was also in Jerusalem at that time. ⁸ Now when Herod saw Jesus, he was exceedingly glad; for he had desired for a long *time* to see Him, because he had heard many things about Him, and he hoped to see some miracle done by Him. ⁹ Then he questioned Him with many words, but He answered him nothing. ¹⁰ And the chief priests and scribes stood and vehemently accused Him. ¹¹ Then Herod, with his men of war, treated Him with contempt and mocked *Him*, arrayed Him in a gorgeous robe, and sent Him back to Pilate. ¹² That very day Pilate and Herod became friends with each other, for previously they had been at enmity with each other. ¹³ Then Pilate, when he had called together the chief priests, the rulers, and the people, ¹⁴ said to them, "You have brought this Man to me, as one who misleads the people. And indeed, having examined *Him* in your presence, I have found no fault in this Man concerning those things of which you accuse Him; ¹⁵ no, neither did Herod, for I sent you back to him; and indeed nothing deserving of death has been done by Him. ¹⁶ I will therefore chastise Him and release *Him*" ¹⁷ (for it was necessary for him to release one to them at the feast). ¹⁸ And they all cried out at once, saying, "Away with this *Man*, and release to us Barabbas"—¹⁹ who had been thrown into prison for a certain rebellion made in the city, and for murder. ²⁰ Pilate, therefore, wishing to release Jesus, again called out to them. ²¹ But they shouted, saying, "Crucify *Him*, crucify Him!" ²² Then he said to them the third time, "Why, what evil has He done? I have found no reason for death in Him. I will therefore chastise Him and let *Him* go." ²³ But they were insistent, demanding with loud voices that He be crucified. And the voices of these men and of the chief priests prevailed. ²⁴ So Pilate gave sentence that it should be as they requested. ²⁵ And he released to them the one they requested, who for rebellion and murder had been thrown into prison; but he delivered Jesus to their will.

Mark 15:15 So Pilate, wanting to gratify the crowd, released Barabbas to them; and he delivered Jesus, after he had scourged Him, to be crucified.

Moved by the Crowd

"Pilate, willing to content the people..." This is justice of convenience, which is not true justice. To give in to the will of the people, though you know it is wrong, to yield to the pressure of the crowd, though you know it is wrong, it's always a hard position to be in. In your heart you know what is true. In your heart you know what is right. In your heart you know what you ought to do. But there is this pressure against you, the pressure to make the wrong decision, to do the wrong thing. And how sad it is when a person yields to that pressure, rather than to stand up for that which he knows to be right and true. Pilate, in order to placate the people, freed Barabbas but delivered Jesus to be crucified.

Loyalty

I believe in loyalty, but only loyalty to one that's worthy of loyalty. And there's many people kind of like following the crowd, they're loyal, and they won't go against this group or this person because they don't want to go against them in that they want to show their loyalty to them. And what I say is, Pilate was loyal to Rome, it cost him his life. He could've had the opportunity, he did have the opportunity to be loyal to Jesus, but he chose to be loyal to Rome, and his life ended in other destruction.

The Fear of Man

Of course, here we'd see the ultimate fulfillment of the proverb, the fear of man is a snare.

Proverbs 29:25 (NKJV) ²⁵ *The fear of man brings a snare, But whoever trusts in the LORD shall be safe.*

Momentary Peace versus Lasting Peace

Here Pilate, he wants to appease the crowd. He wants to bring momentary peace. And it's so common for us to trade in longterm peace for momentary peace. Which is such a foolish trade because it is peace, but for a moment. And its ramifications will come in the future and long term. And maybe you're struggling with a decision you need to make today. I pray the Lord encourages you and speaks to you, that you need to fight through momentary peace and do what needs to be done that's based on two things. What's right and what will bring longterm peace. Even if that means a current turmoil and war in the moment. Let war and turmoil be but for a moment so that peace might be what is permanent.

Pilate Known for 1 Thing – his Decision of Jesus / So Too Your Ultimate Decision

You know, the study of Pilate is quite an interesting study, as you read his life and his career through Rome, and all through history he's only remembered for one thing. So life came down to one thing. What did he do with Jesus Christ? And ultimately, that will be your life too. What you did with Jesus Christ. What you did in the workplace and what you did on the ball field. They'll be soon past. It's really one thing that you'll be remembered for. What did you do with Jesus Christ? What is true of Pilate is true of us. His ultimate decision was is what he is known for, the decision of what he did with Jesus Christ. And so too for us, the ultimate decision of our life will come down to what did we do with Jesus?

God Says Come

Today we come and are gifted this Word from God Himself, His very heart opened before us, the calling to come near, be drawn to Him.

[Matthew 11:28 \(NKJV\)](#) ²⁸ Come to Me, all you who labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest.

The Word of God is Living and Powerful, and is ready, and will do a mighty work in our lives.

[Hebrews 4:12 \(NKJV\)](#) ¹² For the word of God is living and powerful, and sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing even to the division of soul and spirit, and of joints and marrow, and is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart.

In Every Study

- Who Is God? (How Great is He?)
- What Does He Think of Me? (How Wonderful Are His Thoughts Towards Me?)
- What Does He Want Me to Do?
- What Can I Boldly Request of Him?
- What Do I Need to Be on Guard of When I Leave Here Today?

Boldly come to the throne of grace, ask God to reveal Himself in a mighty way to you, and to do I might work in you, and through you.

[Hebrews 4:16 \(NKJV\)](#) ¹⁶ Let us therefore come boldly to the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy and find grace to help in time of need.

End of Study

Mark 15:15-20

By His Stripes We are Healed

Mark 15:15–22 (NKJV) ¹⁵ So Pilate, wanting to gratify the crowd, released Barabbas to them; and he delivered Jesus, after he had scourged *Him*, to be crucified. ¹⁶ Then the soldiers led Him away into the hall called Praetorium, and they called together the whole garrison. ¹⁷ And they clothed Him with purple; and they twisted a crown of thorns, put it on His *head*, ¹⁸ and began to salute Him, “Hail, King of the Jews!” ¹⁹ Then they struck Him on the head with a reed and spat on Him; and bowing the knee, they worshiped Him. ²⁰ And when they had mocked Him, they took the purple off Him, put His own clothes on Him, and led Him out to crucify Him. ²¹ Then they compelled a certain man, Simon a Cyrenian, the father of Alexander and Rufus, as he was coming out of the country and passing by, to bear His cross. ²² And they brought Him to the place Golgotha, which is translated, Place of a Skull.

Recap / Intro / Why Listen

Today I want to talk to you about the price of sin. It won't be a pleasant study, there won't be any laughter, I won't be telling you necessarily how to have a better marriage, or better life, or how to be a better parent, a better person, but I pray by the Spirit of God teaching us today, we will all have a better understanding of what God did for us, the distance He was willing to go for us, the extreme price of sin, and all He (God) did to pay the penalty for sin so we might be forgiven of it. Today I want to tell you what Jesus Christ, God's only Son, did for Ray Bollas, did for you.

God Says Come

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Boldly come to the throne of grace, ask God to reveal Himself in a mighty way to you, and to do I might work in you, and through you.

Hebrews 4:16 (NKJV) ¹⁶ Let us therefore come boldly to the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy and find grace to help in time of need.

Mark 15:15 So Pilate, wanting to gratify the crowd, released Barabbas to them; and he delivered Jesus, after he had scourged Him, to be crucified.

The Fear of Man

Of course, here we'd see the ultimate fulfillment of the proverb, the fear of man is a snare.

Proverbs 29:25 (NKJV) ²⁵ The fear of man brings a snare, But whoever trusts in the LORD shall be safe.

Loyalty

I believe in loyalty, but only loyalty to one that's worthy of loyalty. And there's many people kind of like following the crowd, they're loyal, and they won't go against this group or this person because they don't want to go against them in that they want to show their loyalty to them. And what I say is, Pilate was loyal to Rome, it cost him his life. He could've had the opportunity, he did have the opportunity to be loyal to Jesus, but he chose to be loyal to Rome, and his life ended in other destruction.

Momentary Peace versus Lasting Peace / Every Decision based on What is the Right Thing to Do

Here Pilate, he wants to appease the crowd. He wants to bring momentary peace. And it's so common for us to trade in long-term peace for momentary peace. Which is such a foolish trade because it is peace, but for a moment. And its ramifications will come in the future and long term. And maybe you're struggling with a decision you need to make today. I pray the Lord encourages you and speaks to you, that you need to fight through momentary peace and do what needs to be done that's based on two things. What's right and what will bring long-term peace. Even if that means a current turmoil and war in the moment. Let war and turmoil be but for a moment so that peace might be what is permanent. Every decision truly comes down to, what is the right thing to do..... even if right brings present ramifications.

Pilate Known for 1 Thing – his Decision of Jesus / So Too Your Ultimate Decision

You know, the study of Pilate is quite an interesting study, as you read his life and his career through Rome, and all through history he's only remembered for one thing. So life came down to one thing. What did he do with Jesus Christ? And ultimately, that will be your life too. What you did with Jesus Christ. What you did in the workplace and what you did on the ball field. They'll be soon past. It's really one thing that you'll be remembered for. What did you do with Jesus Christ? What is true of Pilate is true of us. His ultimate decision was is what he is known for, the decision of what he did with Jesus Christ. And so too for us, the ultimate decision of our life will come down to what did we do with Jesus? You get that opportunity today; what will you do with Jesus? Will you make Him King of your life and follow Him, or will you not? Will you see the Savior and ask for Him to take your sin so you may be forgiven, or will you not? The choice, like Pilate had a choice, is your choice today.

Now the Scourging / After 24hrs no Sleep – Probably a Concussion Too

So now the scourging, just one word in our text, but oh the brutality of that one word.

Mind you, we know it was Jesus' routine to prayer early every morning, what appears to be before the sun rises and the world starts getting busy, He is spending time with His Father, connecting and getting directions for the day (good example for us); so Jesus has now been up around 24 hours without sleep as it is now early in the morning, after sunrise, after the Passover meal celebrated about 12 hours prior, after prayer in the late night in the garden, then the garden arrest, then a mock trial with the religious leaders (as Peter warmed himself by the fires in the courtyard). He has been dragged off to stand trial before Pilate, who had sent Him to King Herod, who has now sent Him back to Pilate, but before going to Herod, Jesus had a blindfold put over His face and was repeatedly punched in the face. He is physically exhausted, and suffering intense trauma in His body, especially His face and brain (most likely has a concussion after all the fist to His face), and now the scourging.

The Whip

The whip used in scourging was horrendous. To be scourged was to be whipped with a device known as a flagellum, consisting of a wooden handle with long leather thongs attached. The thongs, which were embedded with sharp pieces of bone and metal, were designed to rip the flesh to the bone. The victim would be tied to a post, his hands extended high over his head and his feet suspended off the ground so that his body was taught. As the scourge tore into his back, muscles would be lacerated, veins cut, and internal organs exposed. Intended to hasten death on the cross, scourging itself was sometimes fatal. After enduring such a debilitating form of torture, the Lord Jesus was handed over to be crucified.

When I was a youth growing up in Western Pennsylvania, we use to make our own sticks (they were not bats, nor were they small clubs, they were somewhere in-between the two. We would carry them in the woods with us, because we spent lots of time in the woods hunting, fishing, and trapping (that what we did in PA). Now we didn't buy our clubs, we made them, and we made them we a passion, because we knew how we would use them (protection and for sporting). We would go find literally small trees, cut them down, and plane our rods from 6 inches down to 3 inches using an axe; we wanted the strongest piece of wood we could have, and the core of the tree gave us that. We would whittle stroke by stroke with our knives, from long strokes to short strokes, until the rod was to the shape we desired. And then, we would do the same at the handle, smaller than the rod body, but

formed until it fit our hands perfectly. Everybody's rod was their own, we didn't share them, and we never got confused whose was whose, we knew each our own as they became our own.

And I would see them men who were trained and enlisted to be the torturer, they fashioned their own whip, to their own liking, and it became part of them. They knew it, it was an extension of them, and they knew how to use it to do exactly what they wanted to do. Historical writings tell us they were trained on how to use it to get the maximum effectiveness out of the scourging, without killing the person, because Rome wanted the person on the cross so people would see a visible demonstration of what was to be of anyone who defied Rome. The people would see the person hanging on the cross as they walked by (sometimes up on the mountain top such as Golgotha, sometimes they had them along the roadside so as people travelled into town, or along the way, they were reminded of what became of thieves, robbers, revilers, murders and the likes who defied Roman law.

More than the back would be shredded, this thing would have reached around to the front too when the torturer wanted to get there. He could lay it on to rip the back, to rip the side of the ribs, or the front of the ribs.

The scourge whip, also called the flagellum, was a brutal, cruel, form of torture. Jesus was tortured, make no mistake about that. The whip, also called the cat-of-nine tails, because it had 9 chords to each. On each chord were multiple metal balls, and the purpose of them was that when they struck the body they would cause a welt, a contusion, which would cause blood to rush to the trauma and do what it was designed to do and that is begin a healing with the blood. But in this case the contusion, bruise, would bring blood to the surface so that (also on the whip) were pieces of sharp metal, or pottery, or sharp bone fragments, bonded to the leather whip; those pieces of sharp objects were meant to rip open that bruise that the metal balls made, to cause fast and excessive blood to pump out of the wound. The person being tortured would bleed out profusely. Yesterday I had some sparkling black cherry water that had red coloring in it (to represent the black cherry), and I did not realize that it was partially froze, and when I cracked the bottle, there was a great rush of red spraying out. It was a split second of a crack before I sealed it back up, but my whole office was covered in red droplets. Everywhere, my computer screen, my carpet, my clothing, my desk, and even still I look today and go wow it made it all the way over to the cabinet, the chair, my room is splattered with red droplets. Well, the scene of the scourging, it red, it is everywhere, and it was the blood of God. His blood would literally be spraying out because of the contusions, and the piercing; I am not trying to be theatrical, but just factual, His blood would not be dripping, but pumping out of His body. How He survived the scourging is beyond human reasoning. I do not use the word miraculous, as I do not believe any miracle is happening, I believe Jesus is the God-Man, and here He is taking all the wrath in His human body. Jesus endures, because He must make it to the cross as prophesied, He must die at twilight, He cannot die any sooner than twilight (between 3-6pm), or He is not the Passover Lamb. He must die via the cross, or He is not the Passover Lamb (Psalm 22). Some men have a hard time following Jesus because they think He is weak.... to which I say then you really don't know Him. He is a man's man, gentle and mild yes, but strong and mighty absolutely! I say Hollywood has a hard time making movies about Jesus because they can't find a man, man enough to paly Jesus. The strength it took to endure the scourging, just to make it to the cross, was pure sheer heart! The scourging was 40 lashes, the physical body would have quit well into this after the beating and pounding He already took, but He makes it to the end, on sheer heart determination. I cannot quit, I will not quit, I must make it to the cross for Ray Bollas or He is doomed to eternal damnation! Have you ever said God doesn't love me, doesn't care about me, has abandoned me? I pray this passage settles that debate in your heart and mind.

Exodus 12:6 (NKJV) ⁶ Now you shall keep it until the fourteenth day of the same month. Then the whole assembly of the congregation of Israel shall kill it at twilight.

John 1:29 (NKJV) ²⁹ The next day John saw Jesus coming toward him, and said, "Behold! The Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world!"

Psalm 22:1 (NKJV) ¹ My God, My God, why have You forsaken Me? Why are You so far from helping Me, And from the words of My groaning?

Psalm 22:14-18 (NKJV) ¹⁴ I am poured out like water, And all My bones are out of joint; My heart is like wax; It has melted within Me. ¹⁵ My strength is dried up like a potsherd, And My tongue clings to My jaws; You have brought Me to the dust of death. ¹⁶ For dogs have surrounded Me; The congregation of the wicked has enclosed Me. They pierced My hands and My feet; ¹⁷ I can count all My bones. They look and stare at Me. ¹⁸ They divide My garments among them, And for My clothing they cast lots.

Jesus Scourged

"And he scourged Him..." Now, we have it only in one word: "scourged" Him. Yet that scourging was one of the cruelest forms of punishment administered by Rome. In fact, it was such a horrible punishment that there was a law that no Roman prisoner being a Roman citizen could be scourged without first of all having a formal trial.

The purpose of scourging was to discover information. You've heard of the old third degree, which of course the supreme courts have outlawed now. You know, when they turn the hot lights on and they don't feed you and they keep asking you questions, and they wear you down mentally until finally you're ready to sign your confession and all. And where they take the pliers and pull out your fingernails and they pinch your ears and they slap your face...and you know, all of the old third-degree thing to get a person to confess. Well, this was the "tenth degree" kind of an exercise of the Roman government, where they would tie the prisoner over a post so that his back was stretched out and exposed. And then they would use this leather whip with sharpened bits of lead and glass tied in it; and it would literally tear the prisoners back to shreds, as they would lay this lash over their back thirty-nine times.

They always had a scribe standing by who was recording the confessions that the prisoner would cry out. And the idea was, as the stripe was laid upon you, you would cry out a crime that you had committed. You confessed to some crime. And that way they would make the next lash a little easier and a little easier. And it was to help the Roman government solve a lot of the unsolved crimes prior to putting the man to death. It was to clear up the police blotter of a lot of the unsolved crimes in the community. And it was very effective. It was so painful that there are records of many men who went insane through the beating, and rarely would a man survive it. Usually, he would die from the loss of blood and just the horrible painfulness of this experience. And many prisoners died during the scourging, many went insane.

"As a lamb before her shearers is dumb, so He opened not His mouth." As they were scourging Him, He had nothing to confess. And of course, the idea was if there was no confession, then he lays the whip on a little harder and a little harder until you're forced to confess your sins, your crimes. Having nothing to confess, Jesus took the full brunt of that scourging. But it wasn't over; it was just the beginning.

Isaiah 53:7 (NKJV) ⁷ He was oppressed and He was afflicted, Yet He opened not His mouth; He was led as a lamb to the slaughter, And as a sheep before its shearers is silent, So He opened not His mouth.

Isaiah 53:5 (NKJV) ⁵ But He was wounded for our transgressions, He was bruised for our iniquities; The chastisement for our peace was upon Him, And by His stripes we are healed.

Isaiah 53:1–12 (NKJV) ¹ Who has believed our report? And to whom has the arm of the LORD been revealed? ² For He shall grow up before Him as a tender plant, And as a root out of dry ground. He has no form or comeliness; And when we see Him, There is no beauty that we should desire Him. ³ He is despised and rejected by men, A Man of sorrows and acquainted with grief. And we hid, as it were, our faces from Him; He was despised, and we did not esteem Him. ⁴ Surely He has borne our griefs And carried our sorrows; Yet we esteemed Him stricken, Smitten by God, and afflicted. ⁵ But He was wounded for our transgressions, He was bruised for our iniquities; The chastisement for our peace was upon Him, and by His stripes we are healed. ⁶ All we like sheep have gone astray; We have turned, every one, to his own way; And the LORD has laid on Him the iniquity of us all. ⁷ He was oppressed and He was afflicted, Yet He opened not His mouth; He was led as a lamb to the slaughter, And as a sheep before its shearers is silent, So He opened not His mouth. ⁸ He was taken from prison and from judgment, And who will declare His generation? For He was cut off from the land of the living; For the transgressions of My people He was stricken. ⁹ And they made His grave with the wicked— But with the rich at His death, Because He had done no violence, Nor was any deceit in His mouth. ¹⁰ Yet it pleased the LORD to bruise Him; He has put Him to grief. When You make His soul an offering for sin, He shall see His seed, He shall prolong His days, And the pleasure of the LORD shall prosper in His hand. ¹¹ He shall see the labor of His soul, and be satisfied. By His knowledge My righteous Servant shall justify many, For He shall bear their iniquities. ¹² Therefore I will divide Him a portion with the great, And He shall divide the spoil with the strong, Because He poured out His soul unto death, And He was numbered with the transgressors, And He bore the sin of many, And made intercession for the transgressors.

1 Peter 2:23–25 (NKJV) ²³ who, when He was reviled, did not revile in return; when He suffered, He did not threaten, but committed Himself to Him who judges righteously; ²⁴ who Himself bore our sins in His own body on the tree, that we, having died to sins, might live for righteousness— by whose stripes you were healed. ²⁵ For you were like sheep going astray, but have now returned to the Shepherd and Overseer of your souls.

Silent So Next Trial Against Ray Bollas

As it's spoken, Jesus remained silent because he was sinless and that is true, but the fact is at this point, He is not just being the sinless Lamb of God. He has now traded places with me, and there is lots to confess. There is lots that could be reported of my crime, my offense, and in our case before the Holy God. Jesus could have dimed me out and said, "Here's the crimes that I know of. Let me start with this man named Ray. He did this, he did that, he did this, he did that," and under the Roman law of a crime breaker, then they're going to go find that criminal and they're going to punish him and they're going to kill him. They're going to put him on the cross, and he's going to take the lashings and the scourging then to the cross, carrying the cross beam. But by Jesus remaining silent, there was no next trail of the crime that I had committed, and so there was no follow-up to come to somebody reviewing the record and saying, "Here's the person that is guilty. Now go get them and do the same."

If you would, He knew all the sins of man, every man, and could have told all the sins of Peter, James, John.....and Rome would have gone out and found them and killed them.

Jesus remained silent so there was no trail. There was no follow-up for punishment. In this case, death for the punishment, the wages of sin is death, but the gift of God is eternal life (Romans 6:23). Jesus's silence is the gift of God that brings us eternal life, and the gift of God took the wages of sin for anyone who would receive it. Romans 3:23 says, "All have sinned and fall short of the glory of God." That means the standard of God. Jesus took it, traded places with us. Anyone who is willing to trade places, but for any man that is unwilling, then they will have to stand and give an account for their own sin, and there will be no substitution available at that time and therefore they will have to take the wrath for sin. An eternal separation from God is a place called hell where the worm dies not. It means it's eternal. The fire's not quenched and there will be a remembrance of what could have been and yet was refused and rejected.

[Romans 3:23 \(NKJV\)](#) ²³ for all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God,

[Romans 6:23 \(NKJV\)](#) ²³ For the wages of sin is death, but the gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord.

[Mark 9:42–48 \(NKJV\)](#) ⁴² "But whoever causes one of these little ones who believe in Me to stumble, it would be better for him if a millstone were hung around his neck, and he were thrown into the sea. ⁴³ If your hand causes you to sin, cut it off. It is better for you to enter into life maimed, rather than having two hands, to go to hell, into the fire that shall never be quenched—⁴⁴ where *'Their worm does not die And the fire is not quenched.'* ⁴⁵ And if your foot causes you to sin, cut it off. It is better for you to enter life lame, rather than having two feet, to be cast into hell, into the fire that shall never be quenched—⁴⁶ where *'Their worm does not die And the fire is not quenched.'* ⁴⁷ And if your eye causes you to sin, pluck it out. It is better for you to enter the kingdom of God with one eye, rather than having two eyes, to be cast into hell fire—⁴⁸ where *'Their worm does not die And the fire is not quenched.'*

The Soldiers Mock and Beat Jesus (15:16-20)

Mark 15:16 Then the soldiers led Him away into the hall called Praetorium, and they called together the whole garrison.

Led by Love

Verse 16, again he is led and bound by love, not by ropes and not by man, but by his love for Ray.

Praetorium – Garrison (Cohort)

The praetorium was the governor's headquarters, and hence the Roman garrison was located near it or within it, which thus would be Antonio Fortress the Roman barracks located right near the Temple. A garrison was about 600 soldiers, as the word used here is the word we have spoken about before called a "cohort", the same word used of the number of soldiers who came with Judas to arrest Jesus in the garden. A cohort was a detachment of a Roman Legion (6,000 men), and a cohort was 1/10th of a Legion, thus 600 men.

Praetorium means "hall of judgement".

God Does Judge

Here we see Jesus coming into the place of judgment for sin, and it is a picture for all mankind, that there is a judgment to come for every person. There is a continual repeatedly, and misunderstanding and misquoting, that God doesn't judge; that is no true, God does judge, and God will, judge, even after the cross. Let me explain.

There is what is called the White Throne Judgement, and the Bema Seat Judgment.

White Throne - Judgment

Question: "What is the Great White Throne Judgment?"

Answer: The great white throne judgment is described in Revelation 20:11-15 and is the final judgment prior to the lost being cast into the lake of fire. We know from Revelation 20:7-15 that this judgment will take place after the millennium and after Satan is thrown into the lake of fire where the beast and the false prophet are (Revelation 19:19-20; 20:7-10). The books that are opened (Revelation 20:12) contain records of everyone's deeds, whether they are good or evil, because God knows everything that has ever been said, done, or even thought, and He will reward or punish each one accordingly (Psalm 28:4; 62:12; Romans 2:6; Revelation 2:23; 18:6; 22:12).

Also at this time, another book is opened, called the "book of life" (Revelation 20:12). It is this book that determines whether a person will inherit eternal life with God or receive everlasting punishment in the lake of fire. Although Christians are held accountable for their actions, they are forgiven in Christ and their names were written in the "book of life from the creation of the world" (Revelation 17:8). We also know from Scripture that it is at this judgment when the dead will be "judged according to what they had done" (Revelation 20:12) and that "anyone's name" that is not "found written in the book of life" will be "thrown into the lake of fire" (Revelation 20:15).

The fact that there is going to be a final judgment for all men, both believers and unbelievers, is clearly confirmed in many passages of Scripture. Every person will one day stand before Christ and be judged for his or her deeds. While it is very clear that the great white throne judgment is the final judgment, Christians disagree on how it relates to the other judgments mentioned in the Bible, specifically, who will be judged at the great white throne judgment.

Revelation 20:11–15 (NKJV) ¹¹ Then I saw a great white throne and Him who sat on it, from whose face the earth and the heaven fled away. And there was found no place for them. ¹² And I saw the dead, small and great, standing before God, and books were opened. And another book was opened, which is the Book of Life. And the dead were judged according to their works, by the things which were written in the books. ¹³ The sea gave up the dead who were in it, and Death and Hades delivered up the dead who were in them. And they were judged, each one according to his works. ¹⁴ Then Death and Hades were cast into the lake of fire. This is the second death. ¹⁵ And anyone not found written in the Book of Life was cast into the lake of fire.

Beam Seat - Judgment

Question: "What is the Judgment Seat of Christ / Bema Seat of Christ?"

Answer: Romans 14:10–12 says, "For we will all stand before God's judgment seat. . . . So then, each of us will give an account of himself to God" (ESV). Second Corinthians 5:10 tells us, "We must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ, so that each of us may receive what is due us for the things done while in the body, whether good or bad." In context, it is clear that both passages refer to Christians, not unbelievers. The judgment seat of Christ, therefore, involves believers giving an account of their lives to Christ.

The judgment seat of Christ does not determine salvation; that was determined by Christ's sacrifice on our behalf (1 John 2:2) and our faith in Him (John 3:16). All of our sins are forgiven, and we will never be condemned for them (Romans 8:1). We should not look at the judgment seat of Christ as God judging our sins, but rather as God rewarding us for our lives. Yes, as the Bible says, we will have to give an account of ourselves. Part of this is surely answering for the sins we committed. However, that is not going to be the primary focus of the judgment seat of Christ.

At the judgment seat of Christ, believers are rewarded based on how faithfully they served Christ (1 Corinthians 9:4-27; 2 Timothy 2:5). Some of the things we might be judged on are how well we obeyed the Great Commission (Matthew 28:18-20), how victorious we were over sin (Romans 6:1-4), and how well we controlled our tongues (James 3:1-9). The Bible speaks of believers receiving crowns for different things based on how faithfully they served Christ (1 Corinthians 9:4-27; 2 Timothy 2:5). The various crowns are described in 2 Timothy 2:5, 2 Timothy 4:8, James 1:12, 1 Peter 5:4, and Revelation 2:10. James 1:12 is a good summary of how we should think about the

judgment seat of Christ: "Blessed is the man who perseveres under trial, because when he has stood the test, he will receive the crown of life that God has promised to those who love him."

2 Corinthians 5:9–10 (NKJV) ⁹ Therefore we make it our aim, whether present or absent, to be well pleasing to Him. ¹⁰ For we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ, that each one may receive the things done in the body, according to what he has done, whether good or bad.

John 3:16–17 (NKJV) ¹⁶ For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have everlasting life. ¹⁷ For God did not send His Son into the world to condemn the world, but that the world through Him might be saved.

Romans 8:1 (NKJV) ¹ There is therefore now no condemnation to those who are in Christ Jesus, who do not walk according to the flesh, but according to the Spirit.

Millennial Kingdom

Question: "What is the Millennial Kingdom, and should it be understood literally?"

Answer: The millennial kingdom is the title given to the 1000-year reign of Jesus Christ on the earth. Some seek to interpret the 1000 years in an allegorical manner. They understand the 1000 years as merely a figurative way of saying "a long period of time," not a literal, physical reign of Jesus Christ on the earth. However, six times in Revelation 20:2-7, the millennial kingdom is specifically said to be 1000 years in length. If God wished to communicate "a long period of time," He could have easily done so without explicitly and repeatedly mentioning an exact time frame.

The Bible tells us that when Christ returns to the earth He will establish Himself as king in Jerusalem, sitting on the throne of David (Luke 1:32–33). The unconditional covenants demand a literal, physical return of Christ to establish the kingdom. The Abrahamic Covenant promised Israel a land, a posterity and ruler, and a spiritual blessing (Genesis 12:1–3). The Palestinian Covenant promised Israel a restoration to the land and occupation of the land (Deuteronomy 30:1–10). The Davidic Covenant promised Israel a king from David's line who would rule forever—giving the nation rest from all their enemies (2 Samuel 7:10–13).

At the second coming, these covenants will be fulfilled as Israel is re-gathered from the nations (Matthew 24:31), converted (Zechariah 12:10–14), and restored to the land under the rule of the Messiah, Jesus Christ. The Bible speaks of the conditions during the millennium as a perfect environment physically and spiritually. It will be a time of peace (Micah 4:2–4; Isaiah 32:17–18), joy (Isaiah 61:7, 10), and comfort (Isaiah 40:1–2). The Bible also tells us that only believers will enter the millennial kingdom. Because of this, it will be a time of obedience (Jeremiah 31:33), holiness (Isaiah 35:8), truth (Isaiah 65:16), and the knowledge of God (Isaiah 11:9, Habakkuk 2:14). Christ will rule as king (Isaiah 9:3–7; 11:1–10). Nobles and governors will also rule (Isaiah 32:1; Matthew 19:28), and Jerusalem will be the political center of the world (Zechariah 8:3).

Revelation 20:2-7 gives the precise time period of the millennial kingdom. Even without these scriptures, there are countless others that point to a literal reign of the Messiah on the earth. The fulfillment of many of God's covenants and promises rests on a literal, physical, future kingdom. There is no solid basis for denying the literal interpretation of the millennial kingdom and its duration being 1000 years.

Revelation 20:1–10 (NKJV) ¹ Then I saw an angel coming down from heaven, having the key to the bottomless pit and a great chain in his hand. ² He laid hold of the dragon, that serpent of old, who is the Devil and Satan, and bound him for a thousand years; ³ and he cast him into the bottomless pit, and shut him up, and set a seal on him, so that he should deceive the nations no more till the thousand years were finished. But after these things he must be released for a little while. ⁴ And I saw thrones, and they sat on them, and judgment was committed to them. Then I saw the souls of those who had been beheaded for their witness to Jesus and for the word of God, who had not worshiped the beast or his image, and had not received his mark on their foreheads or on their hands. And they lived and reigned with Christ for a thousand years. ⁵ But the rest of the dead did not live again until the thousand years were finished. This is the first resurrection. ⁶ Blessed and holy is he who has part in the first resurrection. Over such the second death has no power, but they shall be priests of God and of Christ, and shall reign with Him a thousand years. ⁷ Now when the thousand years have expired, Satan will be released from his prison ⁸ and will go out to deceive the nations which are in the four corners of the earth, Gog and Magog, to gather them together to battle, whose number is as the sand of the sea. ⁹ They went up on the breadth of the earth and surrounded the camp of the saints and the beloved city. And fire came down from God out of heaven and devoured them. ¹⁰ The devil, who deceived them, was cast into the lake of fire and brimstone where the beast and the false prophet are. And they will be tormented day and night forever and ever.

Well Done

One day Jesus will say to us, "Well done thy good and faithful servant. You have been faithful with the few things, I will make you ruler over the many things."

Matthew 25:20–23 (NKJV) ²⁰ "So he who had received five talents came and brought five other talents, saying, 'Lord, you delivered to me five talents; look, I have gained five more talents besides them.'²¹ His lord said to him, 'Well done, good and faithful servant; you were faithful over a few things, I will make you ruler over many things. Enter into the joy of your lord.'²² He also who had received two talents came and said, 'Lord, you delivered to me two talents; look, I have gained two more talents besides them.'²³ His lord said to him, 'Well done, good and faithful servant; you have been faithful over a few things, I will make you ruler over many things. Enter into the joy of your lord.'

And the first question that I think we should all ask ourselves is, "What has he entrusted to us?" I think it's good to do an inventory. What have you given me that I will give an account for on this day that you speak of where I stand before you at this reward seat, also known as the Bema seat, so that we may be sure that we can hear the words "Well done, good and faithful servant," so the question, what has he entrusted to you? I will say to every person here who's married, he has entrusted that spouse to you. Have you been faithful? Are you loving your wife as Christ loved the church? Wives, are you respecting your husband and giving them the honor due to them? Are you loving him? Husbands, are you respecting your wives? Every parent in here, he is trusted a child with. Are we being faithful? Every ministry, every possession, all these things that he gives us, it's good to do an inventory and say, "How am I doing on being faithful to these things and do I need to make some adjustment regarding these things?"

But there's also a time that most Christians don't realize they think life on earth, last breath on earth, first breath in heaven and eternity in heaven, and that is partially correct, but mostly wrong. As we've discussed and continue to discuss and went through in our prophecy overview, we're under the period of grace right now which will come to an end in what is known as the tribulation period, which I believe is preceded absolutely by the rapture of the church, God taking his church out of heaven and then this great tribulation period here on earth for seven years.

Then at the end of this seven-year tribulation period, while we are in heaven doing and having the marriage supper of the lamb for seven years and earth is in tremendous upheaval as the book of Revelation calls it the Wrath of the Lamb, it will culminate at the Battle of Armageddon and it's not good verse evil. It's two evil armies battling each other, but Jesus makes his second return to earth and they will unite together in their hatred against him, but he will speak a word and it will be over. And that then ushers in what is known as the Millennial Kingdom, 1000 year reign on earth and earth will be as God intended it to be. What we see here is an earth in a fallen state, man in control, but here we'll see God establish how earth was intended to be under his rule and his Godly rule.

There will be no more war, there will be no more famine, there will be no more starvation. Things will be as it was intended to be before the fall. And it is said that in the scriptures we're told we shall reign with him and that is part of the reward seat. We shall reign with him and our faithfulness of what he entrusted to us then is rewarded on how he will reward us in our service in what we do here in the millennial kingdom, so it's more than just squeaking by and getting into heaven. There's a thousand-year reign and we will reign with him and that is going to be established and decided by how faithful we are with what he gives us in earthly possessions today, whether that's materially or relationally.

**Mark 15:17 And they clothed Him with purple; and they twisted a crown of thorns, put it on His head,
Mark 15:18 and began to salute Him, "Hail, King of the Jews!"**

Soldiers have Fun at Jesus' Expense

So, now you're going to have some barracks fun. These Roman soldiers are going to take this man who has been condemned to die, the man who made claim to be the King of the Jews. And they're going to make fun of Him and have just a good time as they mock and make fun of the prisoners.

Jesus for Entertainment – So Too Today

Out of boredom, the monotony, and Jerusalem was surely not the place that Roman soldiers wanted to do their tour of duty, sort of for entertainment, they're going to entertain themselves by beating and mocking Jesus Christ. And many people still today do that for their entertainment. They mock Christians, some of them out of the hardness and evilness of their heart, they beat Christians. We have brothers and sisters that we even know

personally who are in harm's way every day for their faith in countries such as the Middle East and India. But here they are playing a game with the life of Jesus.

Clothed in Purple

Clothed Him with purple ... twisted a crown of thorns: A king of that day often wore a purple robe and a gilded wreath of leaves. The rag of purple and crown of thorns mocked this common practice.

Crown of Thorns

These thorns found in Israel, are long and hard, about 1.5 inches long, not the short thorns we are familiar with here in the States.

The King of the Jews, His only crown a crown of thorns. How significant! Where did thorns come from anyhow? Going back to the book of Genesis when Adam rebelled against God and God began to pronounce the curse upon man and upon woman, and God said, "Cursed be the ground; thorns and thistles shall it bring forth." Those thorns were the result of God's curse against sin. Here was Jesus ready to bear the curse of sin. How appropriate that they should crown Him with a crown of thorns.

Genesis 3:17–19 (NKJV) ¹⁷ Then to Adam He said, "Because you have heeded the voice of your wife, and have eaten from the tree of which I commanded you, saying, 'You shall not eat of it': "Cursed is the ground for your sake; In toil you shall eat of it All the days of your life. ¹⁸ Both thorns and thistles it shall bring forth for you, And you shall eat the herb of the field. ¹⁹ In the sweat of your face you shall eat bread Till you return to the ground, For out of it you were taken; For dust you are, And to dust you shall return."

Mark 15:19 Then they struck Him on the head with a reed and spat on Him; and bowing the knee, they worshiped Him.

Jesus is Just Entertainment for Them

You can almost see them; you can almost hear their laughter. It is just a big laugh, a lot of fun. Having had their fun, now they get down to business.

Now Remember This – Jesus is Taking Place of Barabbas

Now remember this, these soldiers are having their fun at the expense of Jesus, but there is also a great hatred for the Jews by the Romans, and Jesus has just now taken the place of Barabbas. Barabbas was guilty of murder in an insurrection against Rome. Most likely Barabbas killed a Roman soldier; now just how much hatred would they have for Barabbas for killing one of their own? Jesus is taking Barabbas' place, and Jesus will get the full vengeance of the Roman soldiers.

The Reed - Thorns

The reed that struck Jesus was a stick, not a reed known for on the shoreline of a lake or pond. But this reed that's spoken of here in this passage is not the reed that was a gentle frail reed around the shoreline of a waterway. This is an actual stick. It was used as a measuring stick, we're told in Ezekiel, and so it has some girth to it. It has some thickness to it, and therefore it has some sting to it. As I read this originally, I viewed it as the reed that was around the shoreline and I could easily see the mocking of making Jesus hold it, and then they take it out of his hand. But it said they struck him with it and the striking with a little reed would be far from the pain that they desire to inflict upon him. So the word here is rightly that word for a stick that has some girth to it, and when you get stung by that stick it will hurt. And now mind you, you're wearing a crown of thorns that are one and a half inches long and someone takes a stick and smacks you in the head with it. They are literally driving those thorns deeper and deeper into Jesus's skull. Imagine the excruciating pain and yet he continues to endure it.

Revelation 21:15–16 (NKJV) ¹⁵ And he who talked with me had a gold reed to measure the city, its gates, and its wall. ¹⁶ The city is laid out as a square; its length is as great as its breadth. And he measured the city with the reed: twelve thousand furlongs. Its length, breadth, and height are equal.

Mark 15:36 (NKJV) ³⁶ Then someone ran and filled a sponge full of sour wine, put it on a reed, and offered it to Him to drink, saying, "Let Him alone; let us see if Elijah will come to take Him down."

Game – Kill the King / Verb Tense is "Continual"

I have stood on the first century level of Israel. The majority of Israel, Jerusalem, better said today that you would see and visit, is on top of many generations of sand and dirt that is blown over it through its many years of destruction. But archeology has dug down to what is known to be the ground level of the first century and have unveiled some amazing archeological discoveries. And one of them is this piece which I have stood over and inscribed into the stone there was this game board. and it was a game board that the Roman soldiers would play with casting of lots, rolling of dice type things, to play this game. And this is what they're going to do for Jesus's robe, clothing. And it's interesting, the name of the game from historical writings is called Kill the King. And here they are playing the game to kill the King. And again, archeology just confirms the Bible that you hold in your hand.

So the way this sick game is played, what they're vying for is who gets to kill the king. It would be an honor to kill anyone who had any type of executive power, if you would, in the land that they occupied, and so they would play this game and the winner of the game of Kill the King got to kill the king and we'll see that they were casting dice in the end for it, but the way the game was played, and we can read it right here, is they put the stick in the prisoner's hand, they come, they bow mockingly, they take the stick, which represents the scepter, out of his hand and they smack the person on the head and then they spit in their face. Then the stick goes back into the hand, and the next person comes, takes the stick out of the hand after they bow mockingly, take the stick out of the hand, smack the person in the head, and then spit in their face.

And the verb tenses that are used in this passage here is a continual, meaning that this repeated over and over and over. Now, we know that a cohort was 600 people and many scholars want to go, "Well, not all 600 would have been there," and I think they say that just because they're trying to come up with, "There's no way that Jesus could've endured 600 times of this," but I think it's very possible. Just as he'll take 40 lashes in the full strength, I believe he could have took 40 or 600 strikes with this rod because he is taking the full wrath of the punishment for sin, and yet he remained silent and spoke not a word. He would not dime you out. He would not give you up.

They were just hitting Him on the head. Now, earlier He had been buffeted in the court of Caiaphas. They put a sack over his head and began to beat Him in the face with their fists, plummet Him and then to slap Him and say, "Prophecy! Who is it that hit You?" Now He is scourged, and now He is being hit over the head with a reed.

So verse 20 tells us what's going on in verse 19, all this is for mockery. Jesus is being mocked. Are you the King of the Jews? He's more than the King of Jews. He's the King of glory, the whole universe, and yet here, the King of glory is being mocked.

Passion of Christ

If you saw the "Passion of Christ", which is probably the most accurate displays of what Jesus endured through the beatings, and scourging, and the cross, you get a good visual on what happened to Jesus, and the hatred the Romans had for the Jews (and thus carried on to the Kings of the Jews), and the sport and entertainment Jesus was to them. It was a bloody movie. One thing I noticed on my way out of the movie theatre was all the buckets of popcorn in the trash that were still nearly full. People came to the movies for entertainment, popcorn and candy, but soon man was reminded the price of sin, and a God who paid it in full, and the strong reminder the Jesus is for entertainment, but a personal, holy (uncommon is what holy means) relationship.

If Anyone Could Say Jesus Died for Me – It was Barabbas

If ever there was a person who could literally say Jesus took my punishment for guilt, it was Barabbas. Everything poured out upon Jesus, should have went to Barabbas, and Barabbas is a picture of you and me (as should have been us).

Have you ever said, maybe a hard time, a lonely time – God You Don't Love Me!

The Bruised Reed

Matthew 12 says, "A bruised reed he will not break and a smoldering flack he will not quench." That's a candle wick in the greatest sense, but this reed speaks of the reed that was around the shoreline of a lake or a waterway, the Jordan River and very thin and frail, and sometimes when a harsh wind would come it would bruise it or it

could break it, but in the reference here of the gentleness of God, if it was bruised by that wind, it would simply need to be healed, to be strengthened and he's that the bruise reed, he's not going to come and pray and say, "You're useless." No. What he's speaking of, he's going to heal the bruised reed, the person who's bruised, the person who feels like their life is flickering and fading. He comes and he's going to be gentle and kind, and of course, how do you rekindle a candle wick or a fireplace, fire flame that's flickering is you blow a gentle wind over it.

You cup it with your hand and gently blow the wind. You make sure that heavy winds don't come and extinguish it, but you cup it in your hand and you give it a slight breath, ever so slight that it would rekindle, and that's what he does through his Holy Spirit. He blows a fresh wind upon us, a gentle wind as he cups his hand around us to protect us and to strengthen us. Oh, what an example we have in Peter. If anybody is a smoldering flax right now ready to extinguish himself and give up, it's Peter but here we will see the Lord in his promise, in his gentleness. He's going to come. He's going to cup his hands around Peter, and he's going to breathe a fresh wind of God's Spirit, god's very breath upon Peter and Peter will be rekindled, he will be strengthened, he will be restored, and he will burn bright for the Lord.

Matthew 12:18–21 (NKJV) ¹⁸ "Behold! My Servant whom I have chosen, My Beloved in whom My soul is well pleased! I will put My Spirit upon Him, And He will declare justice to the Gentiles. ¹⁹ He will not quarrel nor cry out, Nor will anyone hear His voice in the streets. ²⁰ A bruised reed He will not break, And smoking flax He will not quench, Till He sends forth justice to victory; ²¹ And in His name Gentiles will trust."

Jesus doesn't smash the reed that bends under the heat of the sun. Nor does He douse the smoking flax that doesn't ignite easily. In fact, as evidenced by the parable of the lost sheep (Luke 15), Jesus seems to be most interested in the person who is hurting or struggling. Over and over again, Satan will tell you that if your reed is bruised or your flax is nothing more than smoke that Jesus is really tired of you and about to give up on you. But that's a lie. Jesus doesn't break the bruised reed. He doesn't extinguish the smoking flax. You might look at yourself as hopeless. But He doesn't. He sees you as you're going to be. He's not discouraged because, although you might fail time and again, He won't.

Mark 15:20 And when they had mocked Him, they took the purple off Him, put His own clothes on Him, and led Him out to crucify Him.

Dried Blood on the Robe

Verse 20, this is excruciating pain. We think of it as they take the robe off, but we missed the point. They've been playing this game, Kill the King, he's been robed in purple now for who knows how long? 10 minutes? No. 30, 40, 50, 60 minutes. By the time it gets through all these soldiers mocking him, how much longer if it was 600 soldiers? The point being now, this cloth that has been wrapped around Jesus's back that has been shredded has now absorbed the blood and the blood has coagulated on it. The cloth and the blood and the healing have begun, and they're all together in one. You've had that bandage on you that the blood coagulates on and the pain of it when you replace the bandage. Well, here they are, there's no gentleness here. They're going to rip this cloth of purple off of Jesus and the excruciating pain that would come from this one rip of the cloth is unbearable to consider, and then immediately all the blood will start to flow again. So what would have been any resemblance of healing, now the blood would flow and we're going to see why he's not able to continue to carry the cross because he's bleeding out, and hence why Simon the Cyrene will pick up the cross. Verse 22.

Closing

Have you ever said, maybe a hard time, a lonely time – God You Don't Love Me! Have you, maybe even right now, feel God has abandoned you?

God Says Come

Today we come and are gifted this Word from God Himself, His very heart opened before us, the calling to come near, be drawn to Him.

Matthew 11:28 (NKJV) ²⁸ Come to Me, all you who labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest.

The Word of God is Living and Powerful, and is ready, and will do a mighty work in our lives.

Hebrews 4:12 (NKJV) ¹² For the word of God is living and powerful, and sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing even to the division of soul and spirit, and of joints and marrow, and is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart.

In Every Study

- Who Is God? (How Great is He?)
- What Does He Think of Me? (How Wonderful Are His Thoughts Towards Me?)
- What Does He Want Me to Do?
- What Can I Boldly Request of Him?
- What Do I Need to Be on Guard of When I Leave Here Today?

Boldly come to the throne of grace, ask God to reveal Himself in a mighty way to you, and to do I might work in you, and through you.

Hebrews 4:16 (NKJV) ¹⁶ Let us therefore come boldly to the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy and find grace to help in time of need.

End of Study

Mark 15:21-22

Looking into the Eyes of Jesus

Mark 15:15–22 (NKJV) ¹⁵ So Pilate, wanting to gratify the crowd, released Barabbas to them; and he delivered Jesus, after he had scourged *Him*, to be crucified. ¹⁶ Then the soldiers led Him away into the hall called Praetorium, and they called together the whole garrison. ¹⁷ And they clothed Him with purple; and they twisted a crown of thorns, put it on His *head*, ¹⁸ and began to salute Him, “Hail, King of the Jews!” ¹⁹ Then they struck Him on the head with a reed and spat on Him; and bowing the knee, they worshiped Him. ²⁰ And when they had mocked Him, they took the purple off Him, put His own clothes on Him, and led Him out to crucify Him. ²¹ Then they compelled a certain man, Simon a Cyrenian, the father of Alexander and Rufus, as he was coming out of the country and passing by, to bear His cross. ²² And they brought Him to the place Golgotha, which is translated, Place of a Skull.

Recap

We have come as far as verse 21 of chapter 15. Jesus has been falsely arrested, Jesus has been falsely tried, Jesus has been falsely convicted, yet as a lamb led to the slaughter He opened not His mouth..... so that by His stripes, by His wounds, we could be healed. He has been beaten beyond human recognition, and today we begin the march to the cross.

Isaiah 53:5–7 (NKJV) ⁵ But He was wounded for our transgressions, He was bruised for our iniquities; The chastisement for our peace was upon Him, And by His stripes we are healed. ⁶ All we like sheep have gone astray; We have turned, every one, to his own way; And the LORD has laid on Him the iniquity of us all. ⁷ He was oppressed and He was afflicted, Yet He opened not His mouth; He was led as a lamb to the slaughter, And as a sheep before its shearers is silent, So He opened not His mouth.

Historic Present

I love how the Book of Mark is written, in that the verb tenses are written in what is known in the Greek language as “historic present”. Which means, although it is a historical account of something past, it is written in such a way that says come experience as if it is today, right now, and you are there. And of course, how fitting, for Jesus says to us yesterday, today, and forever.... Come; Come to me, come and see, come receive from me.

And I believe, the Word the Lord has for us, for you today, He wants us to look and see, how He looks at you, and how He sees you. Let’s come and see.

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Mark 15:20 And when they had mocked Him, they took the purple off Him, put His own clothes on Him, and led Him out to crucify Him.

Mark 15:21 Then they compelled a certain man, Simon a Cyrenian, the father of Alexander and Rufus, as he was coming out of the country and passing by, to bear His cross.

The Cross Beam

Mark's Gospel, like the other Gospels, tells us very little about this, because everyone in the Roman Empire knew the familiar details all too well. Such marches were as common as today's funeral processions. Contemporary ancient history fills in the details. Jesus was placed in the center of a quarternion, a company of four Roman soldiers. The patibulum (means to hang up, attach, suspend), the cross beam of the cross, weighing perhaps as much as one hundred pounds, was placed on his torn shoulders. St. Chrysostom saw prophetic fulfillment in this, seeing it as parallel to Isaac's bearing the wood for his own sacrifice to Mt. Moriah. Next, as Christ stumbled along the route to the Cross, an officer preceded him carrying a wooden placard whitened with chalk and bearing the darkened inscription of Jesus' crime: "JESUS OF NAZARETH, THE KING OF THE JEWS" (John 19:19). Jesus was led on the longest route possible, so that proper fear would be bestowed throughout the city as a deterrent to crime. As Christ tread his serpentine "Road of Sorrows," weakened from loss of blood, an innocent bystander, a Diaspora Jew from Cyrene in North Africa, was compelled to carry the patibulum (Hughes).

Roman Law – Carry the Burden

Now, all a Roman soldier had to do is lay his spear on your shoulder, flat side on your shoulder, and tell you what to do, and you had to do it. If you were walking along the path and you came to a Roman soldier who was carrying his gear down the road, he could lay his spear on your soldier and say, "Carry this for me one mile." And the paths were all marked out with milestones by Rome and you can see these milestones even today. And legally, you were obligated to carry that load for that soldier one mile. He could force you to do it; that was the law of Rome. However, the law of Rome would only compel you to do one mile. You could carry it through one mile, then you could dump it and go. But he had the power to compel you to carry it one mile. Now, that is what Jesus was talking about when He said, "If they compel you to go one mile, go two." So, they laid the sword on Simon's shoulder flat side down and they said, "Carry this man's cross!"

Matthew 5:41 (NKJV) ⁴¹ And whoever compels you to go one mile, go with him two.

Jesus – 2 Mile Journey? / Jesus Second mile Living for You

As the crow flies it is about a half mile from the Temple Mount area (where Jesus is condemned by Pilate before the people) and Golgotha (where Jesus will be crucified). Its about 1 mile on a direct walking. Knowing that the Romans always went the longest route so their point would be made, I have no problem believing that Jesus' full route was 2 miles (by Roman miles), for Jesus goes the second mile living for you and for me. Jesus goes the distance for us.

**Note: a Roman mile at the time of this writing is about 5,000 feet, which is about .9 miles*

Simon Came to Celebrate

Simon had no doubt come to Jerusalem for the Feast of the Passover. As the adult male Jews came from all over the world for this particular feast and he just happened to be there and just happened to be the man that the Roman soldier laid his spear on, so that he was forced to carry the cross of Christ.

Deuteronomy 16:16–17 (NKJV) ¹⁶ "Three times a year all your males shall appear before the LORD your God in the place which He chooses: at the Feast of Unleavened Bread, at the Feast of Weeks, and at the Feast of Tabernacles; and they shall not appear before the LORD empty-handed. ¹⁷ Every man shall give as he is able, according to the blessing of the LORD your God which He has given you.

Who Simon Was – Is Very Clear because Details Given (Father of Alexander and Rufus)

But there is interesting indication that though it is possible he never knew Jesus up to this point, that Simon actually became converted and became a very important part of the early church. There's a reference in Acts 13:1 to Simeon, who was called the Niger, indicating that he was from Africa, who was among the group of the ordaining elders that sent Paul and Barnabas on the first missionary journey. Rufus and Alexander, being his son's name, there are references in the Bible to Rufus. And it is quite possible that Mark tells us he is the father of Rufus and Alexander in order identify Simon who was well-known in the early church and became a very vital part of the early church. There are those bits of evidences and there are others in the New Testament that indicate that

particular possibility, and it is interesting to speculate. So the interesting thing about Simon is that we know who he is. We're getting eyewitness account here. Peter is giving his eyewitness account to John Mark as he records it, and I just tend to believe that Peter knew Simon the Cyrene because they came to be known to each other. I don't think that Simon the Cyrene just disappeared off the face of the earth, if you would, as in somebody ran up to him in all this chaos and said, "Hey, I'm from the Jerusalem Times doing an article here. What's your name so I can write it down for the paper?"

Acts 13:1–3 (NKJV) ¹ Now in the church that was at Antioch there were certain prophets and teachers: Barnabas, Simeon who was called Niger, Lucius of Cyrene, Manaen who had been brought up with Herod the tetrarch, and Saul. ² As they ministered to the Lord and fasted, the Holy Spirit said, "Now separate to Me Barnabas and Saul for the work to which I have called them."³ Then, having fasted and prayed, and laid hands on them, they sent them away.

Romans 16:13 (NKJV) ¹³ Greet Rufus, chosen in the Lord, and his mother and mine.

Simon Becomes Bloodied

If Simon carried a bloody cross, I think he would have been getting out of the scene as fast as he possibly could. He was defiled, and he's here for a religious feast. He's going to wash the blood off of him as soon as possible. Get the blood of a man, another man's blood, off of his clothing, and I would think, I just want to get out and get away because whatever's happening here is bloody and it's going to lead to death unless Simon the Cyrene stayed because he needs to see what happens to this man that looked into his eyes no doubt, whose blood now was dripping down on his face. Who is this man? How could he look at me the way that he did? Then to hear he's Jesus of Nazareth, which again Luke 24, everybody knew, everybody in town knew what was going on with this man named Jesus of Nazareth.

Luke 24:14–24 (NKJV) ¹⁴ And they talked together of all these things which had happened. ¹⁵ So it was, while they conversed and reasoned, that Jesus Himself drew near and went with them. ¹⁶ But their eyes were restrained, so that they did not know Him. ¹⁷ And He said to them, "What kind of conversation is this that you have with one another as you walk and are sad?" ¹⁸ Then the one whose name was Cleopas answered and said to Him, "Are You the only stranger in Jerusalem, and have You not known the things which happened there in these days?" ¹⁹ And He said to them, "What things?" So they said to Him, "The things concerning Jesus of Nazareth, who was a Prophet mighty in deed and word before God and all the people, ²⁰ and how the chief priests and our rulers delivered Him to be condemned to death, and crucified Him. ²¹ But we were hoping that it was He who was going to redeem Israel. Indeed, besides all this, today is the third day since these things happened. ²² Yes, and certain women of our company, who arrived at the tomb early, astonished us. ²³ When they did not find His body, they came saying that they had also seen a vision of angels who said He was alive. ²⁴ And certain of those who were with us went to the tomb and found it just as the women had said; but Him they did not see."

It Appears Simon Became a Follower

In verse 21, I believe that Simon the Cyrene became a follower and there's many indicators that point that way, *Acts 13:1–3 (NKJV)* ¹ Now in the church that was at Antioch there were certain prophets and teachers: Barnabas, Simeon who was called Niger, Lucius of Cyrene, Manaen who had been brought up with Herod the tetrarch, and Saul. ² As they ministered to the Lord and fasted, the Holy Spirit said, "Now separate to Me Barnabas and Saul for the work to which I have called them."³ Then, having fasted and prayed, and laid hands on them, they sent them away.

Romans 16:13 (NKJV) ¹³ Greet Rufus, chosen in the Lord, and his mother and mine.

Why Not Clear Whether Follower of Not

Why isn't it absolutely clear whether Simon became a follower or not?

- Because like the crowd and the question what you will have me do with this man Jesus, everyone has to make their own decision regarding who Jesus is.
- And, just like Barabbas, who literally Jesus traded places with, everyone has to make their own decision, if Jesus traded places with me on a penalty and punishment that was due to me, that I fully earned, what does that mean to me personally?
- And, thirdly, Jesus says whoever desires to come after me, pick up their cross and follow me, and it is a personal decision every person makes, whether to pick up the cross and follow or not?

All three of these are types/examples/illustrations for us, as we put ourselves into the story and say, how would I have answered if I was there, I do I answer that today? Remember, this is written in the "historic present", we are to put ourselves in the story, and every move, every action, it is as if we are there, and we make our choices just as the crowd and people did, what will we do?

- So if you were in the crowd how would you have answered; interestingly the answer for every person is the same answer, crucify Him! For those who love darkness rather than light say crucify Him, because

they hate the Light, and the revelation it reveals of their sin (John 3:16-21). But the same answer is for the person who wants their sin covered, cleansed, and washed away, for there is no other way to be forgiven of sin, except by recognizing and agreeing that Jesus is the only way to have our sin washed away.

- If you were Barabbas what would you do after the trade, would you go back to your old life, or would you be indebted to Him for your new life and would it have changed your life right there and then,
- And if you were Simon and you carried His cross, what would that have meant to you?

Mark 15:12 (NKJV) ¹² Pilate answered and said to them again, "What then do you want me to do with Him whom you call the King of the Jews?"

Mark 15:15 (NKJV) ¹⁵ So Pilate, wanting to gratify the crowd, released Barabbas to them; and he delivered Jesus, after he had scourged Him, to be crucified.

Mark 15:21 (NKJV) ²¹ Then they compelled a certain man, Simon a Cyrenian, the father of Alexander and Rufus, as he was coming out of the country and passing by, to bear His cross.

John 3:16–21 (NKJV) ¹⁶ For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have everlasting life. ¹⁷ For God did not send His Son into the world to condemn the world, but that the world through Him might be saved. ¹⁸ "He who believes in Him is not condemned; but he who does not believe is condemned already, because he has not believed in the name of the only begotten Son of God. ¹⁹ And this is the condemnation, that the light has come into the world, and men loved darkness rather than light, because their deeds were evil. ²⁰ For everyone practicing evil hates the light and does not come to the light, lest his deeds should be exposed. ²¹ But he who does the truth comes to the light, that his deeds may be clearly seen, that they have been done in God."

I Believe He Did – (Because He Carried – because Jesus Looked at Him)

I believe Simon became a follower of Jesus, because first..... anybody who truly picks up the cross of Christ, and feels its "weight" will never be the same person again, when you feel and truly understand the "gravity/weight" of sin, you will see the price He was willing to pay for you (We love Him because He first loved us – 1 John 4).

1 John 4:17–19 (NKJV) ¹⁷ Love has been perfected among us in this: that we may have boldness in the day of judgment; because as He is, so are we in this world. ¹⁸ There is no fear in love; but perfect love casts out fear, because fear involves torment. But he who fears has not been made perfect in love. ¹⁹ We love Him because He first loved us.

1 John 4:7–11 (NKJV) ⁷ Beloved, let us love one another, for love is of God; and everyone who loves is born of God and knows God. ⁸ He who does not love does not know God, for God is love. ⁹ In this the love of God was manifested toward us, that God has sent His only begotten Son into the world, that we might live through Him. ¹⁰ In this is love, not that we loved God, but that He loved us and sent His Son to be the propitiation for our sins. ¹¹ Beloved, if God so loved us, we also ought to love one another.

Secondly, I believe Simon became a follower, because, Jesus would have looked at him; I say that because I continually see the scriptures, through the life of Jesus, that He never missed the opportunity to engage someone, to connect His heart to someone, and of course because that is why He came, to seek and save the lost. We see Him, in His love, compassion, and purpose look into the eyes of a person, to look at the people, and I believe (for I can testify) that anyone who will truly look into the eyes of Jesus, as He looks at them, will never be the same.

John 1:42 (NKJV) ⁴² And he brought him to Jesus. Now when Jesus looked at him, He said, "You are Simon the son of Jonah. You shall be called Cephas" (which is translated, A Stone).

Mark 10:21–22 (NKJV) ²¹ Then Jesus, looking at him, loved him, and said to him, "One thing you lack: Go your way, sell whatever you have and give to the poor, and you will have treasure in heaven; and come, take up the cross, and follow Me." ²² But he was sad at this word, and went away sorrowful, for he had great possessions.

Matthew 9:36–38 (NKJV) ³⁶ But when He saw the multitudes, He was moved with compassion for them, because they were weary and scattered, like sheep having no shepherd. ³⁷ Then He said to His disciples, "The harvest truly is plentiful, but the laborers are few. ³⁸ Therefore pray the Lord of the harvest to send out laborers into His harvest."

Mark 6:32–34 (NKJV) ³² So they departed to a deserted place in the boat by themselves. ³³ But the multitudes saw them departing, and many knew Him and ran there on foot from all the cities. They arrived before them and came together to Him. ³⁴ And Jesus, when He came out, saw a great multitude and was moved with compassion for them, because they were like sheep not having a shepherd. So He began to teach them many things.

Luke 19:5–7 (NKJV) ⁵ And when Jesus came to the place, He looked up and saw him, and said to him, "Zacchaeus, make haste and come down, for today I must stay at your house." ⁶ So he made haste and came down, and received Him joyfully. ⁷ But when they saw it, they all complained, saying, "He has gone to be a guest with a man who is a sinner."

Luke 22:60–62 (NKJV) ⁶⁰ But Peter said, “Man, I do not know what you are saying!” Immediately, while he was still speaking, the rooster crowed. ⁶¹ And the Lord turned and looked at Peter. Then Peter remembered the word of the Lord, how He had said to him, “Before the rooster crows, you will deny Me three times.” ⁶² So Peter went out and wept bitterly.

How do you think Jesus looked at the woman at the well? How do you think Jesus looked at the woman caught in adultery? How do you think Jesus looked at Adam, at Eve, when He came into the garden and said Adam where are you?

John 4:4–7 (NKJV) ⁴ But He needed to go through Samaria. ⁵ So He came to a city of Samaria which is called Sychar, near the plot of ground that Jacob gave to his son Joseph. ⁶ Now Jacob’s well was there. Jesus therefore, being wearied from His journey, sat thus by the well. It was about the sixth hour. ⁷ A woman of Samaria came to draw water. Jesus said to her, “Give Me a drink.”

John 8:3–6 (NKJV) ³ Then the scribes and Pharisees brought to Him a woman caught in adultery. And when they had set her in the midst, ⁴ they said to Him, “Teacher, this woman was caught in adultery, in the very act.” ⁵ Now Moses, in the law, commanded us that such should be stoned. But what do You say?” ⁶ This they said, testing Him, that they might have something of which to accuse Him. But Jesus stooped down and wrote on the ground with His finger, as though He did not hear.

Genesis 3:9 (NKJV) ⁹ Then the LORD God called to Adam and said to him, “Where are you?”

Jesus Looked at Simon – And Simon Would Never be the Same

When Simon came to take this cross, and the long journey up to the Golgotha, at some point, and probably many points, his eyes and Jesus’ eyes meet, and connect, and as Jesus looked at Peter with love, as He looked at the lost sheep with love, He would have looked into the eyes of Simon, with love, and Simon would have never been the same. How could anyone ever look into the eyes of God, and be the same.

Jesus Looked – Because He Came to Seek and Save the Lost

In Luke 19:10, Jesus makes it clear if there was ever a doubt what his mission statement was and is, the son of man has come to seek and save that which is lost. That’s the whole reason he came: to seek and save that which is lost. He will not miss an opportunity to fulfill that mission, to fill his purpose for coming with each and every person, whether it was Zacchaeus, or whether it’s Simon of Cyrene, or whether it’s you here today. He’s come to seek and save that which is lost.

Luke 19:1–10 (NKJV) ¹ Then Jesus entered and passed through Jericho. ² Now behold, there was a man named Zacchaeus who was a chief tax collector, and he was rich. ³ And he sought to see who Jesus was, but could not because of the crowd, for he was of short stature. ⁴ So he ran ahead and climbed up into a sycamore tree to see Him, for He was going to pass that way. ⁵ And when Jesus came to the place, He looked up and saw him, and said to him, “Zacchaeus, make haste and come down, for today I must stay at your house.” ⁶ So he made haste and came down, and received Him joyfully. ⁷ But when they saw it, they all complained, saying, “He has gone to be a guest with a man who is a sinner.” ⁸ Then Zacchaeus stood and said to the Lord, “Look, Lord, I give half of my goods to the poor; and if I have taken anything from anyone by false accusation, I restore fourfold.” ⁹ And Jesus said to him, “Today salvation has come to this house, because he also is a son of Abraham; ¹⁰ for the Son of Man has come to seek and to save that which was lost.”

From Genesis through Revelation, it’s always been God seeking and to save man. Back in Genesis, after Adam’s fall in his sin, he hides himself from God. Sin makes us hide ourselves from God. But here comes God into the garden and he says and cries out to Adam, “Where are you?” Not as an arresting police officer, but as a loving God who’s come to seek and save that which is lost.

Ezekiel 34:16, God says, “I will seek that which was lost.” God speaks and says, “I will seek out the sick and the broken.” Are you sick and are you broken? Has your sin taken to you that place? God seeks you out as a loving father to draw you to himself, to heal you, and to bind up that which is broken to make you whole. He can do that to you today if you simply receive that today because God loves you. He’s a loving God. He’s a loving father.

Ezekiel 34:16 (NKJV) ¹⁶ “I will seek what was lost and bring back what was driven away, bind up the broken and strengthen what was sick; but I will destroy the fat and the strong, and feed them in judgment.”

The very name Jesus means God is salvation. It’s who he is, it’s what he does, and it’s what he desires today. He rescues and redeems, and he does so by being the purchase price to rescue and redeem. He does it by being it and he wants to do that for you today.

Matthew 1:21 (NKJV) ²¹ And she will bring forth a Son, and you shall call His name Jesus, for He will save His people from their sins.”

Simon – Picture of Pick Up Cross and Follow Me

Simon the Cyrene is the fulfillment of anyone who desires that come after me pick up his cross and follow me. He's the literal physical fulfillment of that in the scriptures for our example.

Mark 8:34–38 (NKJV) ³⁴ When He had called the people to Himself, with His disciples also, He said to them, "Whoever desires to come after Me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross, and follow Me. ³⁵ For whoever desires to save his life will lose it, but whoever loses his life for My sake and the gospel's will save it. ³⁶ For what will it profit a man if he gains the whole world, and loses his own soul? ³⁷ Or what will a man give in exchange for his soul? ³⁸ For whoever is ashamed of Me and My words in this adulterous and sinful generation, of him the Son of Man also will be ashamed when He comes in the glory of His Father with the holy angels."

Mark 8:27–33 (NKJV) ²⁷ Now Jesus and His disciples went out to the towns of Caesarea Philippi; and on the road He asked His disciples, saying to them, "Who do men say that I am?" ²⁸ So they answered, "John the Baptist; but some say, Elijah; and others, one of the prophets." ²⁹ He said to them, "But who do you say that I am?" Peter answered and said to Him, "You are the Christ." ³⁰ Then He strictly warned them that they should tell no one about Him. ³¹ And He began to teach them that the Son of Man must suffer many things, and be rejected by the elders and chief priests and scribes, and be killed, and after three days rise again. ³² He spoke this word openly. Then Peter took Him aside and began to rebuke Him. ³³ But when He had turned around and looked at His disciples, He rebuked Peter, saying, "Get behind Me, Satan! For you are not mindful of the things of God, but the things of men."

Jesus is carrying the sin of the world. Simon gets to feel the load of what that is, carrying his own personal sin that this lumber laid onto the back of Jesus was because of Simon personally, and so too are we when we're moved by that understanding of the price that was paid for sin.

My Story

So the Romans compelled Simon to carry the cross. You know, you can be compelled by some organization, some government, some program, some person, some parents, and be compelled into religion or a routine. But then at some point you have to choose to carry or drop, at some point where you're no longer being compelled but you do it because you choose to do it, or not to do it.

My story is that I grew up in a religious home and I was compelled as a child to carry the family religion, to which I did. But of course, shortly after I became an adult, I dropped it, I no longer chose it, no longer desired to carry it. But then one day, I can literally say Jesus looked at me with love because I picked up the word of God, I started in Genesis and I read verse by verse, chapter by chapter, book by book. I didn't understand much, but what I did understand, especially when I came into the New Testament, was that my sin separated me from God and that he was a holy God and still is a holy God. But then as I read the word of God, I literally looked into the eyes of Jesus and Jesus literally looked into my eyes and I saw a God of compassion, I seen a God who loved me, I seen a God who was willing to go the distance for me. And when he looked at me and I looked at him, I was never the same.

- I am Zacchaeus. Jesus said, "Ray, come down from there. Today I must dine with you." To which I said, "Are you serious? Why would you dine with me? Don't you know who I am?" Of course you know who I am and what I've done.
- And I am Simon, I had a choice to pick up the cross or to drop the cross. But when Jesus looked at me, that was enough. It was enough for me to say, "I will follow you all the days of my life." It's 28 years later, the people thought it was a fad, but now have to accept it was anything but, because my life has changed.

And I want to tell you a story many have heard before, but I gladly received, and I never did look back, but I can't say that I haven't struggled. And it was shortly after I gave my life to Christ that I started to struggle. I had a hard time of this place that there is a being outside of our time domain, who has the power to speak worlds into existence. And even though raised and compelled, I never questioned anything about creation. I absolutely dismissed the evolution theory. I believed there was a God as Genesis said, who spoke and the world came into existence. But shortly after my salvation, I began to struggle, and for two years I read every book about creation and evolution because see, I'm logical. One plus one must always equal two. And so, I went after every argument, I read evolution theories by evolutionists and scientists. I read creation theories by creation scientists. I read books that were opposite. Evolution scientists dispelling creation and the creation scientists dispelling evolution. And I went on and on for probably two years. But then one day it kind of just ended in a blink.

Which by the way, at the end of my research, to close that point out, I came down to you must receive the creation theory by faith and you must, if you will, receive the evolution theory by faith. Because both of them take

you to a place that to receive them you have to accept them by faith because none of them have the perfect closure. You can't see a God who created, but equally so, you can't see nothing that creating everything. Both of them bring you to a place of faith.

But as I was saying, my blink came and it came to an end when I literally came to this realization, my struggle truly wasn't with creation and evolution. My struggle came that there was a being who could love the way that Jesus says that he does. And that he could love me as such. And that became and that was my ultimate struggle, that God is love. But God never gave up on me and God continued to walk with me and God continued to show himself to me and he was always looking upon me with love and acceptance, forgiveness. And I came to the place, through the scriptures, studying the scriptures day by day, chapter by chapter, verse by verse, book by book, that he is who he says that he is. And that he is a God of love and that he loves me. And I want you to know today that if you doubt that in any way, I pray that you will seek him and you will find him. And when you do, you will see him looking at you with his eyes of love that say, "Come unto me. Look at me looking at you."

When Did Simon Realize he Carry Cross of Salvation?

And at what point did Simon the Cyrene come to the realization he's carrying this cross up to Golgotha to die for me? At what point did he realize Jesus is going the distance for him? But I believe at some point their eyes met, Jesus' blood even bruised and puffed, covered with blood, beyond human recognition, but still enough that his eyes could meet Simon and Simon would know that Jesus had come to seek and save the lost. And that Simon had come to sacrifice the lamb for Passover, he would see he's carrying the cross for the final sacrificial Lamb, the Lamb of God who would take away his sin and the sins of the world and he would see Jesus through those eyes of love, saying, "I came for you."

Pick Up Cross – Come and See

In Mark, as we studied, Jesus would say, "If any man desires to come after me, let him deny himself, pick up his cross and follow me." Some people think the cross is our burden to bear, our hardships of life. And that's not true. People want to become their own martyr, but it's not true because Jesus himself would say, "Cast all your cares upon me for I care for you." It means to roll your cares upon him, "Let me carry your burdens." We're not meant to carry the burden. He said, "Let me carry the burden for you." And we know and absolutely clearly see, we can't die for our sin. There's no works that we can do, Ephesians tells us, it's not by works lest any man boast, but by grace, God's riches at Christ's expense. So the carrying the cross isn't carrying a burden, carrying the cross isn't carrying the sin. Carrying is denying oneself, clearly spoken and most importantly, following him.

1 Peter 5:6-7 (NKJV) ⁶ Therefore humble yourselves under the mighty hand of God, that He may exalt you in due time, ⁷ casting all your care upon Him, for He cares for you.

Ephesians 2:8-9 (NKJV) ⁸ For by grace you have been saved through faith, and that not of yourselves; it is the gift of God, ⁹ not of works, lest anyone should boast.

And I think when Jesus says, "Follow me," what he wants us to see, he said, "Follow me to the cross, I want you to see the cross." That's ultimately where he leads us, is to the cross. Because there at the cross, everything comes into perfect focus. It's the intersection of life and all questions of life. Does God love me? Does God care for me? Does God have a plan for me? Does God forgive? Does God receive? And when we come to the cross, we see Jesus and we see no greater love has he than this, who lays down his life for a friend. He calls us friend and he calls us family. He calls us love. I believe Jesus, when he says, "Follow me," he'll lead us as a shepherd leads. But he always wants to lead us back to the cross so that we can look and see how he looks and sees us.

Back in Mark 8, when Jesus said this, talking about the cross, they wouldn't have got it. They would have just known the streets that they walked and saw people on the cross. And they would see the brutality. So then they have to go back and they have to rehear it after the cross. And then it comes into its focus and clarity when Jesus says, "Pick up your cross and follow me." Then it all becomes clear when we see that it's Jesus carrying our cross. And he speaks to us and says, "Look and see how I look and see you."

Dads – the Power of Carrying the Cross Publicly

Verse 21, I pray dads that we would carry the cross so boldly and so loudly that there was a clear witness and recording, not just our words that we would foretell and re-tell, but we would be told of, that there would be no doubt, there's a witness in a record that we carried the cross of Christ and we were proud of it. Romans 1:16 as the apostle Paul would say, "I am not ashamed of the Gospel of Jesus Christ for it is the power of salvation, to the Jew first and then to the Gentile," that we would carry the cross with boldness in the workplace and in the home and in the community, and never be ashamed of it and let everybody know, "One thing I know about that person is they're a Christian."

So the Lord says to us, look unto Me, and as we do it will change the way we live.

Titus 2:13–14 (NKJV) ¹³ looking for the blessed hope and glorious appearing of our great God and Savior Jesus Christ, ¹⁴ who gave Himself for us, that He might redeem us from every lawless deed and purify for Himself His own special people, zealous for good works.

Hebrews 12:1–2 (NKJV) ¹ Therefore we also, since we are surrounded by so great a cloud of witnesses, let us lay aside every weight, and the sin which so easily ensnares us, and let us run with endurance the race that is set before us, ² looking unto Jesus, the author and finisher of our faith, who for the joy that was set before Him endured the cross, despising the shame, and has sat down at the right hand of the throne of God.

Jude 20–21 (NKJV) ²⁰ But you, beloved, building yourselves up on your most holy faith, praying in the Holy Spirit, ²¹ keep yourselves in the love of God, looking for the mercy of our Lord Jesus Christ unto eternal life.

Mark 15:22 And they brought Him to the place Golgotha, which is translated, Place of a Skull.

We will pick up here in our next study.

God Says Come

Today we come and are gifted this Word from God Himself, His very heart opened before us, the calling to come near, be drawn to Him.

Matthew 11:28 (NKJV) ²⁸ Come to Me, all you who labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest.

The Word of God is Living and Powerful, and is ready, and will do a mighty work in our lives.

Hebrews 4:12 (NKJV) ¹² For the word of God is living and powerful, and sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing even to the division of soul and spirit, and of joints and marrow, and is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart.

In Every Study

- Who Is God? (How Great is He?)
- What Does He Think of Me? (How Wonderful Are His Thoughts Towards Me?)
- What Does He Want Me to Do?
- What Can I Boldly Request of Him?
- What Do I Need to Be on Guard of When I Leave Here Today?

Boldly come to the throne of grace, ask God to reveal Himself in a mighty way to you, and to do I might work in you, and through you.

Hebrews 4:16 (NKJV) ¹⁶ Let us therefore come boldly to the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy and find grace to help in time of need.

End of Study

Mark 15:22-32

God Hangs on the Cross

Via Dolorosa – The Way of Sorrow

There are different types of roads... dirt roads, paved roads, country roads, toll roads, two-lane roads, superhighways, back alleys, even cobblestone streets... There are also famous roads... Pennsylvania Avenue, Sunset Boulevard, Park Place and Boardwalk, Charles Street, even the Yellow Brick Road... There're even famous roads in the Bible... The road to Damascus, the Emmaus Road, the Road to Gaza. But of all roads the most famous in history is the Via Dolorosa. This is the path Jesus took - from Pilate's Judgment Hall, to a hill called Calvary, to the tomb of a rich man named Joseph... The term "Via Dolorosa" is Latin for "the way of sorrows" - and indeed it was...

Today the Lord invites us to walk that road with Him again; remind you that this narrative is written in what is called the "historic present", and that is a writing style and verb usage, to read a historic event as if it was today, and since it is today you put yourself in the story as if you were there as it unfolds. So today we are traveling the Via Dolorosa, up to a hill called Calvary, Golgotha, where three crosses await.

Title

Before I teach a book, as part of the Inductive Bible Study, I outline the whole book into major groupings; my outline, and thus my title of this passage is..... "God Hangs on the Cross". Let me say that again..... God hangs on the cross! Wow, that is mind blowing..... God, the creator of the Universe, hangs on a cross.

What does that mean to you? That God hung on the cross? I pray today you hear the heart of God, speaking to your heart, "I came for you, I did this for you, because I love you".

God Says Come

Today we come and are gifted this Word from God Himself, His very heart opened before us, the calling to come near, be drawn to Him.

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- Who Is God? (How Great is He?)
- What Does He Think of Me? (How Wonderful Are His Thoughts Towards Me?)
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Boldly come to the throne of grace, ask God to reveal Himself in a mighty way to you, and to do I might work in you, and through you.

[Hebrews 4:16 \(NKJV\)](#) ¹⁶ Let us therefore come boldly to the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy and find grace to help in time of need.

God Hangs on the Cross (15:22-32)

Mark 15:22 And they brought Him to the place Golgotha, which is translated, Place of a Skull.

Exact Spot Genesis 22

Golgotha, place of the cross, the exact location of Genesis 22 where Abraham would sacrifice willingly, but not in the end. His son Isaac, they're on Mount Moriah, they're one in the same, and as prophesied 2000 years prior that God would provide himself as the lamb. And so here he is, the picture of the Father sacrificing the Son.

[Genesis 22:1-14 \(NKJV\)](#) ¹ Now it came to pass after these things that God tested Abraham, and said to him, "Abraham!" And he said, "Here I am." ² Then He said, "Take now your son, your only son Isaac, whom you love, and go to the land of Moriah, and offer him there as a burnt offering on one of the mountains of which I shall tell you." ³ So Abraham rose early in the morning and saddled his donkey, and took two of his young men with him, and Isaac his son; and he split the wood for the burnt offering, and arose and went to the place of which God had told

him. ⁴ Then on the third day Abraham lifted his eyes and saw the place afar off. ⁵ And Abraham said to his young men, "Stay here with the donkey; the lad and I will go yonder and worship, and we will come back to you." ⁶ So Abraham took the wood of the burnt offering and laid it on Isaac his son; and he took the fire in his hand, and a knife, and the two of them went together. ⁷ But Isaac spoke to Abraham his father and said, "My father!" And he said, "Here I am, my son." Then he said, "Look, the fire and the wood, but where is the lamb for a burnt offering?" ⁸ And Abraham said, "My son, God will provide for Himself the lamb for a burnt offering." So the two of them went together. ⁹ Then they came to the place of which God had told him. And Abraham built an altar there and placed the wood in order; and he bound Isaac his son and laid him on the altar, upon the wood. ¹⁰ And Abraham stretched out his hand and took the knife to slay his son. ¹¹ But the Angel of the LORD called to him from heaven and said, "Abraham, Abraham!" So he said, "Here I am." ¹² And He said, "Do not lay your hand on the lad, or do anything to him; for now I know that you fear God, since you have not withheld your son, your only son, from Me." ¹³ Then Abraham lifted his eyes and looked, and there behind him was a ram caught in a thicket by its horns. So Abraham went and took the ram, and offered it up for a burnt offering instead of his son. ¹⁴ And Abraham called the name of the place, The-LORD-Will-Provide; as it is said to this day, "In the Mount of the LORD it shall be provided."

Feast of Trumpets

One of the major themes of Yom Teruah (Feast of Trumpets) is called Akedat Yitzchak, which means the Binding of Isaac. According to Jewish tradition, God told Abraham that the ram's horn – otherwise known as a shofar – should be blown on Feast of Trumpets to remind people of the sacrifice that God provided Himself when Abraham was about to offer Isaac on Mount Moriah. It's abundantly clear that this event in the life of Abraham and Isaac foreshadowed God the Father's offering of His Son, providing Yeshua (Jesus) as a sacrifice for all men.

Why Called Skulls

Now, it is assumed that it was called the Place of the Skull today because across from the wall of Jerusalem between the Damascus gate and Herod's gate, there is a barren side of a cliff which was created from an ancient stone quarry, where, as the result of the stones being quarried from there and landslides and so forth, there is definitely the appearance of a skull as you look at the cliff. And it could be that the Golgotha got its name from the appearance of the face of that jagged cliff. It is also possible that it got its name, The Place of the Skull, from the fact that this was perhaps the place where the Romans crucified most of the prisoners. And when they were crucified, they were usually left there on the crosses until they died. And sometimes it took as many as six days for a person to die. He would die by exposure, malnutrition and starvation. And they'd leave them hanging until they died. And then they would oftentimes continue to leave them hanging, or they would just cut them down and the dogs and the birds would come and feed on the bodies. And so it could be that there were just a lot of skulls of men who had been crucified at that place around that had been left after the dogs and the birds had done their job on them. And it is possible that that's where it received the name The Place of the Skull. My personal opinion, and it is the first, as you go over there today, you can surely see that appearance of a skull on the face of the mountain or on the face of that hillside there. It's the top of Mount Moriah actually. And there's a very definite impression or face of the skull upon it. And I believe that that is the actual site of the crucifixion of Jesus.

Psalm 22

Psalm 22 was written 1000 years before the crucifixion of Christ. Isaiah was written about 750 years before the crucifixion of Christ, and yet they give explicit details of how the Messiah would be beaten and bruised and pierced. And interestingly, crucifixion wasn't even invented, at least in its form that Jesus would be crucified with, and exactly as Psalm 22 would describe had not even been invented. This is what makes it an amazing prophecy of scripture fulfillment is the empire that brought crucifixion into its fullest and was their primary means of capital punishment is the Roman Empire. When Psalm 22 was written and Isaiah was written, the Roman Empire wasn't even a thought, and so we see not just the prophecy of crucifixion having to come into its fullness and shape, but the Roman Empire, a whole empire, would have to be birthed, conquer the world, mature, control the world, and then implement its means of punishment that it would use to send its message to anyone who would defy the Roman Empire. And as I had said before, no Roman citizen could be crucified because that's how brutal crucifixion is.

Psalm 22:16–18 (NKJV) ¹⁶ For dogs have surrounded Me; The congregation of the wicked has enclosed Me. They pierced My hands and My feet; ¹⁷ I can count all My bones. They look and stare at Me. ¹⁸ They divide My garments among them, And for My clothing they cast lots.

Isaiah 53:12 (NKJV) ¹² Therefore I will divide Him a portion with the great, And He shall divide the spoil with the strong, Because He poured out His soul unto death, And He was numbered with the transgressors, And He bore the sin of many, And made intercession for the transgressors.

Mark 15:23 Then they gave Him wine mingled with myrrh to drink, but He did not take it.

Numbing Agent

There were a certain group, a society of ladies in Jerusalem, a society of mercy, who would make up this concoction of wine with myrrh that had the effect of an anesthesia and would stupefy the prisoners so that they would not experience so badly the suffering and the pain of crucifixion. And so they would come out when prisoners were ready to be crucified, and they would give them this stupefying drink, so that the person would sort of be out of their head and not experience as badly the terrible pain and suffering of crucifixion. Realize, there was no valium for the Savior.

The cross was the most hideous, torturous form of execution ever devised. Josephus, the first century historian, who saw firsthand his share of crucifixions, called the cross, "the most wretched of deaths."

The Roman statesman Cicero said: "It is a crime to bind a Roman citizen; to scourge him is an act of wickedness; to execute him is almost murder: What shall I say of crucifying him? An act so abominable it is impossible to find any word adequately to express."

The Roman historian Tacitus described crucifixion as "a torture fit only for slaves."

Guzik, D. (2013). Mark (Mk 15:24–26). Santa Barbara, CA: David Guzik.

How bad was crucifixion? We get our English word excruciating from the Roman word "out of the cross." "

Consider how heinous sin must be in the sight of God, when it requires such a sacrifice!" (Clarke)

Today we made the cross into jewelry, and that is fine if it is for remembrance, but for many it is a fashion statement totally void of the brutality of the cross. The cross has become common. Today I pray the Lord takes us to the "historic present", this is what the cross is, and this is the price of sin.

This human practice of giving strong drink was begun in response to the biblical injunction of Proverbs 31:6–7: 'Give strong drink to him who is perishing, and wine to those in bitter distress; let them drink and forget their poverty, and remember their misery no more.' " (Lane)

Proverbs 31:6–7 (NKJV) ⁶ Give strong drink to him who is perishing, And wine to those who are bitter of heart. ⁷ Let him drink and forget his poverty, And remember his misery no more.

Taste Death Forever / And Many to Follow

And they offered it to Jesus. But to me it is significant that He refused it, in order that He might taste of death for every man and know what it was. And, the full wrath of it!

Many of His followers in time to come were to be crucified also for their belief in Jesus Christ. When Peter was condemned to die by crucifixion, Peter requested that he have the privilege of being crucified upside down, as he was not worthy to be crucified as his Lord. Jesus, no doubt knowing that many of His followers would be stoned to death, would be crucified, would be beaten to death, would be burned to death, refused that stupefying drink in order that He might know and be able to comfort those who later on would go through the same pain and torture for His sake.

Jesus would look down the road at those who would suffer the punishment of being followers, and for 2000 years it would continue starting with Stephen. Then we would see the likes of Peter, we would see the likes of whole

villages who converted to Christ be killed, and we see it today. People with no warning being yanked out of their homes in such places as India where we have been, still happening in the brutal government of North Korea and on and on it goes, the attacks upon Christians around the world. And as they would take the full wrath of the hatred of Christ, Jesus himself would start with being the first of the martyrs and he would not take any narcotic concoction to deaden the pain. He would take it full on. Our high priests can relate to the full pain that many brothers and sisters will face this year as the millions upon millions in the years past have.

Christian there is tremendous persecution upon Christians because men don't want Jesus to be their King, and so they take out their despise of Jesus upon those who remind them of Him. Why doesn't Satan hate you, hate Christians, because they remind them of Jesus. Every time Satan looks at you, looks at a Christian, He sees Jesus and that drives him mad. Be of good cheer, wear it as a badge of honor, they hate you because they hate Jesus. We can question how God allows this, but I believe it becomes dispelled by the Word of God, because Jesus forewarned and said it would be so, and why it would be so in John 15.

John 15:18–25 (NKJV) ¹⁸ "If the world hates you, you know that it hated Me before it hated you. ¹⁹ If you were of the world, the world would love its own. Yet because you are not of the world, but I chose you out of the world, therefore the world hates you. ²⁰ Remember the word that I said to you, 'A servant is not greater than his master.' If they persecuted Me, they will also persecute you. If they kept My word, they will keep yours also. ²¹ But all these things they will do to you for My name's sake, because they do not know Him who sent Me. ²² If I had not come and spoken to them, they would have no sin, but now they have no excuse for their sin. ²³ He who hates Me hates My Father also. ²⁴ If I had not done among them the works which no one else did, they would have no sin; but now they have seen and also hated both Me and My Father. ²⁵ But this happened that the word might be fulfilled which is written in their law, 'They hated Me without a cause.'

Mark 15:24 And when they crucified Him, they divided His garments, casting lots for them to determine what every man should take.

Crucified Naked

Men were ordinarily crucified naked (Artemidorus II. 61). Jewish sensitivities, however, dictated that men ought not to be publicly executed completely naked, and men condemned to stoning were permitted a loin-cloth (M. Sanhedrin VI. 3). Whether the Romans were considerate of Jewish feelings in this matter is unknown." (Lane) Guzik, D. (2013). Mark (Mk 15:24–26). Santa Barbara, CA: David Guzik.

Of course, there is another reason for Jesus to be naked, or in his linen undergarments only, and that is that clothing is very representative of a nationality, a person origin, but naked we have come into this world and naked we will leave it, and Jesus is stripped bare to declare that He is not dying for one nationality, but for every nationality. For so ever would come!

Roman Property

Just as Isaiah prophesied it would be, they divided His garments. When a crucifixion would happen in Rome, all the belongings of the accused would then become the Roman soldiers' property and as a way to divide it, they would take sport of it and play a game casting lots to who might win it. Now, He would have had sandals, He would have had an inner robe, He would have had the sash that they tied their robe with, His turban. And then, that beautiful outer robe that was made by loving hands, a coat that was sewn or an outer robe that was woven without any seams. And so, they parted His garments. One fellow took the sandals and another the sash, another the inner robe, another the turban. But they cast lots for His robe, for they said, "There's no sense of tearing this thing up; it won't do anybody any good." So they threw dice to see who would get that outer coat.

Isaiah 53:12 (NKJV) ¹² Therefore I will divide Him a portion with the great, And He shall divide the spoil with the strong, Because He poured out His soul unto death, And He was numbered with the transgressors, And He bore the sin of many, And made intercession for the transgressors.

Playing Games

And still such a picture today, though I can say it ever so bluntly and directly and it may sting some, but Jesus Christ is dying on a cross offering salvation to mankind and the world plays games. The world plays games and doesn't search the scriptures to see if the things that were written and spoken and prophesied and promised are true. What a sad indictment, and many will be sad when they realize they have missed the opportunity for salvation because they were more interested in playing games.

Consider how heinous sin must be in the sight of God, when it requires such a sacrifice!" (Clarke)

And those aren't just games like Xbox. Entertainment's fine to its limit, but many play games with Christ trying to justify why they do what they do. They take the word and they try to twist it or they just won't take the word at all. They'll make their own word up. Then they'll tell people to follow the word and many will because they won't have this man roll over them, and they play games and they think they're winning at their games but ultimately, many of these Roman soldiers were the ultimate losers in that they were at the foot of the cross where God was hanging for not just the sin of the world, but their sin personally, and they would miss it and not see it.

Mark 15:25 Now it was the third hour, and they crucified Him.

9am

The day began at six o'clock in the morning, the night watch began at six o'clock in the evening, and the day watch began at six o'clock in the morning. So at nine o'clock, the third hour, they crucified Him.

Mark 15:26 And the inscription of His accusation was written above: THE KING OF THE JEWS

Rome Sends Message with the Cross

So what the Roman government would do when you were riding into a town, the closer you got, the more you would see crosses and the statement being made, "This is what happens when you defy Rome," and people would come in and the closer the town you get, the more crosses you would see. Historical writing says there's some... There were times where there would be hundreds, plural, crosses going into a town and above each cross was what the guilt was. So when you came into that town, you would know the law of Rome and the price that would be paid for thieves, rebels, murderers, and the likes because they would put the crime on top, and Jesus's crime? King of the Jews.

Now, when a prisoner was condemned to death, they made him, as a rule, carry his own cross to the place of execution. And they would have four Roman soldiers that would be marching with the prisoner in the middle. And one Roman soldier would go in the front with a sign that bore the charges against the prisoner. And they would never walk the shortest route to the place of execution, but would take the longest route through the city, making a lot of clamor and a lot of noise so that the people would have fears struck in their heart against rebelling against Rome or whatever. So the fellow in front would carry the wood with the accusation written, the reason why the prisoner was being crucified. And so they took Jesus through the streets, and finally, when they came to the place of the cross and nailed Him upon the cross and raised it up, they took the charges, "The King of the Jews," and they nailed it on His cross, the accusations that were made against Him

I am So Glad

I can tell you I am so glad I don't have to walk the streets of my life and day with a sign over my head of all my guilty charges. I wouldn't be standing here if I had that sign over my head, I would be hiding in shame. How about you Christian? Christian can we just pause today and give Him thanks for wiping the slate clean. Have you praised your cleansing lately, remembered the handwriting that was against you?

Colossians 2:13-14 (NKJV) ¹³ And you, being dead in your trespasses and the uncircumcision of your flesh, He has made alive together with Him, having forgiven you all trespasses, ¹⁴ having wiped out the handwriting of requirements that was against us, which was contrary to us. And He has taken it out of the way, having nailed it to the cross.

Jesus's Charge – King / Is He Your King?

The inscription is true and accurate and God, the Father, makes sure that it is transcribed for all the world to see and to know Jesus Christ was and is the King of the Jews, but he's more than that. He's the King of the universe. He's the King of glory and to be a King, every person decides will they bow their knee to his kingship or will they rebel against his kingdom. God makes sure that it's clear. If Jesus is King, then a person who bows and kneels to him must be subject to him to be part of his kingdom.

Have you done that today? Have you made Jesus Christ the King of your life?

Mark 15:27 With Him they also crucified two robbers, one on His right and the other on His left.

Mark 15:28 So the Scripture was fulfilled which says, "And He was numbered with the transgressors."

How Fitting – Thief of Hearts

How fitting that Jesus was crucified between two robbers (thieves) for He truly to me is the ultimate thief, as He has stolen my heart. I am glad that He wooed me with His love, and through that love I was able to let go, and allow Him to walk into my life and take whatever He wanted, and was glad to let Him have it. My life, so guarded, so protected, so locked up not allowing anyone to get too close and leave me vulnerable. But His love, I could trust Him fully, present myself completely, and let Him take what He wanted totally. And, of all things, He wanted me, which still leaves me in awe. God wanted me! God wanted you! And if you have not opened the door of your heart to Him, let it be known to you this day..... God wants you! God loves you. He is a God of love, and the cross leaves no doubt about it! I pray God steals your heart today.

Song of Solomon 2:4–5 (NKJV) ⁴ He brought me to the banqueting house, And his banner over me was love. ⁵ Sustain me with cakes of raisins, Refresh me with apples, For I am lovesick.

Want to hear something even more amazing, God says we steal His heart, we ravish His heart, we capture His heart. How precious are you, that God says that about you!

Song of Solomon 4:9 (NKJV) ⁹ You have ravished my heart, My sister, my spouse; You have ravished my heart With one look of your eyes, With one link of your necklace.

Precise Prophecy – Our Job is to Search Them Out

Here again we see words such as this, so the scriptures might be fulfilled. There is a prompting here, for in these places it doesn't quote the place it was said. Now for some (such as scribes and religious leaders) it was obvious to them where is said this, and so Jesus' actions are confirming the word, and when God confirms His words to a person they have to respond, either to receive the word and make a change in accordance to what it requires of them, or they can reject and say no I refuse to change.

Isaiah 53:12 (NKJV) ¹² Therefore I will divide Him a portion with the great, And He shall divide the spoil with the strong, Because He poured out His soul unto death, And He was numbered with the transgressors, And He bore the sin of many, And made intercession for the transgressors.

But for others, they would read this and say what, this was foretold in the scriptures, I must see it, I must read that for myself, I must search the scriptures for myself, and not just take someone's word for it. And as they search the scriptures, then they will come to the place, how am I to respond to this Word that is spoken from God Himself. For all scripture is inspired by God we are told. So seeker, or Christian, do you search the scripture daily? Do you search them and apply them so you may be complete and equipped?

Acts 17:11 (NKJV) ¹¹ These were more fair-minded than those in Thessalonica, in that they received the word with all readiness, and searched the Scriptures daily to find out whether these things were so.

2 Timothy 3:16–17 (NKJV) ¹⁶ All Scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness, ¹⁷ that the man of God may be complete, thoroughly equipped for every good work.

Mark 15:29 And those who passed by blasphemed Him, wagging their heads and saying, "Aha! You who destroy the temple and build it in three days,

Wagging Heads - Mockingly

They wag in a mocking way, verse 31 tells us. Like a dog's tail, they are shaking their head in denial.

Destroy this Temple – Speaking of His Body

Jesus one day said to them when they asked for a sign, "Destroy this temple and I will build it in three days." And they thought that He was talking about the temple that Herod had begun construction on. They said, "Forty-seven years have we been building this temple, and You say that You're going to rebuild it in three days." But they didn't realize He was talking about the temple of His body. And they were indeed destroying the temple of His body, but in three days, He was going to raise it up; He was going to rebuild it. He said, "No man takes My life from Me; I give My life. I have power to lay down My life; I have power to take it up again."

John 2:19 (NKJV) ¹⁹ Jesus answered and said to them, "Destroy this temple, and in three days I will raise it up."

Mark 15:30 save Yourself, and come down from the cross!"

People want a Cross-Less Christ

"Come down from the Cross" is still being heard today as the world continues to clamor for a Cross-less Christ. "Jesus is cool," they say. "He was a good teacher, a good example, a good moral leader. But don't talk to me about the Cross. It's too bloody."

Courson, J. (2003). *Jon Courson's Application Commentary* (p. 285). Nashville, TN: Thomas Nelson.

Mark 15:31 Likewise the chief priests also, mocking among themselves with the scribes, said, "He saved others; Himself He cannot save.

Mark 15:32 Let the Christ, the King of Israel, descend now from the cross, that we may see and believe." Even those who were crucified with Him reviled Him.

One Thief

Now Luke's gospel tells us that later on one of them (The thief) had a change of heart, and we will get to that when we get to Luke's gospel.

Luke 23:39-43 (NKJV) ³⁹ Then one of the criminals who were hanged blasphemed Him, saying, "If You are the Christ, save Yourself and us." ⁴⁰ But the other, answering, rebuked him, saying, "Do you not even fear God, seeing you are under the same condemnation?" ⁴¹ And we indeed justly, for we receive the due reward of our deeds; but this Man has done nothing wrong." ⁴² Then he said to Jesus, "Lord, remember me when You come into Your kingdom." ⁴³ And Jesus said to him, "Assuredly, I say to you, today you will be with Me in Paradise."

Already Plenty to Believe / But Comes Down to the Word

There was plenty to believe. Jesus has done continual signs and wonders. These high priests and these priests for three years had been seeing a sea of lepers coming into Jerusalem being healed and having to go through the book of Leviticus as prescribed for what to be done when a person was healed of leprosy. And up to this point, none had exercised a Levitical prescription to be declared clean after having leprosy, but now for three years, a sea of lepers are coming into town, not to mention stories of raising the dead, not to mention Jesus and the countless people that are healed, all the eye witnesses accounting for the miracle of the loaves and the fish. 5,000 people, it's pretty hard to dispel that story.

Pilate asked the crowd in another Gospel account, what will you have me do with the man, to which they said "we will not have this man rule over us", and that is the summation of the Gospel. Will a person allow Jesus to rule over them, or will a man/woman say no, I am my own king. There is one reason that a person rejects Jesus, don't buy the lie or the story about the hypocrisy of the church, or the doubts of the Bible, or even the hardship and pains they experienced in the world and blame God for it, a man/woman reject Jesus Christ, because they do not want to turn from their sin, they do not want Him to reign over them, and they want to be their own king.

Luke 19:11-14 (NKJV) ¹¹ Now as they heard these things, He spoke another parable, because He was near Jerusalem and because they thought the kingdom of God would appear immediately. ¹² Therefore He said: "A certain nobleman went into a far country to receive for himself a kingdom and to return." ¹³ So he called ten of his servants, delivered to them ten minas, and said to them, 'Do business till I come.' ¹⁴ But his citizens hated him, and sent a delegation after him, saying, 'We will not have this man to reign over us.'

John 19:15 (NKJV) ¹⁵ But they cried out, "Away with Him, away with Him! Crucify Him!" Pilate said to them, "Shall I crucify your King?" The chief priests answered, "We have no king but Caesar!"

John 3:16-21 (NKJV) ¹⁶ For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have everlasting life. ¹⁷ For God did not send His Son into the world to condemn the world, but that the world through Him might be saved. ¹⁸ "He who believes in Him is not condemned; but he who does not believe is condemned already, because he has not believed in the name of the only begotten Son of God. ¹⁹ And this is the condemnation, that the light has come into the world, and men loved darkness rather than light, because their deeds were evil. ²⁰ For everyone practicing evil hates the light and does not come to the light, lest his deeds should be exposed. ²¹ But he who does the truth comes to the light, that his deeds may be clearly seen, that they have been done in God."

So they had lots to believe, but they wouldn't, and so there's people today say, "If only there was a sign, then I'll believe. If God does this miracle, then I believe," and it's not true because miracles can happen and people will still reject and they still won't believe, and so it comes down to then, what must a person do to be saved? I think we're given the answer here continually, the searching of the scriptures, and as you do, just like on the road to Emmaus,

two men who hadn't recognized Jesus even though they had seen him, walked with him, but as he opened the scriptures, it said, "The word of God began to burn in their hearts," and that's what will happen to you as you study these scriptures and you seek him. And as Jeremiah prophesied of him and to us, "And when you search for him and seek for him with all of your heart, he will reveal himself to you."

Luke 24:32 (NKJV) ³² And they said to one another, "Did not our heart burn within us while He talked with us on the road, and while He opened the Scriptures to us?"

The Word Only

And let that not be confused with other religions who say a burning the heart, the burning is not an emotional, "I feel it," but it will be inspired by the Word of God that is true and right before you and no other scriptures will do that except the Word of God. No other religious book can do that except the Word of God, and it must be based on the infallible word of God. God will reveal himself through his word, and I pray he's revealing himself to someone or many of you here today and that your heart is being moved. And if that is you today, today is the day of salvation we're told. The Apostle Paul tells us in Second Corinthians, "Now is the acceptable time," and I pray you won't leave here and let that burning on your heart fade away.

2 Corinthians 6:2 (NKJV) ² For He says: "In an acceptable time I have heard you, And in the day of salvation I have helped you." Behold, now is the accepted time; behold, now is the day of salvation.

The Two Statements / He Can't Save Others if Saved Himself

Two statements: one of them was true; one of them was false. It is true He saved others, and they recognized that. It was an admission that they had to make. People all around them had been saved by Jesus. There were blind people who could see, there were lame people who were walking, there was Lazarus who was raised from the dead. He saved others, that they had to admit. They could not deny the evidence. "He saved others," an interesting confession of His enemies. The false statement was, "Himself He cannot save." That is wrong; He could have saved Himself. Actually, He could have appealed to Pilate. Pilate was doing his best to free Jesus. As you get into John's gospel, he points out even more clearly how anxious Pilate was to set Him free. But Jesus was not cooperative with Pilate at all. Jesus wouldn't answer him. He could have just said the right thing to Pilate and Pilate would have just said, "Well, you know, you Jews go your way." I think that Jesus probably could have appealed to the crowd. Emotions were high, but He could have just appealed to the crowd and saved Himself. Or, as He had said to Peter earlier, "Hey, Peter, put away your sword. Don't you realize that at this moment, I could call for ten legions of angels to deliver me from their hands? The cup that the Father has given Me to drink, shall I not drink it?" He could have saved Himself by calling on the angels to come and deliver Him out of the hands of these wicked men. He could have saved Himself, but He didn't save Himself.

Now, there's a bit of irony here. "He saved others; Himself He cannot save." The whole statement taken as a whole is true as a whole statement. Though a part of it is false, as a whole statement it is true. If He is to save others, He cannot save Himself. You see, if He saves Himself, then He can't save others. The only way He can save others is by not saving Himself. So, the statement as the whole is true. "He saved others; Himself He cannot save." You can't do both. You can't save yourself and others. You can only save others. He can only save others by giving Himself as a sacrifice.

Salvation Decided This Side of Eternity

And herein lies the problem, had Jesus come down from the cross, man may have believed then, but have no way of salvation and belief would have meant nothing at that point; and so too will belief be after a person's last breath. Salvation is determined on this side of eternity, not the next. Salvation is based on faith, and God gives us everything we need to come to Him by faith right now today, and He does it through His inspired word. And let me also say this, there is no purgatory, that doctrine is manmade, it is not in the Bible (go search it – and you will not find it). Man cannot work his sin off through works off purgatory; Jesus is the only way to have your sin washed away. And secondly, there is no scripture that says there even is such a place. Purgatory was made by man to ease the conscience of people who died and lived not for God, and it made their family feel comforted that they didn't go to hell. But it was also made by man to raise money, that if you gave money to the church you could buy your loved one out of purgatory's fire into heaven, another lie. One way, and one way only, through the cross and the finished work of Christ.

Hebrews 11:1–3 (NKJV) ¹ Now faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen. ² For by it the elders obtained a good testimony. ³ By faith we understand that the worlds were framed by the word of God, so that the things which are seen were not made of things which are visible.

Romans 10:17 (NKJV) ¹⁷ So then faith comes by hearing, and hearing by the word of God.

Something Greater Than Come Down – Rose from Dead

Let the Christ ... descend now from the cross, that we may see and believe: It is precisely because He would not come down that we believe in Him. Jesus did something greater than come down from the cross—He rose from the dead.

God Says Come

Today we come and are gifted this Word from God Himself, His very heart opened before us, the calling to come near, be drawn to Him.

Matthew 11:28 (NKJV) ²⁸ Come to Me, all you who labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest.

The Word of God is Living and Powerful, and is ready, and will do a mighty work in our lives.

Hebrews 4:12 (NKJV) ¹² For the word of God is living and powerful, and sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing even to the division of soul and spirit, and of joints and marrow, and is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart.

In Every Study

- Who Is God? (How Great is He?)
- What Does He Think of Me? (How Wonderful Are His Thoughts Towards Me?)
- What Does He Want Me to Do?
- What Can I Boldly Request of Him?
- What Do I Need to Be on Guard of When I Leave Here Today?

Boldly come to the throne of grace, ask God to reveal Himself in a mighty way to you, and to do I might work in you, and through you.

Hebrews 4:16 (NKJV) ¹⁶ Let us therefore come boldly to the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy and find grace to help in time of need.

End of Study

Mark 15:33-39

6 Questions from the Cross

Something Greater Than Come Down – Rose from Dead

We finished our last study at verse 32, where the religious leaders (along with a multitude of mockers) had said, Let the Christ ... descend now from the cross, that we may see and believe: It is precisely because He would not come down that we believe in Him. Jesus did something greater than come down from the cross—He rose from the dead. And today we pick up there, our suffering Savior, who was and is the Resurrected King, is on the cross paying for our sin.

Mark 15:29–32 (NKJV) ²⁹ And those who passed by blasphemed Him, wagging their heads and saying, “Aha! You who destroy the temple and build it in three days, ³⁰ save Yourself, and come down from the cross!” ³¹ Likewise the chief priests also, mocking among themselves with the scribes, said, “He saved others; Himself He cannot save. ³² Let the Christ, the King of Israel, descend now from the cross, that we may see and believe.” Even those who were crucified with Him reviled Him.

Today’s Passage

Mark 15:33–39 (NKJV) ³³ Now when the sixth hour had come, there was darkness over the whole land until the ninth hour. ³⁴ And at the ninth hour Jesus cried out with a loud voice, saying, “Eloi, Eloi, lama sabachthani?” which is translated, “My God, My God, why have You forsaken Me?” ³⁵ Some of those who stood by, when they heard that, said, “Look, He is calling for Elijah!” ³⁶ Then someone ran and filled a sponge full of sour wine, put it on a reed, and offered it to Him to drink, saying, “Let Him alone; let us see if Elijah will come to take Him down.” ³⁷ And Jesus cried out with a loud voice, and breathed His last. ³⁸ Then the veil of the temple was torn in two from top to bottom. ³⁹ So when the centurion, who stood opposite Him, saw that He cried out like this and breathed His last, he said, “Truly this Man was the Son of God!”

The Questions

God is on the cross. I would like for you to ask yourself, “what does that mean to me, how should that change my life”. And in our study today we are going to ask, and answer, six questions based on these seven verses. Mark writes this Gospel under the inspiration of the Holy Spirit, is like an old-time news reporter, just presenting the news, and letting the person process what is told them. He doesn’t stay on a topic long, he presents what has happened, then moves on to the next news flash. So for us, we have six questions we can ask, and then six answers to them:

1. Verse 33 - Why was there darkness over the land?
2. Verse 34 – Why did Jesus ask the Father, “why have You forsaken Me?”
3. Verse 35-36 – Why did they think Elijah may come and take Jesus down from the cross?
4. Verse 37 – What did Jesus cry out before His last breath?
5. Verse 38 – Why was the veil in the temple torn?
6. Verse 39 – What made the centurion say “Truly Man was the Son of God”?

God Says Come

Today we come and are gifted this Word from God Himself, His very heart opened before us, the calling to come near, be drawn to Him.

Matthew 11:28 (NKJV) ²⁸ Come to Me, all you who labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest.

The Word of God is Living and Powerful, and is ready, and will do a mighty work in our lives.

Hebrews 4:12 (NKJV) ¹² For the word of God is living and powerful, and sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing even to the division of soul and spirit, and of joints and marrow, and is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart.

In Every Study

- Who Is God? (How Great is He?)
- What Does He Think of Me? (How Wonderful Are His Thoughts Towards Me?)
- What Does He Want Me to Do?
- What Can I Boldly Request of Him?
- What Do I Need to Be on Guard of When I Leave Here Today?

Boldly come to the throne of grace, ask God to reveal Himself in a mighty way to you, and to do I might work in you, and through you.

Hebrews 4:16 (NKJV) ¹⁶ Let us therefore come boldly to the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy and find grace to help in time of need.

1.) Verse 33 - Why was there darkness over the land?

Mark 15:33 Now when the sixth hour had come, there was darkness over the whole land until the ninth hour.

Darkness – Whole Earth

It was midnight at midday. For three hours - noon until 3:00 PM - darkness blanketed the land. Luke's account tells us that darkness was over the whole earth. Not just localized to Jerusalem.

Luke 23:44 (NKJV) ⁴⁴ Now it was about the sixth hour, and there was darkness over all the earth until the ninth hour.

Matthew 27:54 (NKJV) ⁵⁴ So when the centurion and those with him, who were guarding Jesus, saw the earthquake and the things that had happened, they feared greatly, saying, "Truly this was the Son of God!"

Historical Writings

There was darkness over the whole land: The remarkable darkness showed the agony of creation itself in the Creator's suffering. "Origen (Contra Celsus, ii, 33) and Eusebius (Chron.) quote the writing of Phlegon (a Roman historian) in which he makes mention of an extraordinary solar eclipse as well as of an earthquake about the time of the crucifixion." (Geldenhuys)

Guzik, D. (2013). Mark (Mk 15:33–37). Santa Barbara, CA: David Guzik.

Phlegon, Roman historian: "In the fourth year of the 202nd Olympiad (translates into modern calendar 32AD), there was an extraordinary eclipse of the sun: at the sixth hour, the day turned into dark night, so that the stars in heaven were seen; and there was an earthquake." (cited in Clarke)

Guzik, D. (2013). Mark (Mk 15:33–37). Santa Barbara, CA: David Guzik.

Passover is Full Moon (Can't be Eclipse)

It became midnight at noon, darkness over the whole land. There is no particular phenomena that you can blame for the darkness. It could not have been an eclipse of the sun, for this was Passover and it was full moon. And the sun and the moon were opposite of each other during the Passover or during full moon, so it's impossible that it could have been an eclipse. It was as though heaven was veiling itself from this horrible crime that man was committing. This dark shroud covered the earth from the sixth hour, or from twelve o'clock noon until three o'clock in the afternoon.

Whole World Stops

Luke's account tells us that darkness was over the whole earth. Not just localized to Jerusalem. I believe this darkness was so dark that it shut down the movement of the whole world, and rightly so. When Jesus Christ is on the cross dying, the world cannot continue on business as usual.

I believe it's in accordance with Exodus 21 as it speaks of the darkness of that 9th plague that fell upon the land. That it was so dark you could feel it. Ever been there? I've been down in these caves and when the lights go off, it is pitch black. You can literally, it feels like you're wearing a cloak of darkness upon you. This is the darkness and the whole world stops in this moment of darkness.

Exodus 10:21–23 (NKJV) ²¹ Then the LORD said to Moses, "Stretch out your hand toward heaven, that there may be darkness over the land of Egypt, darkness which may even be felt." ²² So Moses stretched out his hand toward heaven, and there was thick darkness in all the land of Egypt three days. ²³ They did not see one another; nor did anyone rise from his place for three days. But all the children of Israel had light in their dwellings.

The Light World being Extinguished

The Light of the World is being extinguished, because of man's sin.

John 8:12 (NKJV) ¹² Then Jesus spoke to them again, saying, "I am the light of the world. He who follows Me shall not walk in darkness, but have the light of life."

Why Darkness – Because Man Sits in Darkness

Why was there darkness on the land? Because man sits in darkness

Luke 1:79 (NKJV) ⁷⁹ To give light to those who sit in darkness and the shadow of death, To guide our feet into the way of peace."

Isaiah 42:7 (NKJV) ⁷ To open blind eyes, To bring out prisoners from the prison, Those who sit in darkness from the prison house.

Luke 4:17–19 (NKJV) ¹⁷ And He was handed the book of the prophet Isaiah. And when He had opened the book, He found the place where it was written: ¹⁸ "The Spirit of the LORD is upon Me, Because He has anointed Me To preach the gospel to the poor; He has sent Me to heal the brokenhearted, To proclaim liberty to the captives And recovery of sight to the blind, To set at liberty those who are oppressed; ¹⁹ To proclaim the acceptable year of the LORD."

Every Man Must Stop at Some Point – Determine What do With Their Sin

Every man would have to stop in the darkness, and decide what does all this mean. I believe God stops the world for every person, at least once, to determine what will they do with their sin. The reason man doesn't come into the light, is because they love their sin. But for those who want to see, and walk in the Light, God has provided a way, through His Son Jesus Christ. We you step into the Light today? God is offering you that gift of Light today!

John 3:16–21 (NKJV) ¹⁶ For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have everlasting life. ¹⁷ For God did not send His Son into the world to condemn the world, but that the world through Him might be saved. ¹⁸ "He who believes in Him is not condemned; but he who does not believe is condemned already, because he has not believed in the name of the only begotten Son of God. ¹⁹ And this is the condemnation, that the light has come into the world, and men loved darkness rather than light, because their deeds were evil. ²⁰ For everyone practicing evil hates the light and does not come to the light, lest his deeds should be exposed. ²¹ But he who does the truth comes to the light, that his deeds may be clearly seen, that they have been done in God."

2.) Verse 34 – Why did Jesus ask the Father why have You forsaken Me?

Mark 15:34 And at the ninth hour Jesus cried out with a loud voice, saying, "Eloi, Eloi, lama sabachthani?" which is translated, "My God, My God, why have You forsaken Me?"

Original Language – Forsaken Because God is Holy

Mark gives the words of Jesus in the language that Jesus spoke them (Aramaic), and very rarely do we have the actual words of Jesus. We have the translation of the words of Jesus, and usually he translates it into Greek and then from Greek to English. But here he gives us the actual words in order that we might understand why some of those who were standing by thought that He was crying for Elijah. "Eloi, Eloi." They thought He was crying, "Elijah, Elijah." But in reality He was crying, "My God, My God, why hast Thou forsaken Me?" The answer to it is found in Psalm 22, which begins, "My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me? Why art thou so far from the cry of my roaring? I cry unto thee in the daytime and thou hearest not; and in the night season and I am not silent. But thou art holy, O thou that inhabits the praises of thy people." It was because of the holiness of God that Jesus was forsaken of God. For sin always separates a man from God, and when the sins of the world were placed upon Jesus, that fellowship that He had experienced, that coexistence, that oneness with the Father was broken. He who had existed with God from the beginning, He who shared the glory of God before the world ever existed was forsaken of God when God laid on Him the iniquities of us all. He tasted of death for every man. He tasted of death for you. He experienced the consequence of sin, spiritual death, separation from God. And thus, the cry, "My God, My God, why hast Thou forsaken Me?" He was forsaken of God in order that you would never have to be forsaken of God.

Psalm 22:1–3 (NKJV) ¹ My God, My God, why have You forsaken Me? Why are You so far from helping Me, And from the words of My groaning? ² O My God, I cry in the daytime, but You do not hear; And in the night season, and am not silent. ³ But You are holy, Enthroned in the praises of Israel.

Holy God Can't Look Upon Sin

The Holy (pure & perfect) God cannot look upon sin. Jesus is taking on sin, becoming sin, and the Father cannot look upon it.

Habakkuk 1:13 (NKJV) ¹³ You are of purer eyes than to behold evil, And cannot look on wickedness. Why do You look on those who deal treacherously, And hold Your tongue when the wicked devours A person more righteous than he?

Isaiah 59:1–2 (NKJV) ¹ Behold, the LORD's hand is not shortened, That it cannot save; Nor His ear heavy, That it cannot hear. ² But your iniquities have separated you from your God; And your sins have hidden His face from you, So that He will not hear.

2 Corinthians 5:21 (NKJV) ²¹ For He made Him who knew no sin to be sin for us, that we might become the righteousness of God in Him.

The Cross was Brutal

If you were standing before a live crucifixion you'd shiver in horror - you'd turn your head - it would turn your stomach – for weeks you'd have nightmares. We do not read details of the cross, for all readers at the time were fully aware of the brutality of the cross.

In 1968 the ancient bones of a 26 year old victim of crucifixion were discovered at a Jewish settlement north of Jerusalem. This rare archeological find shed light on how crucifixions were performed, and it confirmed the details we read about in the Bible... The victim was laid on the ground and 7" iron spikes were driven through his wrists into the crossbeam. The beam was then lifted, and attached to a standing post. The victim's legs were pushed up so his heels were under his buttocks. A single spike was driven through both heels. Crosses in Palestine were made of olive wood. And since olive trees were never large, the cross' height was just a few inches taller than its victim.

Medical Doctor, Truman Davis, gives a description of the agonizing pain the victim endured once He was nailed to the cross...

- "As his body slowly sags down with more weight on the nails in the wrists, excruciating, fiery pain shoots along the fingers and up the arms to explode in the brain - the nails in the wrists are putting pressure on the median nerves.
- As he pushes himself upward, he places the full weight on the nail through his feet. Again he feels the searing agony of the nail tearing through the nerves... As the arms fatigue, cramps sweep through the muscles, knotting them in deep, relentless, throbbing pain.
- With these cramps comes the inability to push himself upward to breathe. Air can be drawn into the lungs, but not exhaled. He fights to raise himself up in order to get even one small breath.
- Finally carbon dioxide builds up in the lungs and in the blood stream and the cramps partially subside. Spasmodically he's able to push himself upward to exhale and bring in life-giving oxygen.
- The victim endures hours of this limitless pain, cycles of twisting, joint-rending cramps, intermittent partial asphyxiation, searing pain, as tissue is torn from his lacerated back as he moves up and down against the rough timber.
- Then another agony begins. He experiences a crushing pain deep within the chest as the pericardium slowly fills with serum and begins to compress the heart. It is now almost over - the loss of tissue fluids reach a critical level – the compressed heart is struggling to pump heavy, thick, sluggish blood into the tissues - the tortured lungs are making a frantic effort to gasp in small gulps of air. He can feel the chill of death..

Sin Kills Slowly

Often I've asked the question, why crucifixion? It's one thing for God to die, but why did God's Son die the most hideous form of death ever invented? Why didn't God send His Son at a time when lethal injections were the mode of execution?... Or even the electric chair? A means that's quick... easy... painless? The answer is that our sin is not quick... or easy... or painless. Our sin grieves the heart of God. Sin not only breaks God's law - but far worse, it breaks His heart.

In God's eyes, sin deserves the most brutal death imaginable. Jesus died on the cross because our sin demanded such a death. This is why He refused the pain numbing potion. He took the full brunt of our sin. The cross teaches us two truths:

1. the severity of our sin,
2. and the sincerity of God's love. Though our sin demanded a steep price - Jesus paid it in full. Romans 5:8 tells us, "God demonstrates His love toward us, in that while we were still sinners, Christ died for us."

Romans 5:8-11 (NKJV) ⁸ But God demonstrates His own love toward us, in that while we were still sinners, Christ died for us. ⁹ Much more then, having now been justified by His blood, we shall be saved from wrath through Him. ¹⁰ For if when we were enemies we were reconciled to God through the death of His Son, much more, having been reconciled, we shall be saved by His life. ¹¹ And not only that, but we also rejoice in God through our Lord Jesus Christ, through whom we have now received the reconciliation.

Every Man Born with Fistful of Nails / Mel Gibson

Once, a little boy went to church with his dad. The church had a cross at the front of the sanctuary. The boy asked, "Dad, what's the meaning of that cross?" The father replied, "Son, Jesus died when people nailed Him to a cross." The little guy's eyes grew big as saucers as he gazed around at the church members. He said, "You mean these people?" And if the dad had answered, he could've said, "Yes, these people!" Who crucified Jesus? The Jews? They played a part. The Romans? They also played a role. But who really crucified Jesus? The answer is you and me. Our

sin drove the nails into His hands and feet. It's been said, "Every man is born with a fist full of nails, and he dies with his hands empty." In other words, we're all guilty!

In the movie the Passion of Christ, a brutal, but factual depiction of all Jesus went through, when they were filming the movie and came to the part where the nails were being driven into Jesus' hands, the actor just wasn't getting it done the way the director (Mel Gibson) wanted him to do it. So with camera still rolling, Mel Gibson came and said let me show you how it was done, and he grabbed the arm of the actor playing Jesus who was laying on the cross, and he yanked on it to pull it taut, and then Mel Gibson took hammer in hand and the nail and drove the "props" into the wrist of the actor. So well did it go, that in the actual movie the hands you see nailing Jesus to the cross is actually Mel Gibson, to which he would later say, and rightly so, for it was my sin that nailed Jesus to the cross.

If Jesus Died for Sin – What Sin did He Die For (If there are None)

Last week we discussed how the world has this thought that God doesn't judge, and we saw very clearly that God will judge, and therefore God does judge. Well another common thought, among the world, and even the people who profess Christ, that sin really isn't sin, God forgives and therefore sin isn't that big of a deal. Sin means to miss the mark. God has set a standard and his standard is for our best. God does not call it sin to be a kill joy, but all of his commandments when they're truly understood will not become burdensome but freeing because sin is to protect us and to provide for us. It protects us from the harm that comes their way and it provides a peace and a freedom that comes with not being under the bondage of those things. Drunkenness protects us from devastation of life, imprisonment, job loss, and there's the provision. I don't have to wake up under the burden of it. I'm free of it and it can't control me. It's not going to affect my family. Drunk driving, I'm not going to find myself in the burden of it. I wake up in the morning and I'm free because I'm thinking freely, and you can pick any of them and just go down the line of them and see the freedom that's in it.

A great question, what sin, what sins did Jesus die for? If there is no sin, then the cross is foolishness, is it not? If nothing is considered sin, why would God go to a cross? It would make no sense if there is no sin but if there is sin, then all of a sudden the cross makes all the sense in the world and this demonstrates the greatness of God's love for us and the willingness that he was willing to bear to redeem us and rescue us and make us his own, to destroy the wall that separated us and give us the power to overcome the things that enslave us. But if nothing has sin, then the cross would be absolute foolishness and yet today there are many even Christians, so-called, who are trying to apply that there is no sin or they don't uphold the severity of it and they claim the absolute absolving of it, that Jesus died for it and therefore I'm free to enter in, do it all I want, because he has covered it in Jesus's love but that too is illogical that he would die for sin so that we could go on and sin if he's dying to give us the power and freedom to overcome it.

How Far Jesus Forsaken – As Far as East from West

Psalms 103 says that our sins are separated as far as the East is from the West. Therefore, that means that's how far the Father separated himself from the Son, when Jesus was on the cross. Forsaken means to leave and to abandon, to distance, and this is how far God distanced himself from the Son when he took on your sin and my sin upon himself. Second Corinthians 5:21 says, "For he who knew no sin became sin for us, that we might become the righteousness of God." That means right standing with God. This is the price of sin and the distance that Jesus went to take our sin. This is what he sweat drops of blood for over in the Garden of Gethsemane, as he knew what would come, not only the pain and suffering of the cross, but the pain was greater of knowing that he would be forsaken and distanced from his father. And we don't know the depths of that because it goes back to the vanishing point before the foundations of the world. God the Son and God the Father and the Holy spirit existed as one together in sweet and perfect fellowship. Jesus had never known separation from his father, and yet now here on this moment, he's forsaken. The depths of this is unimaginable for us.

[Psalm 103:12 \(NKJV\)](#) ¹² As far as the east is from the west, So far has He removed our transgressions from us.

If Feel Forsaken – Jesus Knows

If you feel that you've been forsaken or abandoned maybe by a parent, a spouse, a child, there's definitely a high priest who can sympathize with you and has compassion and understanding for no one has endured the depths of

forsakenness and abandonment like Jesus Christ when he was on the cross, as the father would turn his back on him as he would take on the sin of the world. He knows what it is to be forsaken and that feeling and what it feels like, and he can therefore minister to you and relate to you in your time being forsaken and abandoned.

3.) [Verse 35-36 – Why did they think Elijah may come and take Jesus down from the cross?](#)

Mark 15:35 Some of those who stood by, when they heard that, said, “Look, He is calling for Elijah!”

Mark 15:36 Then someone ran and filled a sponge full of sour wine, put it on a reed, and offered it to Him to drink, saying, “Let Him alone; let us see if Elijah will come to take Him down.”

5th Cup – Cup of Elijah

During the Passover celebration, which this moment here on the cross is at the Passover, the last cup drank at the Passover is called the CUP OF ELIJAH, the LEADER holds up the cup from the place at the table that has been saved for Elijah and says: This cup is for Elijah the prophet, who will come before the Messiah returns. Read Malachi 4:5.

The Jewish people look for Elijah’s return on Passover, so they set a place for him at the table and open the door to welcome him. Christians acknowledge that Elijah has come again in the presence of John the Baptist (Matthew 11:14), and also that the Messiah has come. We open the door in expectation of the second coming of the Messiah: Maranatha! (Revelation 22:20).

They were mistaken in, and easily to be mistaken, that this prophecy referred to the Second Coming, not the first. But here what they were sure of, and we should be too, that the scripture (the Word of God) will come to pass, without a doubt.

Malachi 3:1 (NKJV) ¹ “Behold, I send My messenger, And he will prepare the way before Me. And the Lord, whom you seek, Will suddenly come to His temple, Even the Messenger of the covenant, In whom you delight. Behold, He is coming,” Says the LORD of hosts.

Malachi 4:5 (NKJV) ⁵ Behold, I will send you Elijah the prophet Before the coming of the great and dreadful day of the LORD.

Matthew 11:11–15 (NKJV) ¹¹ “Assuredly, I say to you, among those born of women there has not risen one greater than John the Baptist; but he who is least in the kingdom of heaven is greater than he. ¹² And from the days of John the Baptist until now the kingdom of heaven suffers violence, and the violent take it by force. ¹³ For all the prophets and the law prophesied until John. ¹⁴ And if you are willing to receive it, he is Elijah who is to come. ¹⁵ He who has ears to hear, let him hear!

Precise Prophecies

So Precise are these prophecies, that we can trust in the future promises of precise prophecies.

Proverbs 30:5–6 (NKJV) ⁵ Every word of God *is* pure; He *is* a shield to those who put their trust in Him. ⁶ Do not add to His words, Lest He rebuke you, and you be found a liar.

Revelation 22:18–19 (NKJV) ¹⁸ For I testify to everyone who hears the words of the prophecy of this book: If anyone adds to these things, God will add to him the plagues that are written in this book; ¹⁹ and if anyone takes away from the words of the book of this prophecy, God shall take away his part from the Book of Life, from the holy city, and *from* the things which are written in this book.

Hebrews 13:5–6 (NKJV) ⁵ Let your conduct *be* without covetousness; *be* content with such things as you have. For He Himself has said, “*I will never leave you nor forsake you.*” ⁶ So we may boldly say: “*The LORD is my helper; I will not fear. What can man do to me?*”

Revelation 22:20 (NKJV) ²⁰ He who testifies to these things says, “Surely I am coming quickly.” Amen. Even so, come, Lord Jesus!

Luke 23:34 (NKJV) ³⁴ Then Jesus said, “Father, forgive them, for they do not know what they do.” And they divided His garments and cast lots.

Luke 23:41–43 (NKJV) ⁴¹ And we indeed justly, for we receive the due reward of our deeds; but this Man has done nothing wrong.” ⁴² Then he said to Jesus, “Lord, remember me when You come into Your kingdom.” ⁴³ And Jesus said to him, “Assuredly, I say to you, today you will be with Me in Paradise.”

John 19:30 (NKJV) ³⁰ So when Jesus had received the sour wine, He said, “It is finished!” And bowing His head, He gave up His spirit.

John 14:1–4 (NKJV) ¹ “Let not your heart be troubled; you believe in God, believe also in Me. ² In My Father’s house are many mansions; if *it were* not so, I would have told you. I go to prepare a place for you. ³ And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again and receive you to Myself; that where I am, *there* you may be also. ⁴ And where I go you know, and the way you know.”

Genesis 16:13–14 (NKJV) ¹³ Then she called the name of the LORD who spoke to her, You-Are-the-God-Who-Sees; for she said, "Have I also here seen Him who sees me?" ¹⁴ Therefore the well was called Beer Lahai Roi; observe, *it is* between Kadesh and Bered.

4.) Verse 37 – What did Jesus cry out before His last breath?

Mark 15:37 And Jesus cried out with a loud voice, and breathed His last.

Jesus Gave Up Spirit – Not Taken

Or, He dismissed His spirit. As He said, "No man takes My life from Me; I give My life. I have the power to lay it down; I have the power to take it up." That is why it is so wrong that the church for so many years tried to blame the Jews for the crucifixion of Jesus. They're not responsible; we're responsible. Jesus gave His life. No man took His life from Him; He gave His life. "He bowed His head and dismissed His spirit."

John 10:17–18 (NKJV) ¹⁷ "Therefore My Father loves Me, because I lay down My life that I may take it again. ¹⁸ No one takes it from Me, but I lay it down of Myself. I have power to lay it down, and I have power to take it again. This command I have received from My Father."

Cried – Oh the Difference of the Word

Look at the difference of these words cried, the word that Jesus cried out, and then the Centurion. The word Jesus used for cried out means to forgive. He's crying out forgiveness to you. "I forgive you. I forgive you and I declare it here on this cross."

863 ἀφίημι, ἐναφίημι [aphiemi /af-ee-ay-mee/] v. From 575 and hiemi (to send, an intens. form of eimi, to go); TDNT 1:509; TDNTA 88; GK 918 and 1889; 146 occurrences; AV translates as "leave" 52 times, "forgive" 47 times, "suffer" 14 times, "let" eight times, "forsake" six times, "let alone" six times, and translated miscellaneous 13 times. 1 to send away. 1A to bid going away or depart. 1A1 of a husband divorcing his wife. 1B to send forth, yield up, to expire. 1C to let go, let alone, let be. 1C1 to disregard. 1C2 to leave, not to discuss now, (a topic). 1C21 of teachers, writers and speakers. 1C3 to omit, neglect. 1D to let go, give up a debt, forgive, to remit. 1E to give up, keep no longer. 2 to permit, allow, not to hinder, to give up a thing to a person. 3 to leave, go way from one. 3A in order to go to another place. 3B to depart from any one. 3C to depart from one and leave him to himself so that all mutual claims are abandoned. 3D to desert wrongfully. 3E to go away leaving something behind. 3F to leave one by not taking him as a companion. 3G to leave on dying, leave behind one. 3H to leave so that what is left may remain, leave remaining. 3I abandon, leave destitute.

Strong, J. (1995). Enhanced Strong's Lexicon. Woodside Bible Fellowship.

2896 κράζω [krazo /krad-zo/] v. A primary word; TDNT 3:898; TDNTA 465; GK 3189; 59 occurrences; AV translates as "cry" 40 times, and "cry out" 19 times. 1 to croak. 1A of the cry of a raven. 1B hence, to cry out, cry aloud, vociferate. 1C to cry or pray for vengeance. 2 to cry. 2A cry out aloud, speak with a loud voice. Additional Information: For synonyms see entries 994, boao; 2564, kaleo; and 2905, kraugazo. See entry 5823 for comparison of synonyms.

Strong, J. (1995). Enhanced Strong's Lexicon. Woodside Bible Fellowship.

Roman Jail Sentence

When you paid your sentence, there in a Roman prison, those not sentenced to die, on the last day of your imprisonment, they would come and nail a piece of paper to your door of the prison and it would say paid in full. Jesus is making that declaration. The debt has been paid in full, and the Roman centurion is looking on, and here we are in the historic present tense as if we were there, as if it was today, as if this is the moment in time we too hear these words, it is finished. That leads us to a place that we get to decide how then will we live knowing that it is finished, that our debt has been paid and that we're free men and we're free women and we can leave this place forgiven of our sins, right with God, promised of eternity. How does that make us live today? Not just looking forward to our last breath, but these breaths that we take today. How will it change our life? What a promise.

What a provision. Jesus Christ, him crucified for you, for me. May we praise his holy name.

John 19:30 (NKJV) ³⁰ So when Jesus had received the sour wine, He said, "It is finished!" And bowing His head, He gave up His spirit.

5.) Verse 38 – Why was the veil in the temple torn?

Mark 15:38 Then the veil of the temple was torn in two from top to bottom.

Holy of Holies

God reaches out of heaven, and he tears the veil from the top to the bottom; notice the veil wasn't torn from the bottom to the top!

Holy of Holies in the Old Testament. The holy of holies of the tabernacle was a 10-cubit cube separated from the rest of the sanctuary by a veil, which served to prohibit people from seeing and accessing God (Exod 26:31–35). This is reinforced by images of cherubim "skillfully worked into it" (Gurtner, "The Velum Scissum," 150). The holy

of holies contained the ark of the covenant and the mercy seat. Two gold-plated olivewood cherubim guarded access to God's presence, as they did in Eden (see Gen 3:24; compare Jubilees 8:19, where the holy of holies was in Eden). The holy of holies was the place where heaven and earth came together. The ark of the covenant within the holy of holies was also called "the footstool of the Lord" (Beale, "Eden, the Temple," 17).

In Solomon's temple, the holy of holies was a 20-cubit cube, and the entire room was plated with gold (1 Kgs 6:19–32; 2 Chr 3:8–14). The inner doors to the most holy place were also overlaid in gold (1 Kgs 7:50; 2 Chr 4:22). At the dedication of the temple, the ark was placed in the most holy place underneath the two cherubim (1 Kgs 8:6–11; 2 Chr 5:7). Beale suggests that "Israel's temple was a miniature model of God's huge cosmic temple that was to dominate the heavens and earth at the end of time" (Beale, "Eden, the Temple," 16).

In Ezekiel's vision of a future temple, he sees the outer rooms of the temple, but only his angelic guide enters the most holy place (Ezek 41:4; Allen, Ezekiel 20–48, 232). In the same vision, the portion of the land set aside for the Lord is a "most holy place" (Ezek 45:3; 48:12).

Long, P. J. (2016). Holy of Holies. In J. D. Barry, D. Bomar, D. R. Brown, R. Klippenstein, D. Mangum, C. Sinclair Wolcott, ... W. Widder (Eds.), *The Lexham Bible Dictionary*. Bellingham, WA: Lexham Press.

Come on In!

At this point, God took the veil of the temple, which some say was eighteen inches thick, woven cloth, and God took the thing and just ripped it from the top to the bottom. What did the veil of the temple represent? The unapproachableness of God by man. Only the high priest dared to go in behind that veil, and he only one day of the year. God was unapproachable by man, by sinful man. But when the death of Christ was accomplished, God ripped that veil of the temple and was in fact declaring, "Now, we may come boldly unto the throne of grace to receive mercy, because Jesus has made the way to God for every man." God is no longer unapproachable. But you and I can come to God today through Jesus Christ. The veil has been rent; the way has been made. The approach to God is now possible for just the common person like us. Oh, how glorious that we can come into the presence of God through Jesus Christ! And we don't have to go through a lot of washings and sacrifices and everything else. There has been one sacrifice for all. It's so complete, it's so full that it satisfies for all of us and God is now approachable. Jesus said, "I am the way, the truth and the life; no man comes to the Father but by Me" (John 14:6). But the glorious thing is, we can come to the Father through Him.

Leviticus 16:1–2 (NKJV) ¹ Now the LORD spoke to Moses after the death of the two sons of Aaron, when they offered profane fire before the LORD, and died; ² and the LORD said to Moses: "Tell Aaron your brother not to come at just any time into the Holy Place inside the veil, before the mercy seat which is on the ark, lest he die; for I will appear in the cloud above the mercy seat.

Hebrews 4:12–13 (NKJV) ¹² For the word of God is living and powerful, and sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing even to the division of soul and spirit, and of joints and marrow, and is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart. ¹³ And there is no creature hidden from His sight, but all things are naked and open to the eyes of Him to whom we must give account.

Hebrews 4:14–16 (NKJV) ¹⁴ Seeing then that we have a great High Priest who has passed through the heavens, Jesus the Son of God, let us hold fast our confession. ¹⁵ For we do not have a High Priest who cannot sympathize with our weaknesses, but was in all points tempted as we are, yet without sin. ¹⁶ Let us therefore come boldly to the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy and find grace to help in time of need.

Come Live Abundant Life

So the veil was torn from top to bottom so that man can see, they can enter, they can come into the presence of God. It's no longer once a year through a high priest and he only, but it's every man can come into the presence of God. God tears the veil from the top to the bottom. God is reaching into this earth from heaven and tearing it from top to bottom, not bottom to top, making the statement very clearly here, he's tearing the veil and he's inviting man to come into his presence.

Psalm 16:11 says, "Come into his presence and there is fullness of joy." The only place you'll find fullness of joy is in his presence.

Psalm 16:11 (NKJV) ¹¹ You will show me the path of life; In Your presence is fullness of joy; At Your right hand are pleasures forevermore.

Yet some people, they know they're forgiven. They understand this passage. They understand they're forgiven. If the question has to be asked, but why aren't people living in the victorious Christian promises, why aren't people

living the abundant life that's promised in John 10:10, then I would say to you, because many of you believe and know that you're forgiven, but you don't boldly come to the throne of grace. We start every Bible study here with this slide that clearly says God invites us to boldly come into the throne of grace where we may find help for our troubles in times of need.

John 10:10–11 (NKJV) ¹⁰ *The thief does not come except to steal, and to kill, and to destroy. I have come that they may have life, and that they may have it more abundantly.* ¹¹ *"I am the good shepherd. The good shepherd gives His life for the sheep.*

God invites us into the throne of grace to experience his presence, but also to enjoy his power that he'll give us for a victorious Christian life, for a peace-filled Christian life. If you believe that by faith today, you can simply come to the throne of grace, God's riches at Christ's expense, and he'll lavishly pour them out because it's lavish love, because as we studied last week from the Song of Solomon, you ravish his heart and therefore lavish love follows ravished hearts. You've been there, anyone that's been in love know that lavish love is poured out from a ravished heart that has just been seized and captured because you have lost your breath with the beauty of the one that you are beholding.

Song of Solomon 4:9 (NKJV) ⁹ *You have ravished my heart, My sister, my spouse; You have ravished my heart With one look of your eyes, With one link of your necklace.*

No More Wall of Separation / We Are the Tabernacle

With the wall of separation between man and God being demolished by the sacrifice that was paid, man can have fellowship with God so much to the degree that we're told that God will come and take up residence within us and live inside us, the spirit of God, and with that will come the power to overcome sin and be set free. So the argument that man is free to sin because the price of sin was paid is illogical and it actually should be very concerning. When we say that we have no sin, we're told in the scriptures of First John that we deceive ourselves and the truth is not in us. As Pilot would say, "What is the truth?" Jesus Christ would say, "I am the way, the truth and the life and no man comes to the Father except by me."

John 14:6 (NKJV) ⁶ *Jesus said to him, "I am the way, the truth, and the life. No one comes to the Father except through Me.*

We are now the tabernacle, the temple, of God, I am the tabernacle of God, and I am to make my dwelling place in the pattern of how He says it is to be. You can have problems with that, until you come to the place that God is good, and good for me, and all His ways are perfect. Then no longer it is what can't I do, but what shouldn't I do, because I know you know best, and you desire the best for me.

1 Corinthians 3:16–17 (NKJV) ¹⁶ *Do you not know that you are the temple of God and that the Spirit of God dwells in you?* ¹⁷ *If anyone defiles the temple of God, God will destroy him. For the temple of God is holy, which temple you are.*

Exodus 25:9 (NKJV) ⁹ *According to all that I show you, that is, the pattern of the tabernacle and the pattern of all its furnishings, just so you shall make it.*

6..) Verse 39 – What made the centurion say “Truly Man was the Son of God”?

Mark 15:39 **So when the centurion, who stood opposite Him, saw that He cried out like this and breathed His last, he said, “Truly this Man was the Son of God!”**

Centurion Knows Blood/Death

Just imagine this centurion. He is a man who has seen blood and guts. He is a soldier. Who knows how many crucifixions he has seen, and yet, of course, this one was different from all the other ones. This one, he would know this was no ordinary man, and he would come to his conclusion, this was the son of God.

He Marvels – Jesus can Decide When to Die

He saw that He had the power of just saying, "Okay, that's it; spirit, you can go now." And he marveled that the Man had the power to lay His life down.

John 10:17–18 (NKJV) ¹⁷ *"Therefore My Father loves Me, because I lay down My life that I may take it again.* ¹⁸ *No one takes it from Me, but I lay it down of Myself. I have power to lay it down, and I have power to take it again. This command I have received from My Father."*

But Only God can Reveal Spiritual Things

But..... even still, man can only understand the spiritually things by God revealing them to them. Has God revealed to you today that Jesus is the Son of God? And how then will you respond? God says today is the day of salvation..... will you give your life to Christ today?

1 Corinthians 12:3 (NKJV) ³ *Therefore I make known to you that no one speaking by the Spirit of God calls Jesus accursed, and no one can say that Jesus is Lord except by the Holy Spirit.*

1 Corinthians 2:14–15 (NKJV) ¹⁴ *But the natural man does not receive the things of the Spirit of God, for they are foolishness to him; nor can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned. ¹⁵ But he who is spiritual judges all things, yet he himself is rightly judged by no one.*

2 Corinthians 6:1–2 (NKJV) ¹ *We then, as workers together with Him also plead with you not to receive the grace of God in vain. ² For He says: "In an acceptable time I have heard you, And in the day of salvation I have helped you." Behold, now is the accepted time; behold, now is the day of salvation.*

Something Greater Than Come Down – Rose from Dead

Let the Christ ... descend now from the cross, that we may see and believe they said: It is precisely because He would not come down that we believe in Him. Jesus did something greater than come down from the cross—He rose from the dead.

Mark 15:29–32 (NKJV) ²⁹ *And those who passed by blasphemed Him, wagging their heads and saying, "Aha! You who destroy the temple and build it in three days, ³⁰ save Yourself, and come down from the cross!" ³¹ Likewise the chief priests also, mocking among themselves with the scribes, said, "He saved others; Himself He cannot save. ³² Let the Christ, the King of Israel, descend now from the cross, that we may see and believe." Even those who were crucified with Him reviled Him.*

6 Questions / 6 Answers

So for us, we have six questions we can ask, and then six answers to them:

1. Verse 33 - Why was there darkness over the land?
2. Verse 34 – Why did Jesus ask the Father, “why have You forsaken Me?”
3. Verse 35-36 – Why did they think Elijah may come and take Jesus down from the cross?
4. Verse 37 – What did Jesus cry out before His last breath?
5. Verse 38 – Why was the veil in the temple torn?
6. Verse 39 – What made the centurion say “Truly Man was the Son of God”?

God Says Come

Today we come and are gifted this Word from God Himself, His very heart opened before us, the calling to come near, be drawn to Him.

Matthew 11:28 (NKJV) ²⁸ *Come to Me, all you who labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest.*

The Word of God is Living and Powerful, and is ready, and will do a mighty work in our lives.

Hebrews 4:12 (NKJV) ¹² *For the word of God is living and powerful, and sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing even to the division of soul and spirit, and of joints and marrow, and is a discernor of the thoughts and intents of the heart.*

In Every Study

- Who Is God? (How Great is He?)
- What Does He Think of Me? (How Wonderful Are His Thoughts Towards Me?)
- What Does He Want Me to Do?
- What Can I Boldly Request of Him?
- What Do I Need to Be on Guard of When I Leave Here Today?

Boldly come to the throne of grace, ask God to reveal Himself in a mighty way to you, and to do I might work in you, and through you.

Hebrews 4:16 (NKJV) ¹⁶ *Let us therefore come boldly to the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy and find grace to help in time of need.*

End of Study

Mark 15:40-47

Title: God Laid in the Tomb

Mark 15:37–39 (NKJV) ³⁷ And Jesus cried out with a loud voice, and breathed His last. ³⁸ Then the veil of the temple was torn in two from top to bottom. ³⁹ So when the centurion, who stood opposite Him, saw that He cried out like this and breathed His last, he said, “Truly this Man was the Son of God!”

Mark 15:40–47 (NKJV) ⁴⁰ There were also women looking on from afar, among whom were Mary Magdalene, Mary the mother of James the Less and of Joses, and Salome, ⁴¹ who also followed Him and ministered to Him when He was in Galilee, and many other women who came up with Him to Jerusalem. ⁴² Now when evening had come, because it was the Preparation Day, that is, the day before the Sabbath, ⁴³ Joseph of Arimathea, a prominent council member, who was himself waiting for the kingdom of God, coming and taking courage, went in to Pilate and asked for the body of Jesus. ⁴⁴ Pilate marveled that He was already dead; and summoning the centurion, he asked him if He had been dead for some time. ⁴⁵ So when he found out from the centurion, he granted the body to Joseph. ⁴⁶ Then he bought fine linen, took Him down, and wrapped Him in the linen. And he laid Him in a tomb which had been hewn out of the rock, and rolled a stone against the door of the tomb. ⁴⁷ And Mary Magdalene and Mary *the mother* of Joses observed where He was laid.

Intro/Recap

God has died, six hours on the cross, and today God will be laid in a tomb. Holy ground, sacred ground, more than a story, more than words on a page, today God says come..... come away with me and see My heart, see My love, for you. Come away and see that day as if it was today. As we have said this Gospel is written in what is called the “historic present”, a historical account written in such a way to be experienced as if you were there, as if it was happening today. And all of God’s actions are for people, and as people there is a response expected, more than bystanders just watching along, and then going our way, continuing on doing our own thing, but then become involved, part of what God is doing. Today we will see that as we look at these woman who were at the cross, as we look at Joseph of Arimathea, and Nicodemus, coming to lay Jesus in the tomb, and once again we will see Pilate and the centurion. And as in the “present historic”, you, I, we, all get to ask ourselves, what would I have done had I been there, if I was one of these people in the story; and what will I do today, as God does say to you today, “how about you?”.

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Today we come and are gifted this Word from God Himself, His very heart opened before us, the calling to come near, be drawn to Him.

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Outline 15:40-47

- The Woman at the Cross & Followed (15:40-41)
- The Preparation Day & Sabbath (15:42)

- Joseph Asks for the Body of Jesus (15:43)
- Pilate marvels and the Centurion Called (15:44-45)
- Jesus Taken Down and His Body Prepared (15:46)
- The Woman Observed Where He is Laid (15:47)

The Woman at the Cross & Followed (15:40-41)

Mark 15:40 There were also women looking on from afar, among whom were Mary Magdalene, Mary the mother of James the Less and of Joses, and Salome,

Mark 15:41 who also followed Him and ministered to Him when He was in Galilee, and many other women who came up with Him to Jerusalem.

There are six Mary's in the New Testament, and it's easy to get confused.

1. Mary Mother of Jesus: First of course is Mary, the mother Jesus, blessed and burdened. Most scholars, historical writing seem to lean also, and that is that Mary was a young teenager when called to such a calling. The same age as some of you young teenagers here today. You know what the life of Mary declares to you today? That it can be done, regardless how the world is living, the way they are being swayed, what they declare is acceptable; but that it can be done, you can live a life separated fully unto God, be called and used by the Lord, and that you can be a vessel of glory and for His glory right now today. Maybe you have a decision to make today, you are at a crucial crossroad of going all in, or going the way of the world, to which I pray Mary the mother of Jesus moves shows you today that it can be done, and fully worth doing it, living with a purpose
2. Mary Magdalene: who is often confused with being a harlot, but the Scriptures do not say that, and people come to this conclusion because of confusion as they read through the various gospel accounts. What we know of Mary Magdalene is that she was the woman who had the demon possession that was healed by Jesus. Of course, if Jesus heals you, you surely will follow him because you know what it was to be in prison and in bondage and then to be set free. Can I ask anyone here today, have you forgotten what it was like to be in prison, whatever form it was, as you sat in darkness, where we closed last week, every man sitting in darkness? Then the light of the world, the morning star, as we're told in Peter's epistle, dawned in our hearts and we saw the resurrected light of Jesus Christ and his love is ravishing love, his lavish love, and it changed our heart. We said, "We'll follow you anywhere," and I just bring that back up to you as a reminder because it's so easy to get caught back up in the world. It's so easy to get caught back up in the busy-ness. It's so easy to get caught up with trying to secure our present, and we miss the greatest present, Jesus Christ and his gift of love and fellowship and friendship.
3. Mary the Mother of James: We have this fourth Mary now, who is the mother of James, who is one of the apostles. The "less" means he is a younger brother, not less in quality. Now this James is not James the Lord's brother, nor James the brother of John (the sons of thunder). There are two apostles named James. It appears that James the Less, and James the son of Alphaeus are one in the same person. Here we have the power of the influence of a mother no doubt, as a mother follows so does the son. Or..... just maybe, the son follows and the mother sees the witness and comes to faith too. Youth, don't underestimate the power of a changed life that follows after Jesus, and the witness it is to your parents.
4. Mary of Bethany: And then there is Mary of Bethany that we know so well also who is sister to Martha and Lazarus, who Jesus raised from the dead. And so of course, when we see the power of Christ, how can we not follow? How can we follow at a distance knowing that the power is so near, but also, they enjoyed the sweet fellowship of Jesus in their home? And when you enjoy that sweet fellowship of Jesus in your home, you never want to let him go unless you get distant and busy and you start looking more about redoing the floors, painting the walls, and become too busy for the fellowship of simply sitting at Jesus's feet and enjoying him and his love. As we talked of Simon the Cyrene, you could be sure how many times Jesus looked in the eyes of Mary and she knew lavish love and her heart was ravished by his pure love. And this Mary of Bethany we know anointed Jesus's feet with the costly spikenard. She did that six days before the crucifixion, and just two days before the crucifixion, another woman who gets confused with Mary of Bethany, anointed Jesus's head. And the significance of this unknown woman, I think she represents all of us in anointing him and pouring our love out upon him, and just adoration and thanks for

what he was willing to do for us. As Jesus would be in the garden, sweating drops of blood, he would have smelled that spikenard when he was being whipped and his hair would be over his face. He would be smelling that spikenard, and I believe even to the cross, it's still holding its strong odor and that as Jesus endures the pain he's smelling the sweet fragrance of love, that's there's his love for us but knowing the response that will come from those such as us who will with adoration give thanks to the Lord for enduring the cross, taking all the shame, and being forsaken so we would not be forsaken.

5. Mary Mother of John Mark: And then we have the Mary who was the mother of John Mark, and we read that people met in their home. And John Mark would no doubt be the one who had fled the garden and left his garment behind, and John Mark, his mother here at the cross, would be able to give details of the cross as John Mark was fleeing with the other men. And John Mark is the one who under the voice of Peter, we piece together, puts the Gospel of Mark together that we are enjoying right now today. So here is a mother that followed Jesus at all cost, and her son followed suit, and may that encourage every mother here today to keep following hard after Jesus, and trust your child will see your witness and follow too. Parents keep telling your child the story of Jesus.
6. Mary of Rome: And then we have a Mary who was of Rome, we're told, and we read of her in the book of Romans and we don't know much about her other than her name is Mary. But, what we do know is she labored much for the Gospel sake. So maybe you are not well known for all you do, know this God sees and records your generosity of love.

Matthew 1:18 (NKJV) ¹⁸ Now the birth of Jesus Christ was as follows: After His mother Mary was betrothed to Joseph, before they came together, she was found with child of the Holy Spirit.

Mark 16:9 (NKJV) ⁹ Now when He rose early on the first day of the week, He appeared first to Mary Magdalene, out of whom He had cast seven demons.

John 11:1-3 (NKJV) ¹ Now a certain man was sick, Lazarus of Bethany, the town of Mary and her sister Martha. ² It was that Mary who anointed the Lord with fragrant oil and wiped His feet with her hair, whose brother Lazarus was sick. ³ Therefore the sisters sent to Him, saying, "Lord, behold, he whom You love is sick."

Acts 1:13-14 (NKJV) ¹³ And when they had entered, they went up into the upper room where they were staying: Peter, James, John, and Andrew; Philip and Thomas; Bartholomew and Matthew; James the son of Alphaeus and Simon the Zealot; and Judas the son of James. ¹⁴ These all continued with one accord in prayer and supplication, with the women and Mary the mother of Jesus, and with His brothers.

Acts 12:12-13 (NKJV) ¹² So, when he had considered this, he came to the house of Mary, the mother of John whose surname was Mark, where many were gathered together praying. ¹³ And as Peter knocked at the door of the gate, a girl named Rhoda came to answer.

Romans 16:6 (NKJV) ⁶ Greet Mary, who labored much for us.

Salome

Salome - Also here we're told is Salome, and she is the mother of the apostles, James and John, who we are told called the sons of Zebedee. So when you piece all this together, that Salome is the sister to Mary, the mother of Jesus, that makes James and John, who are the sons of Salome, because she is married to Zebedee, that makes these two cousins to Jesus. And then we know that Zachariah and Elizabeth, the mother and father of John the Baptist, they were related to Mary, the mother of Jesus. So here again we have another cousin and then there's the brother, James, who is not the James mentioned in our passage. He would be Jesus's brother. So interesting to see these family strings as they weave themselves together, to which we have a lifetime of heart connections. These are cousins who would play together. They'd always be together at the Passover and the various feasts of Israel, and most usually of the same tribe, therefore living in the same regions.

John 19:25 (NKJV) ²⁵ Now there stood by the cross of Jesus His mother, and His mother's sister, Mary the wife of Clopas, and Mary Magdalene.

Mark 3:13-19 (NKJV) ¹³ And He went up on the mountain and called to Him those He Himself wanted. And they came to Him. ¹⁴ Then He appointed twelve, that they might be with Him and that He might send them out to preach, ¹⁵ and to have power to heal sicknesses and to cast out demons: ¹⁶ Simon, to whom He gave the name Peter; ¹⁷ James the son of Zebedee and John the brother of James, to whom He gave the name Boanerges, that is, "Sons of Thunder"; ¹⁸ Andrew, Philip, Bartholomew, Matthew, Thomas, James the son of Alphaeus, Thaddaeus, Simon the Cananite; ¹⁹ and Judas Iscariot, who also betrayed Him. And they went into a house.

They would see each other often, just as life happens, having family times together, coming together and helping each other in harvest time, helping each other in building houses time, so there's a connection here. I know, like for myself, my brother who's in town this week is heading to our hometown up in Western Pennsylvania, and he's

going to stay with my cousin Jeffrey. And soon as my brother says the word "Jeffrey," my heart has this immediate response to it. "Oh, it's Jeffrey. He's such a good, wonderful cousin," and so I have this heart connection to Jeffrey because we were cousins. And no doubt, obviously, imagine what all this means for the aunts and the uncles and the cousins and the mothers and the brothers and the sisters watching Jesus go through this.

Sit at Right and Left

So remember Salome (mother of James and John) came to Jesus and asked that her sons sit on left hand and right hand, imagine what she is seeing now, and saying thank you Lord for not answering my prayer, for on the left hand right hand are two cross. Have you ever been upset that God isn't answering your prayer? What you are sure is best for you, or your children, maybe even questioning Him on His love for you? May you at this moment, remember Salome.

Matthew 20:20–28 (NKJV) ²⁰ Then the mother of Zebedee's sons came to Him with her sons, kneeling down and asking something from Him. ²¹ And He said to her, "What do you wish?" She said to Him, "Grant that these two sons of mine may sit, one on Your right hand and the other on the left, in Your kingdom." ²² But Jesus answered and said, "You do not know what you ask. Are you able to drink the cup that I am about to drink, and be baptized with the baptism that I am baptized with?" They said to Him, "We are able." ²³ So He said to them, "You will indeed drink My cup, and be baptized with the baptism that I am baptized with; but to sit on My right hand and on My left is not Mine to give, but it is for those for whom it is prepared by My Father." ²⁴ And when the ten heard it, they were greatly displeased with the two brothers. ²⁵ But Jesus called them to Himself and said, "You know that the rulers of the Gentiles lord it over them, and those who are great exercise authority over them. ²⁶ Yet it shall not be so among you; but whoever desires to become great among you, let him be your servant. ²⁷ And whoever desires to be first among you, let him be your slave—²⁸ just as the Son of Man did not come to be served, but to serve, and to give His life a ransom for many."

Woman Ministered with their Substance

Luke eight tells us regarding these women that they ministered to Jesus out of their substance. So they are providing for Jesus with their very financial means and the things that they own. How are you ministering to Jesus currently in your life? A life that ministers to Jesus, will see Jesus.

They're following Jesus. And if you look at this, you've got Salome, the mother of James and John, who needs to be there for the family business saying, "Go." She's letting them go. She's probably the one, she may had to intervene with Zebedee, the father, saying, "I know you said you need them for the business, but this is more important." How that conversation played out with the two of them regarding their sons, we don't know, but they came to the conclusion, their spiritual manna was made way more important than their physical manna, even at the price that no doubt the burden that it added for these two to not be with their dad helping with the fishing business.

Luke 8:1–3 (NKJV) ¹ Now it came to pass, afterward, that He went through every city and village, preaching and bringing the glad tidings of the kingdom of God. And the twelve were with Him, ² and certain women who had been healed of evil spirits and infirmities—Mary called Magdalene, out of whom had come seven demons, ³ and Joanna the wife of Chuza, Herod's steward, and Susanna, and many others who provided for Him from their substance.

Jesus Buried in Joseph's Tomb (15:42-47)

The Preparation Day & Sabbath (15:42)

Mark 15:42 Now when evening had come, because it was the Preparation Day, that is, the day before the Sabbath,

Twilight - Night

In the Jewish keeping of time, there is night, and there is twilight. Twilight (in the springtime – as it is here in our passage) is from approximately from 3–6pm, and then night is from approximately 6pm to 6am. The new day in Jewish time keeping begins at night (6pm). So the next day is only hours away as we read here.

Some mistake the word used here for the "Preparation Day" as meaning Friday, but it means the day before the Sabbath, which the Sabbath isn't just on Saturday, but there were other Sabbaths when you celebrated the Feasts, the new month, the new year, etc. So it means more than just Friday, but it was commonly used to denote Friday because Friday was "weekly" Sabbath.

Joseph Asks for the Body of Jesus (15:43)

Mark 15:43 Joseph of Arimathea, a prominent council member, who was himself waiting for the kingdom of God, coming and taking courage, went into Pilate and asked for the body of Jesus.

Risks Life to Come Before Pilate

Joseph was very wealthy, and therefore coming in before Pilate, he does have some access as Pilate would know the wealthy, as politicians know who's wealthy and who has influence, and Joseph has influence. So, Joseph going in before Pilate is literally risking your life because Pilate's in a bad mood today, of course, and he doesn't really have much favor for the Jews; especially at this moment. I'm sure he feels forced into the decision that he made, but he made his own decision, nonetheless. But Joseph is the point that he's willing to risk his life to go before Pilate to receive the body of Jesus.

From the Night unto the Light

With Joseph is Nicodemus that we came to meet back in John chapter three, and we call him Nic at Night, but look at... He's with Joseph and there is no covering of darkness. He's not coming to Jesus in the darkness because he's afraid of what others are thinking. He is coming to Jesus literally in the daylight of the event where all the religious leaders will say, "Where is his body," and it will become made known Joseph and Nicodemus has come and taken the body. That's boldness and it's what the revelation of Jesus Christ does in anyone's life. We're sure we've seen what we've seen, we go from the darkness, we're filled with the boldness and the courage and we walk in the light. We don't care what other men think and we don't hide and we don't pull back from it. For the degree that you see will be the degree that you walk openly. These men go from the night, unto the Light.

John 3:1-3 (NKJV) ¹ There was a man of the Pharisees named Nicodemus, a ruler of the Jews. ² This man came to Jesus by night and said to Him, "Rabbi, we know that You are a teacher come from God; for no one can do these signs that You do unless God is with him." ³ Jesus answered and said to him, "Most assuredly, I say to you, unless one is born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God."

John 19:38-42 (NKJV) ³⁸ After this, Joseph of Arimathea, being a disciple of Jesus, but secretly, for fear of the Jews, asked Pilate that he might take away the body of Jesus; and Pilate gave him permission. So he came and took the body of Jesus. ³⁹ And Nicodemus, who at first came to Jesus by night, also came, bringing a mixture of myrrh and aloes, about a hundred pounds. ⁴⁰ Then they took the body of Jesus, and bound it in strips of linen with the spices, as the custom of the Jews is to bury. ⁴¹ Now in the place where He was crucified there was a garden, and in the garden a new tomb in which no one had yet been laid. ⁴² So there they laid Jesus, because of the Jews' Preparation Day, for the tomb was nearby.

When we read of Nicodemus back in John three, he studied under Gamaliel and he was considered one of the greatest theologians in all of Israel. We see a man who took his theology and applied it to his life accurately and that's what we're supposed to do when we study the Scripture is bring us to a place, how do I respond to this? Though I hear a note in my head, now I translate it into my heart and into the actions of my hands and feet and Nicodemus does. He sees and knows the Messiah. Remember when he asked Jesus how a man can be born again? Jesus said to him, "Man, you're the great scholar of Israel and you don't know?" Well, we can see that he comes to know and fully clearly, and he responds and here he is, John chapter 19, becoming part of this two-man team to take Jesus, the body down, and lay it in a tomb.

So Nicodemus, we're told he was the third richest man in Jerusalem. This is according to the Talmud, which also states that he was the brother of the Jewish historian Josephus. It is said that his daughter's wedding was the most expensive wedding ever provided for, at least up to that point, in Jerusalem. But then we're also told, and this is not as a compliment, but as an attack on his character, that Nicodemus went from all of his riches to poverty and his daughter too, because Nicodemus had joined himself to the Christians, and so Nicodemus knew what the cost would be. He counted the cost when he went to get the body of Jesus. So did Joseph, but they still went nonetheless, because to them, and I hope to all of us, Jesus is worth it, at whatever the price and whatever the cost, what a profit a man that he gains the whole world, yet in the end that loses his soul.

The Talmud said that Gamaliel took Nicodemus into his home to give them a place to live when he came into his poverty because of their friendship, and there is actually a holiday celebration called the... In the Gregorian calendar, which is the calendar based on Pope Gregory, there's a holiday on August 3rd called the day of Saint Nicholas of the house of Gamaliel. That's pretty interesting. What I do know of Gamaliel, he said, "Be careful here what you do, guys," as he was talking to the council. "If this is of God, you could be fighting against God," and so

now he has Nicodemus who was a believer and follower living in his home, proving the Scriptures to him that Jesus was and is the Messiah. I wonder if we'll see Gamaliel in heaven because of this witness. And you know what? Maybe you're asking, "Why am I living in poverty or pain?" It might just very well be because that's the only way God could get you in the house of Gamaliel and be able to witness and testify who Jesus Christ is. Nicodemus was willing to pay it all, even down to poverty. May that be a witness for us.

Powerful Difference (Woman & Joseph) – When See the Cross

Notice such a mighty power difference here at this moment between the woman and Joseph, compared to the disciples/apostles....and that is the power of those who see the cross.

These Woman Gave Their Treasures / Heart Followed All the Way to Cross

But these women, they're giving to Jesus, they're providing for Jesus, because where your treasures are, there your heart will be, and they believed in the ministry of Jesus and they followed that ministry all the way to the cross. We're going to read Joseph had courage. That means Nicodemus had courage, but these women, their courage is to stay at the cross. They would have been marked, they would have been known, they're with him and yet there they are, amazing women.

Matthew 6:21 (NKJV) ²¹ For where your treasure is, there your heart will be also.

Pilate Marvels and the Centurion Called (15:44-45)

Mark 15:44 Pilate marveled that He was already dead; and summoning the centurion, he asked him if He had been dead for some time.

Mark 15:45 So when he found out from the centurion, he granted the body to Joseph.

Pilate Marvels – Death so Soon / Because Jesus Gave Up the Spirit – Not Taken

Victims of crucifixion often lasted days before death. This is why "Pilate marveled that He was already dead; and summoning the centurion, he asked him if He had been dead for some time. We're told Pilate in marvel that Jesus was already dead. Historical writings, I personally cannot confirm. I'll just tell you what I heard in a sermon myself from a well-respected Bible teacher, that the shortest crucifixion on record was one of 32 hours and the longest was one of 13 days, so crucifixion was not a quick death and it was meant to be long and grinding. It was meant to make its point: Don't cross Rome. Here's what your future will behold, and it is the ultimate picture of sin. It's long, it's grinding. It never kills quickly, but slowly and thoroughly so Pilate, he marvels that Jesus could die at such a quick time in six hours.

The reason, Jesus gave up the Spirit, it wasn't taken from Him, just as He said it would be so.

John 10:17–18 (NKJV) ¹⁷ "Therefore My Father loves Me, because I lay down My life that I may take it again. ¹⁸ No one takes it from Me, but I lay it down of Myself. I have power to lay it down, and I have power to take it again. This command I have received from My Father."

Must Die at Twilight on the 14th of Nisan

And as we have studied, Jesus must die at twilight on this very day (the 14th of Nisan), when all the other Passover lambs were being sacrificed, as He will be the final Passover Lamb, to take away the sin of the world.

Exodus 12:6–7 (NKJV) ⁶ Now you shall keep it until the fourteenth day of the same month. Then the whole assembly of the congregation of Israel shall kill it at twilight. ⁷ And they shall take some of the blood and put it on the two doorposts and on the lintel of the houses where they eat it.

John 1:29 (NKJV) ²⁹ The next day John saw Jesus coming toward him, and said, "Behold! The Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world!"

The centurion called, based on the grammatical structure, would point back to the centurion who oversaw the whole crucifixion. The centurion who declared, truly this is the Son of God. I wonder if he told Pilate that? Here is what I know, and that is his answer to Pilate came out from Him by means more than a military debrief, a situational awareness, but came out with emotion.... if you just saw the Son of God die, how would you answer that question of Pilate. Christian, I pray when people ask you about Jesus, that you answer in the "historical present", as if you are reliving the cross, and then the resurrection, when you tell people the Gospel. Don't just give facts, take yourself back and give passion too.

Mark 15:37–39 (NKJV) ³⁷ And Jesus cried out with a loud voice, and breathed His last. ³⁸ Then the veil of the temple was torn in two from top to bottom. ³⁹ So when the centurion, who stood opposite Him, saw that He cried out like this and breathed His last, he said, "Truly this Man was the Son of God!"

Pilate Gifts the Body

So the word here that Pilate gives him the body of Jesus means to gift as a present. So as a favor in the sense, Pilate is giving this gift to Joseph, and truly anyone who will receive Jesus, his body. It is truly a gift. What you hold in your hand today with these communion elements is truly a gift from the Lord, and it's a present from the Lord, and the gift is of eternal life and forgiveness and oneness and reconciliation with God. That is the ultimate gift, and may you handle these communion elements as such. Not that they are holy, but what they represent, as Jesus would say, "Do this in remembrance of me. Remember the gift that I gave you," and anytime you receive an awesome gift, enjoy it to its fullest.

Jesus Taken Down and His Body Prepared (15:46)

Mark 15:46 Then he bought fine linen, took Him down, and wrapped Him in the linen. And he laid Him in a tomb which had been hewn out of the rock, and rolled a stone against the door of the tomb.

Interment – the preparing of the body for burial

Joseph's Tomb in Jerusalem

Joseph was extremely wealthy, so wealthy that his tomb is carved out. It wasn't a cave. It was carved by hand. You just have to consider how much did that cost to how somebody carve out a cave out of solid rock, and so that indicates great wealth. The Scriptures tell us in Luke, and we're seeing him clearly as a man who had a great reputation and he was part of the Sanhedrin council, but we're told that he did not vote in agreement for the crucifixion of Jesus. He would've been on the voting committee, but he would not have voted to have Jesus crucified. He was an honorable man, we are told.

Luke 23:50–51 (NKJV) ⁵⁰ Now behold, there was a man named Joseph, a council member, a good and just man. ⁵¹ He had not consented to their decision and deed. He was from Arimathea, a city of the Jews, who himself was also waiting for the kingdom of God.

It's quite interesting regarding Joseph. It says he's from the area of Arimathea, which is about 35 miles from Jerusalem, and that's where your family plot would be. You would be buried with your forefathers in your family plot, but there's something about Joseph that he wants a tomb in Jerusalem and we can do as much conjecture that he believes Jerusalem is the heart of God. This is where the Messiah would return, as we see that he's looking forward to the return of Christ, but there's also another possibility that I put there for you is, it's just something that the Lord laid on his heart and so this is what he did, even when people would be, "Why are you spending all this money to carve out this rock," and it could just be something that he felt that it was the leading of the Lord, and so there's a place in your life, in my life, that we go, "I can't really explain it. It's really not logical in the sense. I just feel this is where the Lord's leading me and to do anything less would be disobedient." And so Joseph of Arimathea, he's laying out the tomb but it has never been used and now we see it all unfold, why it's never been used, why it's in Jerusalem, and why it is here. It was fashioned in God's plan before the foundation of the world. Christian, there's lots of things that we're not going to fully see until they come to pass and there might be things that you don't even fully realize even now until you get to heaven, but just continue on with the burden that the Lord put on your heart.

Mark 15:42–43 (NKJV) ⁴² Now when evening had come, because it was the Preparation Day, that is, the day before the Sabbath, ⁴³ Joseph of Arimathea, a prominent council member, who was himself waiting for the kingdom of God, coming and taking courage, went in to Pilate and asked for the body of Jesus.

Fine Linen – Gives Best

Joseph brings the best, and gives the best, not castoffs. For where your treasures are there your heart will be. Jesus is the treasure of His heart.

Matthew 6:21 (NKJV) ²¹ For where your treasure is, there your heart will be also.

The Linen - tachrichin

Still today as practiced by Orthodox Jews, the deceased is dressed in "tachrichin", also called a shroud, the traditional burial shroud, handmade of white linen or cotton. All Jews, rich or poor, are buried in tachrichin as a statement of the equality in death. Gamaliel established this practice so identify that there is no class separation, and that we come into this world with nothing and we leave this world with nothing. This shroud is 4 foot wide by 18 feet long.

Taking the Body Down

Joseph and Nicodemus take down the body of Jesus. Here are the rich men, the respected men, men who once were secret disciples, now in their lives are saying “enough” as they step out of the shadows at all cost and come for the Lord’s body. Imagine going to Golgotha, carrying a pry bar, carrying a stool? Imagine as they arrive and they see the sight, Jesus dead, lifeless, slumped and hanging. Naked. Imagine what it is like for these men. How you could lovingly and delicately separate Jesus’ hands from that cross with that nail is beyond me, and I have a mechanical background. They probably separate the crossbeam from the vertical beam, then from the ground they pry His hands and feet from the nails, gently wrap His naked body with cloth, then carry Him to the tomb. Imagine holding in your arms the lifeless body of our Lord. These men are older men we know because they were part of the Sanhedrin Council, the lifeless body of Jesus is dead weight, but they press on. Although rich they did not pass this task on to a servant, but lovingly take Him into their own arms and make the trek probably close to a quarter mile to the tomb.

John 19:38–42 (NKJV) ³⁸ After this, Joseph of Arimathea, being a disciple of Jesus, but secretly, for fear of the Jews, asked Pilate that he might take away the body of Jesus; and Pilate gave him permission. So he came and took the body of Jesus. ³⁹ And Nicodemus, who at first came to Jesus by night, also came, bringing a mixture of myrrh and aloes, about a hundred pounds. ⁴⁰ Then they took the body of Jesus, and bound it in strips of linen with the spices, as the custom of the Jews is to bury. ⁴¹ Now in the place where He was crucified there was a garden, and in the garden a new tomb in which no one had yet been laid. ⁴² So there they laid Jesus, because of the Jews’ Preparation Day, for the tomb was nearby.

Washing the Body

Before the body was wrapped in the shroud, it was to be washed as Jewish Custom today still details out. The washing is called the “taharah”. It is still done today. The Jewish practice is to wash the body and have it in the grave by sunset. A Jewish recently told the story of her father dying in Israel, and he dies and 9am and within an hour the “Holy Society” (chevra kaddsha) was there to prepare and take the body. She sat in a separate room because she was a female, as men wash the body of men, and they have woman wash the body of woman. She said she sat in the other room but listen to the whole process. She heard the water pouring, and she said that they talked to the deceased as if they could hear. She said she heard them saying, Mr. Stien, we are now going to turn you over and wash your back. The whole process done very lovingly, caring, respectful, and gentle. She said he died at 9am and was in the tomb by noon.

Washing Practiced in Acts

We know this washing practice was done in the times of Jesus because we read about it in Acts 9 after Dorcas dies. *Acts 9:36–38 (NKJV)* ³⁶ At Joppa there was a certain disciple named Tabitha, which is translated Dorcas. This woman was full of good works and charitable deeds which she did. ³⁷ But it happened in those days that she became sick and died. When they had washed her, they laid her in an upper room. ³⁸ And since Lydda was near Joppa, and the disciples had heard that Peter was there, they sent two men to him, imploring him not to delay in coming to them.

Mitzvah

This process is called “mitzvah” (which means commandment) and it is the highest commandment in that you are doing something for someone that they can’t do for themselves, they can’t repay.

Consider Washing Jesus

Imagine these two (Nicodemus and Joseph) washing the body of Jesus. By now in the hot sun of the arid Middle-East, the blood was dried. Imagine taking a wash cloth

- and washing the hands of Jesus, imagine as you would clean off all the blood and you would come to the hole.
- Imagine washing His chest and stomach, and coming to the wound where the spear had pierced His side. Imagine as you would loving and gently roll His body over on to His stomach, saying Jesus I am going to roll you over now so I can wash your back.
- Imagine what you would see as you would clean the blood off His back and then see the damage that the cat-of-nine-tails had done to Him. Then saying Jesus we are going to roll you back over now, we are going to wash Your face.

- Imagine washing His face, that was beaten beyond human recognition Isaiah foretells, His face that they plucked His beard out. Imagine taking that crown of thorns off His head, ever so gently.
- Imagine as you wash away the blood you come down to clean skin, you come down to those eyes that you once looked into, imagine just beholding His face.
- After that they comb the hair, and imagine looking at His face and holding His head, as you pulled the comb through His hair. And then lastly after the body was washed, the hand was placed over the eyes and the eyelids closed shut.

I wonder if they kissed Him.....how I would if I could right now lay my chest upon His and hold Him, saying thank you Lord. How I would if I could right now kiss His lips and say I love You My Lord.

Isaiah 52:14 (NKJV) ¹⁴ Just as many were astonished at you, So His visage was marred more than any man, And His form more than the sons of men;

Isaiah 50:6 (NKJV) ⁶ I gave My back to those who struck Me, And My cheeks to those who plucked out the beard; I did not hide My face from shame and spitting.

Loving Hands / Soldier / Thanks

Here Jesus is in loving hands. After the crucifixion He is only in loving hands. It is when we hear of one of our warriors being killed in the battlefield, our hearts grieve not only at their death, but that they are in angry and hateful hands, but then we have a sense of closure when we receive word the body has been recovered and is back in loving and respectful hands. I wonder what it was like after the resurrection when Jesus saw them, did He lay His hand on their shoulder and look into their eyes and say thanks men, thanks for all you did. As I always say, I don't think Jesus ever missed an opportunity to look into the eyes of people and make a heart connection with them.

The Final Wrapping of Linen / Tachrichin

Lastly the body would be placed on a clean piece of linen (the Tachrichin). The linen would wrap from head-to-toe, not wound around like a mummy, but wrapped from head-to-toe. Then a strip of linen was wrapped at the ankles to keep them together, then wrapped at the knees, then a strip at the waist that held the hands to the side of the body. Then there was a last strip that went around the forehead to the chin to hold the mouth shut. Before the final tying they would place myrrh and aloe and spices to bring a sweet fragrance to the body.

Then Leaving the Tomb / No Passover for Them

After it is all done, it is time for Joseph and Nicodemus to leave the body and close the tomb. I can only imagine how hard it was to leave that tomb. Where would you go, how could you leave Him, but the Sabbath Law required the body be in the tomb before the Sabbath began, but they wouldn't be able to participate in the Passover meal or the Sabbath celebration for they were now ceremonially unclean for touching a dead body, and thus they couldn't make the sacrifice of the Passover Lamb that was required of them. But the fact is, and they knew it, they had just prepared the Final Passover Lamb, who would be and was, their Passover Lamb that year and for all years to come.

1 Corinthians 5:7-8 (NKJV) ⁷ Therefore purge out the old leaven, that you may be a new lump, since you truly are unleavened. For indeed Christ, our Passover, was sacrificed for us. ⁸ Therefore let us keep the feast, not with old leaven, nor with the leaven of malice and wickedness, but with the unleavened bread of sincerity and truth.

History Tells of Joseph & Nicodemus

March 17th in the Gregorian calendar is the day of Saint Joseph of Arimathea, and so here we have again another possible thread that Joseph and Nicodemus and the impact that they had on the early Christian Church. The Scriptures tell us clearly they both were disciples, first in secret out of fear of the religious people, but then after the resurrection, in pure power with no wavering, encourage and that's what the cross and the resurrection will do when you fully grab it and seize it.

"Oh, my marriage," you may say, or, "Oh, my depression," or, "Oh, my fear." I will tell you this. If you will lay all of it aside and simply come to the cross and see Jesus, the gift, the body given to you and then the resurrection power, you will have power and overcome. You will have courage in all things. You're struggling with addiction? You need to study the cross, and maybe you studied it before. Well, there's a reason that Jesus gave us two of

these, these two ordinances, baptism and communion, and for communion, the representation of the body and the blood that Jesus Christ said, "Do this in remembrance of me until my return." He's coming back, folks. He's coming back. May we living in power while we wait for a soon return.

67 A.D, it's said that Phillip sends Joseph of Arimathea to what we know as Britain to take the gospel there, and if you go to church, if you go to England today, you'll find the oldest church in England. It's called the Church of Saint Joseph of Arimathea.

And it's said that Joseph of Arimathea, when he got to England, he built a pulpit out of thorns. He would know, now wouldn't he?

Communion

Would you please stand with your communion elements in your hand, and lets take communion together as we reflect on this great day.

The Gift

In Mark's account it reads that Pilate "granted" the body to Joseph. The word there for "gave" is "to gift". To give as a favor. He is Jesus, God's gift to you, His favor unto you, for He favors you, He loves you. He is Jesus, God's gift to you.

Mark 15:45 (NKJV) ⁴⁵ So when he found out from the centurion, he granted the body to Joseph.

The Woman Observed Where He is Laid (15:47)

Mark 15:47 And Mary Magdalene and Mary the mother of Joses observed where He was laid.

Woman Know Exactly Where Tomb Is

These ladies will return on Sunday to finish dressing Jesus' body. Here we're told they paid special attention to the tomb's location. This is an important point, for there are skeptics even today who try to discredit Jesus' resurrection by saying the tomb was empty - not because He rose from the dead - but because the women went to the wrong tomb. Mark though, says that was impossible since the girls made special note of its location ahead of time... If men had been first to the tomb we might assume they got lost - but women are experts at navigating directions. The only viable explanation for the empty tomb is that Jesus lives, and it was no longer needed.

God Says Come

Today we come and are gifted this Word from God Himself, His very heart opened before us, the calling to come near, be drawn to Him.

Matthew 11:28 (NKJV) ²⁸ Come to Me, all you who labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest.

The Word of God is Living and Powerful, and is ready, and will do a mighty work in our lives.

Hebrews 4:12 (NKJV) ¹² For the word of God is living and powerful, and sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing even to the division of soul and spirit, and of joints and marrow, and is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart.

In Every Study

- Who Is God? (How Great is He?)
- What Does He Think of Me? (How Wonderful Are His Thoughts Towards Me?)
- What Does He Want Me to Do?
- What Can I Boldly Request of Him?
- What Do I Need to Be on Guard of When I Leave Here Today?

Boldly come to the throne of grace, ask God to reveal Himself in a mighty way to you, and to do I might work in you, and through you.

Hebrews 4:16 (NKJV) ¹⁶ Let us therefore come boldly to the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy and find grace to help in time of need.

End of Study

Mark 16

Mark 16:1-8

Title: Empty Tomb, Risen Savior

Mark 16:1–8 (NKJV) ¹ Now when the Sabbath was past, Mary Magdalene, Mary *the mother* of James, and Salome bought spices, that they might come and anoint Him. ² Very early in the morning, on the first *day* of the week, they came to the tomb when the sun had risen. ³ And they said among themselves, “Who will roll away the stone from the door of the tomb for us?” ⁴ But when they looked up, they saw that the stone had been rolled away—for it was very large. ⁵ And entering the tomb, they saw a young man clothed in a long white robe sitting on the right side; and they were alarmed. ⁶ But he said to them, “Do not be alarmed. You seek Jesus of Nazareth, who was crucified. He is risen! He is not here. See the place where they laid Him. ⁷ But go, tell His disciples—and Peter—that He is going before you into Galilee; there you will see Him, as He said to you.” ⁸ So they went out quickly and fled from the tomb, for they trembled and were amazed. And they said nothing to anyone, for they were afraid.

Outline Mark 16:1-8:

- The Sabbath has Passed, and Woman come to Anoint Jesus’ Body (16:1)
- Early in Morning on First Day of Week (16:2)
- Who Will Roll Away the Stone they Ask? (16:3-4)
- The Angel Declares: He was Crucified – He is Alive (16:5-6)
- Send Message to the Disciples, and Peter (16:7)
- The Woman Run out of the Tomb (16:8)

Intro:

All of Christianity hinges on the resurrection. If Jesus had died for our sin, then went straight to heaven, then we would sit here today and say “I think” our sins are forgiven. Propitiation means to appease, to satisfy. There was, and there is, a penalty for sin, and that penalty is death. That death comes through “wrath”, the Holy God cannot look upon sin, and He judges it “thoroughly”. Wrath simply means punishment; but it is not simple, it is thorough. So Jesus traded places with us. The Passover was and is a picture of how it worked. Read all 5 chapters of Leviticus 1-5 to get a full detail of this. You get a lamb, lay your hand upon it, you would confess your sins to God, and the lamb would be killed, the blood of the lamb sprinkled upon you, and your sin would be “covered”. It was a type/picture, of the innocent lamb trading places with you, your guilt to the innocent, and the innocent to you. That is what Jesus did on the cross, your guilt to the innocent, He the innocent on to you. However how do we know that God accepted the trade? How do we know how long the trade was good for? See in the Old Testament, you continually had to come back to the temple, come back and make the sacrifice, because it was only temporal, it only covered your sin, couldn’t totally “take it away”, and we know that is true, because the lambs died. But we know that God accepted the substitute, the trade, because Jesus died, and rose again!. Had Jesus stayed dead, we could only conclude that God the Father did not accept the trade. But a resurrected Christ proves the trade, the substitution, was accepted.

1 Corinthians 15:13–14 (NKJV) ¹³ But if there is no resurrection of the dead, then Christ is not risen. ¹⁴ And if Christ is not risen, then our preaching is empty and your faith is also empty.

1 Corinthians 15:15–19 (NKJV) ¹⁵ Yes, and we are found false witnesses of God, because we have testified of God that He raised up Christ, whom He did not raise up—if in fact the dead do not rise. ¹⁶ For if the dead do not rise, then Christ is not risen. ¹⁷ And if Christ is not risen, your faith is futile; you are still in your sins! ¹⁸ Then also those who have fallen asleep in Christ have perished. ¹⁹ If in this life only we have hope in Christ, we are of all men the most pitiable.

1 John 4:8–10 (NKJV) ⁸ He who does not love does not know God, for God is love. ⁹ In this the love of God was manifested toward us, that God has sent His only begotten Son into the world, that we might live through Him. ¹⁰ In this is love, not that we loved God, but that He loved us and sent His Son to be the propitiation for our sins.

John 3:36 (NKJV) ³⁶ He who believes in the Son has everlasting life; and he who does not believe the Son shall not see life, but the wrath of God abides on him.”

John 3:16–17 (NKJV) ¹⁶ For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have everlasting life. ¹⁷ For God did not send His Son into the world to condemn the world, but that the world through Him might be saved.

ABC Gospel & a “D”

The Gospel is as simple as ABC,

- A - Admit - all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God. We need to recognize and admit that we are sinners, and guilty before God for breaking His Holy Law, and there is a punishment to come for doing so.
- B – Believe - And we are to believe on the Lord Jesus Christ and him only and we shall be saved. Jesus would say, "I am the way, the truth, and the life." And all those in their sentence structure are, "I am the only way. I am the only truth. I am the only life." We must recognize our sin separates us from God, and that Jesus taking our punishment on the cross is the only way to cover and cleanse our sin before the Holy God.
- C – Confess - Then you call to Him, confess to Him, as confession simply means to agree with, and we come into agreement our guilt and our need, and the only provision... Jesus Christ and Him crucified for us, And when we do that, He comes to you and cleanses your sin, and forgives you of your sin (past-present-future).

2 Corinthians 6:1–2 (NKJV) ¹ We then, as workers together with Him also plead with you not to receive the grace of God in vain. ² For He says: "In an acceptable time I have heard you, And in the day of salvation I have helped you." Behold, now is the accepted time; behold, now is the day of salvation.

Acts 3:19 (NKJV) ¹⁹ Repent therefore and be converted, that your sins may be blotted out, so that times of refreshing may come from the presence of the Lord,

John 14:6 (NKJV) ⁶ Jesus said to him, "I am the way, the truth, and the life. No one comes to the Father except through Me.

Romans 3:23 (NKJV) ²³ for all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God,

Romans 10:9–10 (NKJV) ⁹ that if you confess with your mouth the Lord Jesus and believe in your heart that God has raised Him from the dead, you will be saved. ¹⁰ For with the heart one believes unto righteousness, and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation.

And I like to always say, and after ABC, there is a D, and that stands for discipleship. For everyone Jesus called, He said to "follow me", and if you truly give your life to Christ, you will follow Him, go the direction He is going, and live according to the Word that He spoke (His Holy Commandments). In fact the Bible clearly says, you will know that you know Him, because you keep His commandments. So if you are not living according to His commandments, you need to examine yourself and see if you are truly in the faith.

Matthew 16:24–26 (NKJV) ²⁴ Then Jesus said to His disciples, "If anyone desires to come after Me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross, and follow Me. ²⁵ For whoever desires to save his life will lose it, but whoever loses his life for My sake will find it. ²⁶ For what profit is it to a man if he gains the whole world, and loses his own soul? Or what will a man give in exchange for his soul?

1 John 2:3–5 (NKJV) ³ Now by this we know that we know Him, if we keep His commandments. ⁴ He who says, "I know Him," and does not keep His commandments, is a liar, and the truth is not in him. ⁵ But whoever keeps His word, truly the love of God is perfected in him. By this we know that we are in Him.

2 Corinthians 13:5–6 (NKJV) ⁵ Examine yourselves as to whether you are in the faith. Test yourselves. Do you not know yourselves, that Jesus Christ is in you?—unless indeed you are disqualified. ⁶ But I trust that you will know that we are not disqualified.

God Says Come

Today we come and are gifted this Word from God Himself, His very heart opened before us, the calling to come near, be drawn to Him.

Matthew 11:28 (NKJV) ²⁸ Come to Me, all you who labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest.

The Word of God is Living and Powerful, and is ready, and will do a mighty work in our lives.

Hebrews 4:12 (NKJV) ¹² For the word of God is living and powerful, and sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing even to the division of soul and spirit, and of joints and marrow, and is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart.

In Every Study

- Who Is God? (How Great is He?)
- What Does He Think of Me? (How Wonderful Are His Thoughts Towards Me?)
- What Does He Want Me to Do?
- What Can I Boldly Request of Him?

- What Do I Need to Be on Guard of When I Leave Here Today?

Boldly come to the throne of grace, ask God to reveal Himself in a mighty way to you, and to do I might work in you, and through you.

Hebrews 4:16 (NKJV) ¹⁶ Let us therefore come boldly to the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy and find grace to help in time of need.

Jesus Rises from the Dead (16:1-8)

Mark 16:1 Now when the Sabbath was past, Mary Magdalene, Mary the mother of James, and Salome bought spices, that they might come and anoint Him.

Imagine Those 3 Days

Imagine what it was like those three days as they waited. Did they wait alone, did they wait together? However, it played out, it was a long three days, we just want to get to see Jesus. Now the Sabbath you did not work, but you were not confined to your house, you could go outside the house but the scribes had determined there was a limit how far you could walk on the Sabbath (about .6 miles, a little more than a half mile, about 3,000 feet). So these woman if they lived close by probably met each other every day to come up with their plan to go on after the Sabbath and anoint Jesus body. This anointing was not an embalming, but a last act of love from their hearts to Jesus. Obviously, they do not expect an empty tomb, nor a resurrected Jesus. That must have been a long three days. I know when Renee goes away, my heart misses her. I can only imagine how these women are missing their Jesus, the love of their life.

These Woman Take Great Risk / Jesus Killed as a Rebel

So now, these women probably don't know this, maybe they do. Maybe they were told that after they saw Jesus laid in the tomb that shortly after a detachment of soldiers were assigned to the tomb to make sure that this resurrection theory doesn't come to some type of life conspiracy, but still, nonetheless, these women would know there's great risk going to this tomb. Jesus has just been murdered. He didn't die, He didn't pass away in an unfortunate accident, He died a brutal, cruel death as a criminal, as a conspirator, as one who is trying to raise up a sedition against Rome, and not to mention they know the religious leaders in high places had, and did, insight the crowd into a mob mentality, and yet they go.

What Risk Has God Called You to Take / Resurrection Story – Is Story of Power

Once again, love does not count the risk and the cost. Love goes and trusts the Lord. That might be a Word for someone here today. You know God's called you to go on a mission trip, you know God's called you to go be part of this ministry, or to go evangelize, or whatever it may be, but you're counting the cost right now. I pray the Lord just speaks to you clearly right now, with what you have in life that you make it count. You can be as impactful in these last years than all your final, or cumulative, years before that. The story of the resurrection is a story of power. The story of the resurrection is a story of abundant life. **A dead Jesus is powerless, a resurrected Jesus is unstoppable.** A resurrected Jesus demonstrates and displays the power of God who is for you, who walks with you, who promises never to leave you nor forsake you, and is the God who according to 1 Corinthians lives inside you. Go and live as such.

John 10:10 (NKJV) ¹⁰ The thief does not come except to steal, and to kill, and to destroy. I have come that they may have life, and that they may have it more abundantly.

1 Corinthians 3:16 (NKJV) ¹⁶ Do you not know that you are the temple of God and that the Spirit of God dwells in you?

Too many Christians live as the purpose of life is to arrive at death safely and comfortably. There is an abundant life awaiting, go and live it, it is exciting taking risks for Jesus.

Death and Hell have been defeated, and now we have the power to be unstoppable:

1 Corinthians 15:50–58 (NKJV) ⁵⁰ Now this I say, brethren, that flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God; nor does corruption inherit incorruption. ⁵¹ Behold, I tell you a mystery: We shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed—⁵² in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trumpet. For the trumpet will sound, and the dead will be raised incorruptible, and we shall be changed. ⁵³ For this corruptible must put on incorruption, and this mortal must put on immortality. ⁵⁴ So when this corruptible has put on incorruption, and this mortal has put on immortality, then shall be brought to pass the saying that is written: “Death is swallowed up in victory.” ⁵⁵ “O Death, where is your sting? O Hades, where is your victory?” ⁵⁶ The sting of death is sin, and the strength of sin is the law. ⁵⁷ But thanks be to God, who gives us the victory

through our Lord Jesus Christ. ⁵⁸ Therefore, my beloved brethren, be steadfast, immovable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, knowing that your labor is not in vain in the Lord.

Mark 16:2 Very early in the morning, on the first day of the week, they came to the tomb when the sun had risen.

On 3rd – Not After / Give Me a Sign People Ask – here it Is, the Resurrection

Jesus said he will rise again on the third day, not after the third day, on the third day, and he did exactly as he said that he would. Jesus fulfilled what He said perfectly regarding the sign they asked for. And so too for anyone who says God I want a sign from You to prove you are real; here it is, it is the resurrection!

Mark 9:31 (NKJV) ³¹ For He taught His disciples and said to them, "The Son of Man is being betrayed into the hands of men, and they will kill Him. And after He is killed, He will rise the third day."

Matthew 12:38–40 (NKJV) ³⁸ Then some of the scribes and Pharisees answered, saying, "Teacher, we want to see a sign from You." ³⁹ But He answered and said to them, "An evil and adulterous generation seeks after a sign, and no sign will be given to it except the sign of the prophet Jonah. ⁴⁰ For as Jonah was three days and three nights in the belly of the great fish, so will the Son of Man be three days and three nights in the heart of the earth.

Mark 16:3 And they said among themselves, "Who will roll away the stone from the door of the tomb for us?"

Mark 16:4 But when they looked up, they saw that the stone had been rolled away—for it was very large.

Mark 16:5 And entering the tomb, they saw a young man clothed in a long white robe sitting on the right side; and they were alarmed.

The Tomb & the Stone

These are multi grave tombs in that there's a several hued out places in these tombs to lay a body. And so the stone would be removed from time to time to put in the new corpse. We know this particular grave has never been used before and we discussed that last week of Joseph of Arimathea having this grave of all places in Jerusalem and not in his hometown. As we spoke of sometimes we do things that we won't know until much later why God inspired us to do them, but here, this stone as it would be rolled away, some of them were round and some of them were kind of oval shape. Obviously an oval shaped stone weighing one ton, one and a half ton, much harder to move, it is said would take 10 to 15 men with pry bars and wooden ramp type things to roll the stone back away so it's nothing that's going to be easily moved without great effort.

The stone would weigh about two tons, so it is quite the obstacle.

Verb Tense – Continually / The Impossible Obstacles

The verb tense used here as these women are walking is a continual discussion. Not just said once, but continually the discussion was, "Who's going to roll the stone away," so however long the walk is, that's how long this question and how often this question came up. And when you continually ask something that is out of your control and ponder it, you're now in this place of worry and so they're worrying and over and over who's going to roll this stone away, but let it be noted, they continue on nonetheless, even with that so-called impossible obstacle ahead of them.

You know there are some stones that you will never figure out how to roll away, some barriers and obstacles to keep you from Jesus or to keep you from what he's called you to do. And even all the planning in the world will still bring you to a place of, "I can't figure out how to overcome this obstacle," and so then comes a great place of faith in life that we can just say, "Since I can't figure it out, since I don't have a plan on how to move this obstacle, how to get to Jesus or how to take someone to see Jesus, then I guess I won't go. I'll just stay here and wait and do something else."

It's an exciting life to step out and walk by faith and see God move barriers and obstacles that we can look back and go, "Only Jesus, only God could have did this," and it inspires our faith and ignites our faith. But you know, so too, is it true? Probably 90% of the obstacles that I worry about, by the time I get there, they're gone. They're obstacles that I made, barriers that I put up. As I think of everything that can go wrong or worry about everything

that can be against me, when I finally get to that place, I find out God's already removed that barrier, and in many cases that barrier never even existed.

Mark 16:6 But he said to them, "Do not be alarmed. You seek Jesus of Nazareth, who was crucified. He is risen! He is not here. See the place where they laid Him.

Verb Tense – Stop Being Afraid!

The verb tense that this angel speaks is to these women, "Stop being afraid." It's a continual tense. You're continually being afraid right now, stop being afraid. And that is a message of the resurrection. God speaks to us and says, "Stop being afraid." In our Christian faith, our whole life can come down to this. It is a was and an is. He was crucified and he is alive. And because of the was and is, you can stop being afraid. There is no power to hold you. There is no death to sting you and the Apostle Paul will say such words, "Oh death, where is your sting? Oh hell, where is your power?"

Do You Know What Jesus Does Right After the Resurrection? / Beloved Roll Away the Stone and Live

Do you know what Jesus does after He resurrects, after He has conquered sin, overcome the grave? Do you know what He does after the resurrection? This isn't a trick question. What does He do? He walks out of the tomb. Of course, He does, but here's what I want to say to someone here today. Here's what I want to say to everyone here today. "Roll away the stone and live."

There are many people here today, right now, you believe that Jesus Christ has forgiven your sin, you believe that the power of the resurrection is true and that the grave and death can no longer hold you, but there is someone, and there are some people, who still will never leave the tomb. You stay in the very cell that you have been freed of.

Do you know what's in the grave? Do you know what's in that tomb? Your past failures that haunt you, your past sins that condemned you. The very things that put you in bondage and chains are in that tomb, and yet you stay, you won't leave. You won't roll away the stone and live, and God wants to say to you, "You are free to leave this tomb. Your history is buried in that tomb. Your sin is left in that tomb. Don't stay in that tomb, in that prison cell. The Stone's been rolled away so you can walk out and you can live as I promised that you could." John 10:10, The abundant life, the God life, the life that is beyond anything this world can offer you." You need not stay in that tomb.

When Jesus Christ resurrected from the dead, the next thing He did was walk out of the tomb. There are some here today, you've been resurrected from the dead, your sin is forgiven, your eternal security and salvation is secured, and now it's time for you to walk out of this grave, today. Not something to talk about, not something to be, not....."I hear what you're saying and I'm going to do it tomorrow." No, today, and not just today, right now. You don't need to wait till the end of the service, the end of this Bible study, to walk away. You can just right now say, "I'm stepping out of my past, my tomb, my prison walls, my cell, and I am going to leave this place and I'm going to go on and live the life that God has promised me, has died for me, has provided for me, today.

How do I do That You May Ask

You may be saying, "Pastor, how do I do that? I hear you. I'm moved by this Word. I actually want to do it, but how do I practically do that?" Jesus shows us right here. He tells these women, "Go tell the disciples to meet me in Galilee." Just that simple. See, Jesus didn't say, "Meet me here at this tomb." He's gone, He's moved on from the tomb. He's going about now to live the resurrection, the resurrected life, and He's not going to have His whole ministry telling everybody, "Meet me at the tomb," as powerful as it is. The only thing I want you to see at the tomb is that it's empty. In that tomb is left your history and your condemnation, and now that stays in the tomb and we move on, and we go live the abundant life. He says, "Meet me in Galilee." What I want to tell you is, you ask Him, you ask Him today, you get alone with Him today, you spend time with Him today and He will tell you where to meet Him at.

You want to stay here at the altar all day, the altar is open for you all day. You don't have to leave until you've heard from God say to you, "Meet me, and He'll tell you where to meet Him. He may say to you, "Meet me for coffee tomorrow." He may say, "Meet me for a walk today. We're going to go for a walk and we're going to talk." He may say, "Meet me here in this ministry." He may say, "Meet me here at the Women's Retreat or the Men's Conference." He will continually tell you where to meet Him and where to follow Him. Then, He will tell you what to do after you meet with Him, and this resurrected life is daily. We meet with Him daily, not just weekly. We meet with him daily and we get our abundant life instructions for the day, and sometimes they string out into things that are weekly, monthly, yearly, but still daily, "Meet me."

When Peter meets him there in Galilee, He'll tell Peter what to do, "Feed my sheep," but not at the tomb. It's not where he got his abundant life marching orders. When He freed the man who was bound, and chained, and living in the tombs that we studied here in Mark 5, He told him what to do. "Go back home, tell your friends what great things I've done." It's actually the very passage of scripture that the Lord gave me when I was, just finished Bible college the next day I still didn't know what was next. All that I knew, first step was to go to Bible college. Finished Bible college, and the next day as I'm doing my daily reading there in the campus laundromat doing my laundry before sunrise, because that's what wild and crazy college students do after they graduate, the next day they do their laundry. The Lord spoke to me this passage, as I had before me opportunities to stay at the Bible college, and teach, and other ministries on the West Coast. The Lord spoke to me that passage that He spoke to the man entombed. "Go back home and tell your family what great things I've done," and I knew that meant God says "Go back to the East Coast and start telling people the great things that I've done. That's where your family is, now go." I took my clothes out of the laundry, not even sure they were fully dried, threw them in my duffle bag, threw that duffle bag in the back of my car, went got my other small belongings. I think it equaled a whole box of books, or two, threw them in my trunk. Told the Dean of the school, "God has spoken," and he said, "Go. God bless you," and I drove, and I left and started making my way back to the East Coast.

Mark 5:1–5 (NKJV) ¹ Then they came to the other side of the sea, to the country of the Gadarenes. ² And when He had come out of the boat, immediately there met Him out of the tombs a man with an unclean spirit, ³ who had his dwelling among the tombs; and no one could bind him, not even with chains, ⁴ because he had often been bound with shackles and chains. And the chains had been pulled apart by him, and the shackles broken in pieces; neither could anyone tame him. ⁵ And always, night and day, he was in the mountains and in the tombs, crying out and cutting himself with stones.

Mark 5:18–19 (NKJV) ¹⁸ And when He got into the boat, he who had been demon-possessed begged Him that he might be with Him. ¹⁹ However, Jesus did not permit him, but said to him, "Go home to your friends, and tell them what great things the Lord has done for you, and how He has had compassion on you."

This word you hold in your hand is the very revelation of God! The revelation of His heart, and His will for you. Meet Him in this Word – daily! And often throughout the day.

So, what you need to do is you need to meet Jesus and just ask Him, "What do you want me to do?" He'll tell you, and I know one of the things He's going to tell you and it won't be, "Stay in that tomb, live in this tomb, live in your past, live in your guilt, and live in your shame. Listen, I want to tell you, I got a lot of guilt and I got a lot of shame. It's not just my past, it's even after I made my profession for Christ, things that I'm thankful cannot be put up on the screen and played as a video, because if it was you'd never see me again. But the resurrection power, and God saying, "Go," there's the power, it's when you go.

Some People Want to Keep You in the Tomb of Your Past Sin

For some people, Jesus is still on the cross. For some people, Jesus is still in the tomb. For some people, Jesus is the dead God. He is not the God of the empty cross. He's not the God of the empty grave. He is not the God of the resurrected life, and so they live with a dead powerless God, a God of a memory, a God of a past, but not the God of the resurrected life who overcome sin and overcomes the grave and walks in power.

And there are those people who keep Jesus on the cross and keep Jesus in the grave. And there are those same people who do the same to you. They keep you living in your memory. They keep you living in your past. They continually come up and speak about your death as in your old life, your old failures, and they won't come and speak to you as the resurrection life, the new life that you have received through Christ. And unfortunately for

some of you, you allow that. It could just be one person who haunts you and taunts you, and allows you and keeps you in that grave.

I think we all have people like that in our life. Some of them may even be so-called believers, but they love to talk about your failures. They love to talk about everything that's wrong with you, and then you listen to it and you find yourself paralyzed, entombed, again

People have been talking about Jesus for 2000 years, laying challenges against him, but if you notice no one and not one of them, not one challenge and not one critique keeps Jesus in the grave. The stone has been rolled away and he has walked out, and he is living in the resurrection power and he's given people the example. So too, can you, so come and follow me.

So once again, the point of the story, you have to put your feet in the direction that God called you and you have to move when God tells you to move and you have to trust that God will be taking care of and directing your steps, and removing all barriers and obstacles that would get in the way from keeping you to see Jesus or you from bringing people to see Jesus and his wonders and what he does.

So, I ask you, Christian roll away the stone and live.

Mark 16:7 But go, tell His disciples—and Peter—that He is going before you into Galilee; there you will see Him, as He said to you.”

Peter by Name – Jesus Always Looks for the Neediest Person

Jesus calling out Peter by name, well, having the angel call Peter out by name, you know what it speaks to us, you know what it speaks to you individually? God is always looking out for the neediest person in the room. When Jesus walked in the room, we read through the scriptures, he always looked for the person who was the neediest and in the greatest need. He walks in and he sees a man with a withered hand, that's who he's drawn to. He walks in and he sees a grieving mother, that's who he's drawn to. And here, he knows all the people, of all the people, who's the most neediest during these three days and will be the most neediest when this news that the resurrection is true will be Peter, because the last person who's going to think that Jesus has risen from the dead and comes to restore and to revive will be him.

Mark 3:1–5 (NKJV) ¹ And He entered the synagogue again, and a man was there who had a withered hand. ² So they watched Him closely, whether He would heal him on the Sabbath, so that they might accuse Him. ³ And He said to the man who had the withered hand, “Step forward.” ⁴ Then He said to them, “Is it lawful on the Sabbath to do good or to do evil, to save life or to kill?” But they kept silent. ⁵ And when He had looked around at them with anger, being grieved by the hardness of their hearts, He said to the man, “Stretch out your hand.” And he stretched it out, and his hand was restored as whole as the other.

Mark 16:8 So they went out quickly and fled from the tomb, for they trembled and were amazed. And they said nothing to anyone, for they were afraid.

Go Tell Your Friends & Family

Jesus tells these women, through the angel, to go your way and to tell others. And I know that might scare some of you, but I believe it's a calling for all of us. We're to go our way, and as we go, we share the good news, he is alive. He who was crucified is alive. So I encourage you today, with that blessed beautiful calling, go your way. Tell the lost and dying world that there is a way and he is the truth, and he is the life.

And you know what, all they were to do was tell them what they saw. It was not their responsibility to convince them, debate them, or rebuke them..... simply to tell them.

God Says Come

Today we come and are gifted this Word from God Himself, His very heart opened before us, the calling to come near, be drawn to Him.

Matthew 11:28 (NKJV) ²⁸ Come to Me, all you who labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest.

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In Every Study

- Who Is God? (How Great is He?)
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Hebrews 4:16 (NKJV) ¹⁶ Let us therefore come boldly to the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy and find grace to help in time of need.

End of Study

Mark 16:9-18

Title: Jesus is alive - and on the move

Mark 16:9–18 (NKJV) ⁹ Now when *He* rose early on the first *day* of the week, He appeared first to Mary Magdalene, out of whom He had cast seven demons. ¹⁰ She went and told those who had been with Him, as they mourned and wept. ¹¹ And when they heard that He was alive and had been seen by her, they did not believe. ¹² After that, He appeared in another form to two of them as they walked and went into the country. ¹³ And they went and told *it* to the rest, *but* they did not believe them either. ¹⁴ Later He appeared to the eleven as they sat at the table; and He rebuked their unbelief and hardness of heart, because they did not believe those who had seen Him after He had risen. ¹⁵ And He said to them, “Go into all the world and preach the gospel to every creature. ¹⁶ He who believes and is baptized will be saved; but he who does not believe will be condemned. ¹⁷ And these signs will follow those who believe: In My name they will cast out demons; they will speak with new tongues; ¹⁸ they will take up serpents; and if they drink anything deadly, it will by no means hurt them; they will lay hands on the sick, and they will recover.”

Outline Mark 16:9-18:

- Mary Magdalene Sees the Risen Lord (16:9-11)
- Jesus Appears to Two Disciples (16:12-13)
- The Great Commission (16:14-18)

Intro/Recap

Jesus is alive and we can see by our outline he's on the move and there's lots to do so let's get into the word and get moving as he is moving about this country is he's moving about this nation as he's moving about this world as g about our families as he's moving about our church is he's moving about our lives individually for our God is on the move he is the on the move God and he says that ass come along let's get moving together

Textual Criticism

In what is called “textual criticism”, the argument is made that these verses (Mark 16:9-20) did not exist in the earliest manuscripts and were later added. Well to me that would be a total bummer of a way to end this awesome Gospel account, and that is to end it at verse 8, “for they were afraid”. Does anyone's Bible end at verse 8? Ok, for all those who have verses 9-20 today, we will study them, and if your Bible ends at verse 8, you are free to sleep through this one (haha). I appreciate those who research and critic such things, all joking aside it is good to do so, we don't receive these things blindly. However, I do think some people can get blinded by these things, and be so busy criticizing the Scriptures, they miss the Scriptures before them. I would say these verses were in the original writings that circulated the early church, because the early church fathers quoted from them, so that simple fact confirms their existence. So, let's get into them, just like our early church brothers and sisters did.

Mark 16:8 (NKJV) ⁸ So they went out quickly and fled from the tomb, for they trembled and were amazed. And they said nothing to anyone, for they were afraid.

a. Many very early Christian writers refer to this passage in their writings. This shows that the early Christians knew about this passage in the Gospel of Mark and accepted it as genuine.

- Papias refers to Mark 16:18. He wrote around A.D. 100.
- Justin Martyr's first Apology quoted Mark 16:20 (A.D. 151).
- Irenaus in Against Heresies quoted Mark 16:13 and remarked on it (A.D. 180).
- Hippolytus in Peri Charismaton quoted Mark 16:18 and 19. In his homily on the heresy of Noetus, he refers to Mark 16:19. He wrote while he was Bishop of Portus (A.D. 190–227).
- Vicentius, Bishop of Thibari, quoted from 2 of the verses in the 7th Council of Carthage held under Cyprian (A.D. 256). Augustine, a century and a half later, in his reply, recited the words again.
- The apocryphal Acts of Pilate contains Mark 16:15–18 (thought to be written in the somewhere around A.D. 200).
- The Apostolic Constitutions clearly allude to 16:15 in two places and quote Mark 16:16 outright (thought to be written somewhere in the late third century or the early fourth century).

b. The overwhelming majority of ancient manuscripts do include this passage.

Guzik, D. (2013). Mark (Mk 16:9–20). Santa Barbara, CA: David Guzik.

Quotes From Early Church Fathers

Papias Quote - I shall not hesitate also to put into ordered form for you, along with the interpretations, everything I learned carefully in the past from the elders and noted down carefully, for the truth of which I vouch. For unlike most people I took no pleasure in those who told many different stories, but only in those who taught the truth. Nor did I take pleasure in those who reported their memory of someone else's commandments, but only in those who reported their memory of the commandments given by the Lord to the faith and proceeding from the Truth itself. And if by chance anyone who had been in attendance on the elders arrived, I made enquiries about the words of the elders—what Andrew or Peter had said, or Philip or Thomas or James or John or Matthew or any other of the Lord's disciples, and whatever Aristion and John the Elder, the Lord's disciples, were saying. For I did not think that information from the books would profit me as much as information from a living and surviving voice.

Papias Quote - The Elder used to say: Mark, in his capacity as Peter's interpreter, wrote down accurately as many things as he recalled from memory—though not in an ordered form—of the things either said or done by the Lord. For he neither heard the Lord nor accompanied him, but later, as I said, Peter, who used to give his teachings in the form of chreiai,[Notes 1] but had no intention of providing an ordered arrangement of the logia of the Lord. Consequently Mark did nothing wrong when he wrote down some individual items just as he related them from memory. For he made it his one concern not to omit anything he had heard or to falsify anything.

He is the same Yesterday – Today – Forever

And so here we are some 2,000 years later, studying the same word, and being moved and changed by it, just as our forefathers and brothers and sisters were. For..... He is the same, yesterday, today, and forever. That means His Word is too, and we have before us the revelation of His heart, and today He will, as He always does, reveal His heart to us.

Malachi 3:6 (NKJV) ⁶ "For I am the LORD, I do not change; Therefore you are not consumed, O sons of Jacob.

Hebrews 13:8 (NKJV) ⁸ Jesus Christ is the same yesterday, today, and forever.

God Says Come

Today we come and are gifted this Word from God Himself, His very heart opened before us, the calling to come near, be drawn to Him.

Matthew 11:28 (NKJV) ²⁸ Come to Me, all you who labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest.

The Word of God is Living and Powerful, and is ready, and will do a mighty work in our lives.

Hebrews 4:12 (NKJV) ¹² For the word of God is living and powerful, and sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing even to the division of soul and spirit, and of joints and marrow, and is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart.

In Every Study

- Who Is God? (How Great is He?)
- What Does He Think of Me? (How Wonderful Are His Thoughts Towards Me?)
- What Does He Want Me to Do?
- What Can I Boldly Request of Him?
- What Do I Need to Be on Guard of When I Leave Here Today?

Boldly come to the throne of grace, ask God to reveal Himself in a mighty way to you, and to do I might work in you, and through you.

Hebrews 4:16 (NKJV) ¹⁶ Let us therefore come boldly to the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy and find grace to help in time of need.

Mary Magdalene Sees the Risen Lord (16:9-11)

Mark 16:9 Now when He rose early on the first day of the week, He appeared first to Mary Magdalene, out of whom He had cast seven demons.

Rise Up for Purpose Taking Action

When He rose – I love the tense, the verb/word sense here, as it means “to rise up for the purpose of taking action” – Jesus is rising, to take action, and that action is to not just set the captives free, but to lead them into the

abundant spiritual filled life. The first day of the week is Sunday, and the point being made of the first day of the week, at daybreak, is it is a new day, a new beginning, a new life for all to be had. Oh Christian beloved, let us walk in this day, let us live in this new light, let have life and that more abundant.

John 10:10 (NKJV) ¹⁰ The thief does not come except to steal, and to kill, and to destroy. I have come that they may have life, and that they may have it more abundantly.

It's the 17 of Nissan

Now it is not just Sunday, it is the 17th of Nissan in the Jewish calendar, and here is why that is significant.

- 14th of Nissan – Feast of Passover
- 15th of Nissan – Feast of Unleavened Bread
- 17th of Nissan – Feast of First Fruits

It is the month of Nissan in the Jewish calendar.

- Passover - The 10th day of the month was the day Jesus rode into Jerusalem and was heralded the Messiah (see notes on the 70 sevens of Daniel). The Passover Lamb was to be brought into the house and stay and eat with the family until it was to be sacrificed on the 14th. The purpose was for the family to be attached to this precious innocent Lamb and see the consequences of sin.
- Feast of Unleavened Bread - The Scripture is clear that this feast is on the 15th. Leaven represents sin, corruption, decay, and they were to go throughout the house cleaning it of leaven before this day came. It was promised that Jesus would not be left in hell or see corruption, and that His body would not decay.
- The Feast of Firstfruits - Jesus is the firstfruits of the resurrection, He is our leader proving the perfect sacrifice was acceptable unto God, in that He rose again and was not left in the grave.

Leviticus 23:5 (NKJV) ⁵ On the fourteenth *day* of the first month at twilight *is* the LORD's Passover.

Leviticus 23:6–8 (NKJV) ⁶ And on the fifteenth day of the same month *is* the Feast of Unleavened Bread to the LORD; seven days you must eat unleavened bread. ⁷ On the first day you shall have a holy convocation; you shall do no customary work on it. ⁸ But you shall offer an offering made by fire to the LORD for seven days. The seventh day *shall be* a holy convocation; you shall do no customary work on it.' "

Psalms 16:10–11 (NKJV) ¹⁰ For You will not leave my soul in Sheol, Nor will You allow Your Holy One to see corruption. ¹¹ You will show me the path of life; In Your presence *is* fullness of joy; At Your right hand *are* pleasures forevermore.

Leviticus 23:9–14 (NKJV) ⁹ And the LORD spoke to Moses, saying, ¹⁰ "Speak to the children of Israel, and say to them: 'When you come into the land which I give to you, and reap its harvest, then you shall bring a sheaf of the firstfruits of your harvest to the priest. ¹¹ He shall wave the sheaf before the LORD, to be accepted on your behalf; on the day after the Sabbath the priest shall wave it. ¹² And you shall offer on that day, when you wave the sheaf, a male lamb of the first year, without blemish, as a burnt offering to the LORD. ¹³ Its grain offering *shall be* two-tenths of an ephah of fine flour mixed with oil, an offering made by fire to the LORD, for a sweet aroma; and its drink offering *shall be* of wine, one-fourth of a hin. ¹⁴ You shall eat neither bread nor parched grain nor fresh grain until the same day that you have brought an offering to your God; *it shall be* a statute forever throughout your generations in all your dwellings.

1 Corinthians 15:20 (NKJV) ²⁰ But now Christ is risen from the dead, *and* has become the firstfruits of those who have fallen asleep.

And here is another amazing fact, of the perfection of the Scriptures, and that is the 17th of Nissan is the same day the Ark rested, symbolizing in advance that Christ would be our rest, and our escape from judgement of God, our ark of salvation, our new beginning. So it is a new day Christian, it is a new beginning, the old things have passed away, all things have been made new.

(Genesis 8:4 NKJV) *Then the ark rested in the seventh month, the seventeenth day of the month, on the mountains of Ararat.*

2 Corinthians 5:17 (NKJV) ¹⁷ Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation; old things have passed away; behold, all things have become new.

Casting Out – Once and For All

The verb tense here of Jesus casting the demons out is, casting out once and for all. Meaning it is done, and so these demons could never come back to torture, bind and haunt Mary again. When Jesus casts demons out of your life, it is once and for all. And when you realized it, you will follow him to the ends of the Earth, just like Mary. You will be waiting at daybreak to see your Lord because you know what he's done, and what he's delivered. He casts those things out once-and-for-ever, and we need not leave in fear that they can come back and take ownership and possession of us again. For who the Son sets free, is free indeed. Beyond words..... The Spring Feast confirm, all the promises of God are yes and amen, and the punishment of sin has been dealt the death blow, and we are

free! And, our salvation is secure, a guarantee, our souls shall not see corruption, regardless of our past, regardless even of our today, our salvation is secure, because our salvation is upon Him, not us, once and forever all!

2 Corinthians 1:20–22 (NKJV) ²⁰ For all the promises of God in Him are Yes, and in Him Amen, to the glory of God through us. ²¹ Now He who establishes us with you in Christ and has anointed us is God, ²² who also has sealed us and given us the Spirit in our hearts as a guarantee.

John 8:31–32 (NKJV) ³¹ Then Jesus said to those Jews who believed Him, “If you abide in My word, you are My disciples indeed. ³² And you shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free.”

John 8:34–36 (NKJV) ³⁴ Jesus answered them, “Most assuredly, I say to you, whoever commits sin is a slave of sin. ³⁵ And a slave does not abide in the house forever, but a son abides forever. ³⁶ Therefore if the Son makes you free, you shall be free indeed.”

Mary Doesn't Recognize Jesus – Until She Hears her Name / Logic & Reason – Heart & Connection

Now, Mary doesn't recognize Jesus, thinks he's the gardener (John 20). He's in his resurrected body. And the last time she saw Jesus, he was brutalized and beyond recognition, we're told by the prophet Isaiah. So to see a man in a resurrected body, fresh skin, cleansed skin, combed hair, and the likes, he's not recognizable to her. She doesn't recognize him, even his voice she doesn't recognize until he says her name, Mary. And I can only just imagine it, gather it. It was the way that he said her name that has now bypassed the mind. All the logic that's churning right now is, where's Jesus? He's dead. Why is this gardener here? What happened to the body? All the logic is now skipped, and the way he said her name just gripped her heart and she knew it was her savior, Jesus Christ.

John 20:11–18 (NKJV) ¹¹ But Mary stood outside by the tomb weeping, and as she wept she stooped down and looked into the tomb. ¹² And she saw two angels in white sitting, one at the head and the other at the feet, where the body of Jesus had lain. ¹³ Then they said to her, “Woman, why are you weeping?” She said to them, “Because they have taken away my Lord, and I do not know where they have laid Him.” ¹⁴ Now when she had said this, she turned around and saw Jesus standing there, and did not know that it was Jesus. ¹⁵ Jesus said to her, “Woman, why are you weeping? Whom are you seeking?” She, supposing Him to be the gardener, said to Him, “Sir, if You have carried Him away, tell me where You have laid Him, and I will take Him away.” ¹⁶ Jesus said to her, “Mary!” She turned and said to Him, “Rabboni!” (which is to say, Teacher). ¹⁷ Jesus said to her, “Do not cling to Me, for I have not yet ascended to My Father; but go to My brethren and say to them, ‘I am ascending to My Father and your Father, and to My God and your God.’” ¹⁸ Mary Magdalene came and told the disciples that she had seen the Lord, and that He had spoken these things to her.

And if you will be still long enough, if I will be quiet long enough, and just sit at his feet, I'll hear him speak to me in such a way that it will go beyond all my logic and reasoning. I'm not saying to put that away, but there's a place he just wants to reach your heart. Kind of like us in a marriage, it's a heart connection along with the logical things that go along with it, but it's the heart that connects, and he'll connect to our heart the way he speaks to us.

Psalms 46:10 (NKJV) ¹⁰ Be still, and know that I am God; I will be exalted among the nations, I will be exalted in the earth!

We will be warmed and we'll be enraptured by his love. There was something the way he said it, and there'll be something the way he'll say it to you, and I think he's saying it right now. I think there's people, your heart's being melted and warmed. I think you're feeling him drawing you close to him, and I think you're feeling and sensing there's special going on right here and right now between you and your savior. Some things never change, isn't he beautiful?

She Calls Him Rabboni (Teacher) / The Bible is Revelation of God & His Heart

And what does she call him? Rabboni, it means teacher. Of all the words, all the titles, all the character descriptions she could have gave Jesus, she says teacher. And that doesn't surprise me, and I don't think it surprises anyone who is here today, who truly has been taught by him. Because the way he teaches, he teaches from the heart, he teaches straight from the heart so that he might reach our heart. And as we study him and we find out who he is, and are amazed, the creator of the universe. And then, as he reveals to us what he thinks of us, and he does that as he teaches us. And that's all that the Bible is. It's the revelation of Jesus Christ, it's the manifestation of the heart of God to us.

She Calls Him Teacher – Because That is Where Her Heart Connected with Him / Lord Teach Us

And I can see why Mary would call him teacher, in an endearing way, in a thanksgiving way, because when he teaches us, the revelation of his heart is revealed to us and his love manifested to us. All I can say is teach me more. Teach me again, teach me more.

Lord and Savior

I believe, the clearest tell-tale indication and sign of being a follower of Jesus Christ, is when we call Him, “Rabboni – Teacher”. Jesus is Lord and Savior. My Savior..... yes Jesus died for my sin, and “saved” me from the penalty/judgement of sin. But “Lord”, which means master, king, is when we say and He is my Rabboni, teacher, and His teaching, His Word, changes the way I live. So a question for all of us..... does Jesus’ teaching, change the way I live? Not just what I agree with, but all His teaching?

Acts 2:36 (NKJV) ³⁶ “Therefore let all the house of Israel know assuredly that God has made this Jesus, whom you crucified, both Lord and Christ.”

Mark 16:10 She went and told those who had been with Him, as they mourned and wept.

Mark 16:11 And when they heard that He was alive and had been seen by her, they did not believe.

Grown Men – Mourning for 3 Days / Thief of Unbelief / Forget His Promises

These men have been mourning for three days, and honestly, I've been in places where I've been in sorrow for more than three days, sometimes three weeks, some places, three years. And I can relate to them that the mourning and the grief is so heavy that I can't see the truth. My faith is weak. It's easy for the thief of unbelief to come and rob me, because yes, I've been cast down. Oh, my soul was heavy. It's so easy for me to not believe the promises of God and equally so, to simply just not remember the promises of God that He spoke, "I will rise again. Ray, I will be faithful to complete that which I started. I will accomplish this thing." And He's so gentle with me and He wants to be gentle with you today. He wants to correct you of your unbelief today, and He also wants to comfort you in your weak belief, in your mourning. And He wants to remind you who He is and what He is. He's God who rises from the dead. He's God who can walk out of the tomb and He's God who will ascend into heaven and lives to intercede for you.

Why Woman HaHa / Because they Were There

Many times the jokes, why did Jesus appear to the woman and have the angel tell the women about the resurrection and the jokes go of course, because you want to get the news out. Tell women and they'll tell two friends and they'll tell two friends and they'll tell two friends, good humor. But you know, really why did the angel appear to the women to tell the women? And once again, not a trick question, just real simple because the women were there and the men weren't. That's why the women were told. It's not a deep theological explanation behind it. It's just a very factual statement. The women were told because the women were there, the men were not told because the men were not there.

Jeremiah 29 – Seek & Find / James 4:8 – Draw Near / Can't hear the Lord? – Then Draw Near

One of the most powerful passages in the Bible, Jeremiah 29, "And you will see me and find me when you search for me with all of your heart." And that's a promise and the promise is the blade and proven here. When you seek him you will find him. And so there is a revelation and a revealing that comes when we seek him. And so there is a place on our side of making that effort, of making the journey, getting to the place regardless of the obstacles, tiredness and time pressures and busy-ness and all of those things. But when we seek him, we will find him. When we search for him with all of our heart. And some people say, "I don't hear the Lord speaking to me." To which the response is, "Are you seeking him?" As James will say, "Draw near to God and he will draw to you." He leaves the door open for us. You come and will surely speak and minister to you." Yeah, he does and he will come find you along the way.

Jeremiah 29:11–14 (NKJV) ¹¹ For I know the thoughts that I think toward you, says the LORD, thoughts of peace and not of evil, to give you a future and a hope. ¹² Then you will call upon Me and go and pray to Me, and I will listen to you. ¹³ And you will seek Me and find Me, when you search for Me with all your heart. ¹⁴ I will be found by you, says the LORD, and I will bring you back from your captivity; I will gather you from all the nations and from all the places where I have driven you, says the LORD, and I will bring you to the place from which I cause you to be carried away captive.

James 4:8 (NKJV) ⁸ Draw near to God and He will draw near to you. Cleanse your hands, you sinners; and purify your hearts, you double-minded.

But Still – God Will Come Find you

He did that for Peter. Peter wasn't there. Lord went and sought him out and found him, we're told. Private meeting, private conversation, how sweet that must've been. So that's the Lord will do it. For I think we see here the guaranteed promise. Seek him and you'll find him when you search for him with all of your heart. Draw near to him and he'll draw near to you. Christian, I pray a new season for all of our lives. We can draw a line here today and just say, today is that day. I'm going to seek you, I'm going to search for you with all my heart. Not a drive by prayer, not a 1-minute devotion. But the time of just sitting and waiting upon the Lord to hear what he has to say and let him minister to us.

Luke 24:33–35 (NKJV) ³³ So they rose up that very hour and returned to Jerusalem, and found the eleven and those who were with them gathered together, ³⁴ saying, "The Lord is risen indeed, and has appeared to Simon!" ³⁵ And they told about the things that had happened on the road, and how He was known to them in the breaking of bread.

Don't You Want More?

Really don't you want more? Truly, don't you want more? God says draw near, God says seek me, and you will.....

Jesus Appears to Two Disciples (16:12-13)

Mark 16:12 After that, He appeared in another form to two of them as they walked and went into the country.

Mark 16:13 And they went and told it to the rest, but they did not believe them either.

Road to Emmaus

- "We saw Him!" the ecstatic pair on the road to Emmaus exclaimed (Luke 24:35).
"No you didn't," said the downcast disciples.
- "We talked to Him!" said the travelers.
"You couldn't have," said His followers.

Hour after hour, day after day the disciples remained in a needless state of depression and despondency simply and solely because of unbelief.

Luke 24:13–32 (NKJV) ¹³ Now behold, two of them were traveling that same day to a village called Emmaus, which was seven miles from Jerusalem. ¹⁴ And they talked together of all these things which had happened. ¹⁵ So it was, while they conversed and reasoned, that Jesus Himself drew near and went with them. ¹⁶ But their eyes were restrained, so that they did not know Him. ¹⁷ And He said to them, "What kind of conversation is this that you have with one another as you walk and are sad?" ¹⁸ Then the one whose name was Cleopas answered and said to Him, "Are You the only stranger in Jerusalem, and have You not known the things which happened there in these days?" ¹⁹ And He said to them, "What things?" So they said to Him, "The things concerning Jesus of Nazareth, who was a Prophet mighty in deed and word before God and all the people, ²⁰ and how the chief priests and our rulers delivered Him to be condemned to death, and crucified Him. ²¹ But we were hoping that it was He who was going to redeem Israel. Indeed, besides all this, today is the third day since these things happened. ²² Yes, and certain women of our company, who arrived at the tomb early, astonished us. ²³ When they did not find His body, they came saying that they had also seen a vision of angels who said He was alive. ²⁴ And certain of those who were with us went to the tomb and found it just as the women had said; but Him they did not see." ²⁵ Then He said to them, "O foolish ones, and slow of heart to believe in all that the prophets have spoken! ²⁶ Ought not the Christ to have suffered these things and to enter into His glory?" ²⁷ And beginning at Moses and all the Prophets, He expounded to them in all the Scriptures the things concerning Himself. ²⁸ Then they drew near to the village where they were going, and He indicated that He would have gone farther. ²⁹ But they constrained Him, saying, "Abide with us, for it is toward evening, and the day is far spent." And He went in to stay with them. ³⁰ Now it came to pass, as He sat at the table with them, that He took bread, blessed and broke it, and gave it to them. ³¹ Then their eyes were opened and they knew Him; and He vanished from their sight. ³² And they said to one another, "Did not our heart burn within us while He talked with us on the road, and while He opened the Scriptures to us?"

When did their Heart Change?

Now when did these men's heart change? When Jesus taught them! His Word is the revelation of Himself, His heart.

Luke 24:32 (NKJV) ³² And they said to one another, "Did not our heart burn within us while He talked with us on the road, and while He opened the Scriptures to us?"

The Great Commission (16:14-18)

Mark 16:14 Later He appeared to the eleven as they sat at the table; and He rebuked their unbelief and hardness of heart, because they did not believe those who had seen Him after He had risen.

Mark 16:15 And He said to them, "Go into all the world and preach the gospel to every creature.

Rebukes Unbelief – Immediately Moves On to Action

Jesus rebukes them for their unbelief, but notice, immediately he moves on to let's get busy, let's get back onto the mission. I've corrected you now, course correction and adjustment has been made, let's get on with what we need to do and what I am calling you to do. Many people live in the continual correction and failure and then they never get into what they're called to do, and then hence they live in this continual cycle of depression and defeat, rather than just putting it away and saying, "Yes, amen, I accept what you're saying. Thank you for correcting me, caring enough to correct me, and now thank you for willingness to use me, even as flawed as I am."

God uses flawed vessels. It's just what he chooses to do. And of course, no one would be qualified if it was perfection, because there are none. And so we can take joy in the prerequisite is flawed vessels and I qualify, but of course I don't plan to remain that flawed vessel. I plan on taking God's word, and even when they are words of correction, and conforming myself into the image of Christ so I can minister more effectively. I can use my flaws and tell people I relate, but I surely don't want to say I'm flawed and no one needs to worry about it, because that's not the will of God either.

Grace is What Separates

What we see here is what separates Christianity from all other religions, and what we see here is grace. A God of grace, a God who takes failures, a God who takes those who have broken his law, and he forgives them through his finished work on the cross, he redeems them, he calls them his own, and then he even uses them. And that's just pure grace, and that's the heart and the message that is spoken and clothed out here. We just see grace, upon grace, upon grace, and the message that we take to this world is grace, upon grace, upon grace. May we praise God for his grace. May we be a gracious people. May we be a people who live in the power of grace, and may we be a people who extend the message of grace to people in a world that truly seeks one thing. And that is grace

Go to every Part of World

The verb tense here is an emphatic verb tense, which means don't skip no parts of the world. So this gospel is to the whole world.

It's a Teaching Gospel

Matthew gives us greater clarity on how we are to "preach" this Gospel, and that is we are to "teach" this Gospel along with preaching the Gospel. Preach is to declare, teach is to instruct. I am, we are, to declare the Gospel to all men, that man is separated from the Holy God because of sin. But as we do that, we also teach people about God..... who He is, what He thinks of man, His nature, His love!

Matthew 28:18–20 (NKJV) ¹⁸ And Jesus came and spoke to them, saying, "All authority has been given to Me in heaven and on earth. ¹⁹ Go therefore and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, ²⁰ teaching them to observe all things that I have commanded you; and lo, I am with you always, even to the end of the age." Amen.

Creature – Creation

The word seems a little strange here, 'creature', and of course we all would love to see our cats and dogs saved. I don't know about cats, but anyways, yeah. The word here is 'creature' and it seems a little odd for usage, but it means that which is created, of creation. And so it brings a personal touch back to the Gospel because I think it's easy for us to start grouping and categorizing people based on various reasons. Sadly, some of it's socioeconomic, some of it's because of an addiction or a lifestyle. Some of it is because of a nationality. Some of it is because of a religion and hear what the Lord is saying. "They're created. They're my creation regardless of what they're involved in. Currently present, they're my creation. I created them." Psalm 139, "In their mother's womb, they're unique to me and they're special to me." They're not an accident and they're not something of evolution. They're not something that just came about by being. They are special in the eyes of the Lord and God created them and He created them for a reason.

Psalm 139:13–18 (NKJV) ¹³ For You formed my inward parts; You covered me in my mother's womb. ¹⁴ I will praise You, for I am fearfully and wonderfully made; Marvelous are Your works, And that my soul knows very well. ¹⁵ My frame was not hidden from You, When I was made in secret, And skillfully wrought in the lowest parts of the earth. ¹⁶ Your eyes saw my substance, being yet unformed. And in Your book they all were written, The days fashioned for me, When as yet there were none of them. ¹⁷ How precious also are Your thoughts to me, O God! How great is the sum of them! ¹⁸ If I should count them, they would be more in number than the sand; When I awake, I am still with You.

Revelation chapter four, "For His good pleasure." Every man's created for God's pleasure. He wants a personal relationship with every man. He wants to experience every man. He wants to walk with every man, but sin enters in and it corrupts, and it distorts and it even mars God's creation and He wants to redeem that creation. He wants to bring the creation back to new of what it was created for, perfection and holiness and wholeness. And for relationship and oneness and communion with the one who... Here's the key, created them. And so your Gospel will be futile, it will be failure if your Gospel is anything other than looking at that person as God's special creation and God using you to redeem them, to bring them back in to what they were created for and that they are precious in the sight of the Lord.

Revelation 4:11 (NKJV) ¹¹ "You are worthy, O Lord, To receive glory and honor and power; For You created all things, And by Your will they exist and were created."

Beyond Gospel

This application goes beyond just the Gospel, it goes to that person you may be at odds with, the brother or sister you would rather steer clear of, it is every person, in every situation..... we are to look at them, and see God created them, they are His artwork, and they were created for His good pleasure..... so based on that, how should I see them?

Mark 16:16 He who believes and is baptized will be saved; but he who does not believe will be condemned.

Important Context (Believe & Baptism)

Verse 16 very important for context to dispel some of the errant teaching that baptism is a mandatory requirement for salvation. When Jesus said it's done, he meant it. It's done. It's been paid in full. The debt has been wiped out. Ephesians 2 tells us, "Not by works of righteousness so that no man can boast, but by grace, God's grace, which is God's riches at Christ's expense." And that's Christ paying in full. But some like to say you have to be baptized and they take this verse, but they miss the next verse because if baptism was a mandatory requirement, then the next verse would say, and if you don't believe or if you're not baptized, you will not be saved.

John 19:30 (NKJV) ³⁰ So when Jesus had received the sour wine, He said, "It is finished!" And bowing His head, He gave up His spirit.

Ephesians 2:7-9 (NKJV) ⁷ that in the ages to come He might show the exceeding riches of His grace in His kindness toward us in Christ Jesus. ⁸ For by grace you have been saved through faith, and that not of yourselves; it is the gift of God, ⁹ not of works, lest anyone should boast.

Titus 3:4-7 (NKJV) ⁴ But when the kindness and the love of God our Savior toward man appeared, ⁵ not by works of righteousness which we have done, but according to His mercy He saved us, through the washing of regeneration and renewing of the Holy Spirit, ⁶ whom He poured out on us abundantly through Jesus Christ our Savior, ⁷ that having been justified by His grace we should become heirs according to the hope of eternal life.

Marked

I think the powerful application here is baptism confirms and declares what's happening inwardly. Your belief is demonstrated by the action of baptism, which we definitely can appreciate here in the USA. But some things haven't changed for 2000 years in places like Syria and Iraq and Iran and Jerusalem at this time. When you were baptized and you were joining yourself to Christ publicly, first thing up is you could just about be sure you are going to be ostracized and kicked out of your family. You would be kicked out of your community there in Jerusalem. And people would do no business with you because they would consider you an heretic just like they did Jesus. Remember the hostility towards Jesus, the hostility towards his followers followed after shortly and never has truly ceased. You get baptized as we said in some of these countries today, you're signing your death warrant.

You will be marked and hence why I wear this shirt with the marking. And for some, when you commit your life to Christ they come and put this mark over your home and you pretty much get four choices. You could simply leave. And that means leave everything, your home, your wealth, your possessions, and get out of the country. Or you can convert to Islam and denounce your faith in Christ. Just telling you what the facts are. And you can read this for yourself for proof. Or third, you could pay a tax. Money always talks. Isn't that amazing? And you can pay a tax to continue living in that neighborhood. Or fourthly, stay, do none of the three above and be killed. Those are pretty much your four choices.

But if you've never been baptized and you want to make that public profession, you let us know and we will start arranging for a baptism, your baptism.

What is Cult

I was meeting with the elders this week and we were discussing what is a cult, and I always summarizes it real simply; the Gospel is Jesus Christ and Him Crucified, and if you add anything to that, or take anything away from that.... His finished work on the cross, then you are a false religion, a cult, or errant teacher. If you say, Jesus Christ and Him crucified on the cross, and good works, then you are (false teacher, cult, or errant teacher), if you say Jesus Christ and Him crucified on the cross and keep the sacraments, then you are a (false teacher, cult, or errant teacher). And even if you say Jesus Christ and Him crucified on the cross and baptism, then you are a (false teacher, cult, or errant teacher). When Jesus said it is done, He meant it. There is nothing you can add to, or take away, from the cross.

Paul Baptized No One

If baptism truly was salvation, surely Paul never would have said, "I thank God that I baptized none of you." He would have said just the opposite. So, we see baptism is not a requirement to be saved.

1 Corinthians 1:14–17 (NKJV) ¹⁴ I thank God that I baptized none of you except Crispus and Gaius, ¹⁵ lest anyone should say that I had baptized in my own name. ¹⁶ Yes, I also baptized the household of Stephanas. Besides, I do not know whether I baptized any other. ¹⁷ For Christ did not send me to baptize, but to preach the gospel, not with wisdom of words, lest the cross of Christ should be made of no effect.

Baptism Buries Old Person

Baptism, as seen in Romans 6, is the proclamation is I'm burying the old man, putting him to death, leaving him in the grave, and the person that is rising up out of that water is making the public profession that the new man lives for Christ. Ephesians were told, bury, kill, put the death, the old man and let the new man live.

Ephesians 4:17–24 (NKJV) ¹⁷ This I say, therefore, and testify in the Lord, that you should no longer walk as the rest of the Gentiles walk, in the futility of their mind, ¹⁸ having their understanding darkened, being alienated from the life of God, because of the ignorance that is in them, because of the blindness of their heart; ¹⁹ who, being past feeling, have given themselves over to lewdness, to work all uncleanness with greediness. ²⁰ But you have not so learned Christ, ²¹ if indeed you have heard Him and have been taught by Him, as the truth is in Jesus: ²² that you put off, concerning your former conduct, the old man which grows corrupt according to the deceitful lusts, ²³ and be renewed in the spirit of your mind, ²⁴ and that you put on the new man which was created according to God, in true righteousness and holiness.

Romans 6:1–14 (NKJV) ¹ What shall we say then? Shall we continue in sin that grace may abound? ² Certainly not! How shall we who died to sin live any longer in it? ³ Or do you not know that as many of us as were baptized into Christ Jesus were baptized into His death? ⁴ Therefore we were buried with Him through baptism into death, that just as Christ was raised from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life. ⁵ For if we have been united together in the likeness of His death, certainly we also shall be *in the likeness of His* resurrection, ⁶ knowing this, that our old man was crucified with *Him*, that the body of sin might be done away with, that we should no longer be slaves of sin. ⁷ For he who has died has been freed from sin. ⁸ Now if we died with Christ, we believe that we shall also live with Him, ⁹ knowing that Christ, having been raised from the dead, dies no more. Death no longer has dominion over Him. ¹⁰ For *the death* that He died, He died to sin once for all; but *the life* that He lives, He lives to God. ¹¹ Likewise you also, reckon yourselves to be dead indeed to sin, but alive to God in Christ Jesus our Lord. ¹² Therefore do not let sin reign in your mortal body, that you should obey it in its lusts. ¹³ And do not present your members *as* instruments of unrighteousness to sin, but present yourselves to God as being alive from the dead, and your members *as* instruments of righteousness to God. ¹⁴ For sin shall not have dominion over you, for you are not under law but under grace.

Confession – Displays Inward Condition

So, why the tie between belief and baptism is the statement that's being made that Matthew 10:32, "If you confess me before men, I will confess you before my father in heaven. But if you deny me before men, I will deny you before my father in heaven." It's not that baptism is going to save, but your public profession will prove out what is truly in your heart. If you're truly saved and Christ lives in you, it's hard to live that silent Christian life, to be ashamed of him or to be afraid of man. But I say it's not all going to happen at once and there's a working and a great work of God. He who began a good work will be faithful to complete it in you, and that's part of raising you up in the boldness to know what you believe and why you believe it, and to know what your calling is, and to fulfill your calling, and hence why we come to this thread, and this network, and this string again, the importance of the teaching of the word.

Matthew 10:32–33 (NKJV) ³² "Therefore whoever confesses Me before men, him I will also confess before My Father who is in heaven. ³³ But whoever denies Me before men, him I will also deny before My Father who is in heaven.

Believe – Put Full Weight Upon

I think one of the greatest definitions of believe is to put full trust in, to lean in totally, to put full weight on. And I think one of the things that can be real clear, if you're putting your trust in anything other than the full weight of the gospel of Jesus Christ, him crucified for your sin, rose again on the third day, proving, overcoming sin and death. If you put your trust in anything else, you're not saved. And so, there's the place of people put their trust in sacraments, or works, or other ways to heaven, even though Jesus said, and the verb tense is continually, "I am the only way. I am the only truth. I am the only life." Jesus is the only way to heaven is the summation of John 14:6. And if a man or a woman put their trust in anything else, then this declaration is being made, then you're not saved, and that's just a simple fact.

John 14:6 (NKJV) ⁶ Jesus said to him, "I am the way, the truth, and the life. No one comes to the Father except through Me.

I won't even put the word in and say probably not saved. I am going to put the word in based on this word, and what it means, and the structure of how it is in its context used throughout the scriptures. Anything else you add to it, then you're not saved. Not probably not saved, not saved. Bold statement, yes. Bold gospel, absolutely.

And when you go on to read the rest of this verse, it says, "And those who do not believe are damned." That's what it says. It's not for me to evaluate but to declare, and it is being declared right here exactly what it says. People get upset with that, to which I go, "But there's a way." It's not like there's no way. There is a way. So why are we upset about this when truly there's a way? Why not just take the way? Receive it, believe it, and live it, and then not have to worry of this verse?

Mark 16:17 And these signs will follow those who believe: In My name they will cast out demons; they will speak with new tongues;

Mark 16:18 they will take up serpents; and if they drink anything deadly, it will by no means hurt them; they will lay hands on the sick, and they will recover."

Abuse – Signs & Wonders Over the Teaching / Signs will Follow (not precede)

So we often see the abuse of the so called signs and wonders and the abuse comes in that people miss this thread that we've just studied of God's word is his revelation of himself to man. God's word is the very heart of God. And so when people miss that and they do something that is preemptive over the teaching of the word, where the word becomes secondary, then what you have here is this abuse. And so we see people promoting signs and wonders over the teaching of the word and that surely is backwards of God's intent. It says that signs will follow, not precede.

Signs and wonders always were to confirm the teaching of the word for starters. But secondly, what's being spoken of here is then when you're on mission for Jesus and for the gospel sake, he's given you a confirmation and a promise saying that, "I'm going to protect you. Nothing will touch you unless I allow it to." And I think that's something that needs to be spoken out in that there is a permissible will of God that doesn't necessarily mean that we will be exempt from pain and suffering, but we shall be untouchable unless God deems that we are to enter into this time of hardship.

Untouchable Unless God Deems It

I remember when I was moving from Florida to Lake Charles, Louisiana, my day journey of driving, I targeted out, I can make it as far as New Orleans. So I had a hotel arranged and I made it there and it was in November, daylight savings time. It was all ready dark at seven or eight o'clock but I surely didn't want to drive any further because I couldn't make it all the way. So I said, "I've never seen the heart of New Orleans and down there to waterfront, I'm just going to go for a walk down there and check it out, get something to eat and come back." Somewhat naive in a sense for sure. And I started to walk and I made it all of two blocks and I tell you, I felt and sensed a darkness that I've never felt and sensed before. As in a spiritual darkness. And I stopped and I said to myself, "Right now, I'm just being a tourist. I'm not being incited in the name of the gospel and I do not therefore have this covering. So it's best for me to just turn around, go back to the hotel and order room service." And that's exactly what I did.

Even though prior to that I had been in places in the mission field that were dark, that were dangerous, there was a risk associated. But in all those places, I never had a sense of fear or worry because I knew that I was going forth in the gospel sake.

And so this ties back to last week where I said there's a place where the excitement of taking a risk, and part of the excitement of risk is the possibility of failure, that makes it exciting. Like this could actually fail and it makes it as exciting of it could actually succeed. But here we have a balance of the risk in the context of knowing that we're being sent, empowered, and protected by the Lord. So balance that in your prayer life, when you make your decisions of where you're to go and what you need to do.

Greatest Miracle Changed life

The greatest miracle is the changed life! The changed life declares and demonstrates something supernatural has happened. I think many times we want God to show us signs and miss that we are to be signs!

Miracle for Everyone But Me

Just a last word on miracles. I want you to look at these disciples who didn't believe the report of the resurrection. They say they don't believe even in the excitement, and the witness of these people who have seen him. There's something here for us, and it's John 6:44, "No one comes to the Son unless drawn by the Father." Don't put the pressure on you in any way. But yes, we have that Great Commission to go tell the world. You tie these two verses together, the Great Commission and John 6, and really it boils down to this simple statement, "It's our responsibility to bring man to Christ, but it's God's responsibility to bring Christ to man." We can only bring them, and that's where it ends for us. I think it's easy for us to forget that, and put pressure on ourselves.

But I see equally as so, and you can see it in church organizations, and we need to constantly be on guard of it here even in our church. We put such a structure, and we put such a formality, and we put such an emphasis on man and our involvement, our associating, our linking, our speaking, our organization. That list goes on and on, and then we can forget, "Well, but it's still supernatural." You can do all those things, but it's still supernatural. Then on the other side there's a place that even if you don't do all those things to perfection, it's still you have to trust in supernatural work of God. So it's very freeing and relieving at that.

But here's something that is somewhat subtle until you think about it though. These guys, these gals, they've seen supernatural works of God. They saw miracles. They saw him heal the sick. Give out sight to the blind. Heal leprosy. Feed the multitude miraculously. Some of them even saw Lazarus get raised from the dead. But I think there's a place in all of us, and every one of us, is we believe the miracles up to a certain point, and then that's where we end. For whatever reason, we come to a place where we go, "Nah. This is an impossible thing." Well, if it's possible, then it's really not a miracle. Correct? The impossible is what makes it a miracle. These disciples, they've reached the point where they go, "Everything was possible, except up to this." That is, that he could raise from the dead for whatever the reason they have on this. Maybe because they thought he lost his power when they saw him beaten and brutalized, and he didn't save himself.

Maybe the extreme depth of fear because now it's personal for them. Like it's truly personal for them of, "The miracles were good for everyone else, but I don't think they're going to apply to me. See, he can raise Lazarus from the dead. He can heal this woman with the issue of blood for 12 years. He can give sight to the blind. But now see, it's me who's living in fear, and I need a resurrected Jesus to save me from what I'm fearing right now, and that is the Roman Empire coming. The Jewish leaders coming to kill me just as they did him." So whatever the reason, which I don't know, but what I clearly see here is, they've reached the limit on what they considered was the realm for a miracle to happen. I believe that happens to every one of us. I believe there's a place where we go, "Miracle here. Yes. Miracle for them. Yes. Miracle for me here? No. Miracle me personally? No. This is where I draw the line that God can perform miracles," and we literally let the thief of unbelief rob us.

Look, you got a prodigal, a thief of unbelief. Exercising your prayer life will be powerless. The thief of unbelief, exercising your addiction that binds you, or that marriage you say can ever be healed. That, "It is what it is. It'll

always be this dismal marriage," or you say, "I'll never be that bold witness for Christ." That's the thief of unbelief that then robs you of a miraculous power that could possibly be happening in your life.

God Says Come

Today we come and are gifted this Word from God Himself, His very heart opened before us, the calling to come near, be drawn to Him.

[Matthew 11:28 \(NKJV\)](#) ²⁸ *Come to Me, all you who labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest.*

The Word of God is Living and Powerful, and is ready, and will do a mighty work in our lives.

[Hebrews 4:12 \(NKJV\)](#) ¹² *For the word of God is living and powerful, and sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing even to the division of soul and spirit, and of joints and marrow, and is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart.*

In Every Study

- Who Is God? (How Great is He?)
- What Does He Think of Me? (How Wonderful Are His Thoughts Towards Me?)
- What Does He Want Me to Do?
- What Can I Boldly Request of Him?
- What Do I Need to Be on Guard of When I Leave Here Today?

Boldly come to the throne of grace, ask God to reveal Himself in a mighty way to you, and to do I might work in you, and through you.

[Hebrews 4:16 \(NKJV\)](#) ¹⁶ *Let us therefore come boldly to the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy and find grace to help in time of need.*

End of Study

Mark 16:19-20

Title: Jesus is Seated at the Right Hand of God; Why it Matters to You

Jesus Ascends to the Right Hand of the Father (16:19-20)

Mark 16:19–20 (NKJV) ¹⁹ So then, after the Lord had spoken to them, He was received up into heaven, and sat down at the right hand of God. ²⁰ And they went out and preached everywhere, the Lord working with *them* and confirming the word through the accompanying signs. Amen.

Intro/Recap

We finish our study of the life of Jesus Christ today in verses 19 and 20. The title of today's message is, "Jesus is Seated at the Right Hand of God; Why it Matters to You". It is vital to our understanding, it is crucial to our continual remembrance, and it is the key to living the abundant, powerful, victorious Christian life here on earth.

John 10:10 (NKJV) ¹⁰ *The thief does not come except to steal, and to kill, and to destroy. I have come that they may have life, and that they may have it more abundantly.*

Outline Mark 16:19-20:

- The Lord Rises Up (16:19a)
- The Lord Sits Down (16:19b)
- The Lord Goes with Them (16:20)

Come – Let us Hear what the Spirit Says to the Church

God says come, and sometimes I think we complicate that, and miss it, for He simply says come..... so let us come and hear what the Spirit says to us today.

Revelation 3:13 (NKJV) ¹³ *"He who has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches."*

God Says Come

Today we come and are gifted this Word from God Himself, His very heart opened before us, the calling to come near, be drawn to Him.

Matthew 11:28 (NKJV) ²⁸ *Come to Me, all you who labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest.*

The Word of God is Living and Powerful, and is ready, and will do a mighty work in our lives.

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Boldly come to the throne of grace, ask God to reveal Himself in a mighty way to you, and to do I might work in you, and through you.

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Outline Mark 16:19-20:

- The Lord Rises Up (16:19a)
- The Lord Sits Down (16:19b)
- The Lord Goes with Them (16:20)

The Lord Rises Up (16:19a)

Mark 16:19 So then, after the Lord had spoken to them, He was received up into heaven, and sat down at the right hand of God.

Resurrection

The ascension is as important as the resurrection. As we have studied All of Christianity hinges on the resurrection. If Jesus had died for our sin, then went straight to heaven, then we would sit here today and say “I think” our sins are forgiven. [Propitiation means to appease, to satisfy](#). There was, and there is, a penalty for sin, and that penalty is death. That death comes through “wrath”, the Holy God cannot look upon sin, and He judges it “thoroughly”. Wrath simply means punishment; but it is not simple, it is thorough. So Jesus traded places with us. The Passover was and is a picture of how it worked. Read all 5 chapters of Leviticus 1-5 to get a full detail of this. You get a lamb, lay your hand upon it, you would confess your sins to God, and the lamb would be killed, the blood of the lamb sprinkled upon you, and your sin would be “covered”. It was a type/picture, of the innocent lamb trading places with you, your guilt to the innocent, and the innocent to you. That is what Jesus did on the cross, your guilt to the innocent, He the innocent on to you. However how do we know that God accepted the trade? How do we know how long the trade was good for? See in the Old Testament, you continually had to come back to the temple, come back and make the sacrifice, because it was only temporal, it only covered your sin, couldn't totally “take it away”, and we know that is true, because the lambs died. But we know that God accepted the substitute, the trade, because Jesus died, and rose again!. Had Jesus stayed dead, we could only conclude that God the Father did not accept the trade. But a resurrected Christ proves the trade, the substitution, was accepted. [1 Corinthians 15:13–14 \(NKJV\)](#) ¹³ But if there is no resurrection of the dead, then Christ is not risen. ¹⁴ And if Christ is not risen, then our preaching is empty and your faith is also empty.

[1 Corinthians 15:15–19 \(NKJV\)](#) ¹⁵ Yes, and we are found false witnesses of God, because we have testified of God that He raised up Christ, whom He did not raise up—if in fact the dead do not rise. ¹⁶ For if the dead do not rise, then Christ is not risen. ¹⁷ And if Christ is not risen, your faith is futile; you are still in your sins! ¹⁸ Then also those who have fallen asleep in Christ have perished. ¹⁹ If in this life only we have hope in Christ, we are of all men the most pitiable.

[1 John 4:8–10 \(NKJV\)](#) ⁸ He who does not love does not know God, for God is love. ⁹ In this the love of God was manifested toward us, that God has sent His only begotten Son into the world, that we might live through Him. ¹⁰ In this is love, not that we loved God, but that He loved us and sent His Son to be the propitiation for our sins.

[John 3:36 \(NKJV\)](#) ³⁶ He who believes in the Son has everlasting life; and he who does not believe the Son shall not see life, but the wrath of God abides on him.”

[John 3:16–17 \(NKJV\)](#) ¹⁶ For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have everlasting life. ¹⁷ For God did not send His Son into the world to condemn the world, but that the world through Him might be saved.

The Ascension

The ascension puts the explanation point of the acceptance of the sacrifice, on the “debt satisfied”, for had the substitution not been satisfactory to the Holy God, Jesus would not have ascended into heaven. But now, we have full and final confirmation of that, and full and final confirmation that when we die, our sins are forgiven, and we are clean and forgiven, and we too will enter into heaven.

Imagine the Day He Left Heaven

Hard to believe Christmas is right around the corner for us again, and it truly is as the song declares, “the most wonderful time of the year”. I love Christmas, I love the joy of the season. Let's read the beloved Christmas passage (Matthew 1). Now, I want us to step back from the moment and consider that moment, that split second, before “the conception”. Jesus' earthly life began at conception, Matthew 1 declares it, and let be declared to the whole world, life begins at conception, an eternal soul enters at conception and lives forever, even after death (whether inside the womb or outside the womb). So back to “the moment”, imagine it..... Jesus is going to step out of heaven, into our time domain, and He is going to be physically separated from His Heavenly Father for the first time, and then a moment of time, 6 hours on the cross, 3 of them He will be “spiritually” separated from Him. The perfect Son, will be separated from His Father (for us let us not forget), for the first time since.... (and when that is, the “since” is beyond our human comprehension), but for the first time....”since” they will be separated. And then, consider what He is being separated unto do, and for, and to become.... The “sin of the world”.

Matthew 1:18–25 (NKJV) ¹⁸ Now the birth of Jesus Christ was as follows: After His mother Mary was betrothed to Joseph, before they came together, she was found with child of the Holy Spirit. ¹⁹ Then Joseph her husband, being a just *man*, and not wanting to make her a public example, was minded to put her away secretly. ²⁰ But while he thought about these things, behold, an angel of the Lord appeared to him in a dream, saying, “Joseph, son of David, do not be afraid to take to you Mary your wife, for that which is conceived in her is of the Holy Spirit. ²¹ And she will bring forth a Son, and you shall call His name Jesus, for He will save His people from their sins.” ²² So all this was done that it might be fulfilled which was spoken by the Lord through the prophet, saying: ²³ *“Behold, the virgin shall be with child, and bear a Son, and they shall call His name Immanuel,”* which is translated, “God with us.” ²⁴ Then Joseph, being aroused from sleep, did as the angel of the Lord commanded him and took to him his wife, ²⁵ and did not know her till she had brought forth her firstborn Son. And he called His name JESUS.

Hebrews 12:1–2 (NKJV) ¹ Therefore we also, since we are surrounded by so great a cloud of witnesses, let us lay aside every weight, and the sin which so easily ensnares us, and let us run with endurance the race that is set before us, ² looking unto Jesus, the author and finisher of *our* faith, who for the joy that was set before Him endured the cross, despising the shame, and has sat down at the right hand of the throne of God.

Jesus lived on this earth for approximately 33 years, that in our time dimension is a “gigasecond”, but from heavens time perspective when it come to separation between the Father and the Son, it was like an eternity. But willingly done, for me and for you.

Imagine Entering Heaven – Father & Son

Now imagine, this moment here, this very moment, when the Son returns into heaven. Imagine, like a victorious soldier returning home from battle, Jesus entering the halls of heaven. What a moment that was!

Matthew 25:23 (NKJV) ²³ *His lord said to him, ‘Well done, good and faithful servant; you have been faithful over a few things, I will make you ruler over many things. Enter into the joy of your lord.’*

Someday It Will be My Turn to Enter

And some day, it will be our turn, praise the Lord,

Matthew 25:23 (NKJV) ²³ *His lord said to him, ‘Well done, good and faithful servant; you have been faithful over a few things, I will make you ruler over many things. Enter into the joy of your lord.’*

The Lord Sits Down (16:19b)

Mark 16:19 So then, after the Lord had spoken to them, He was received up into heaven, and sat down at the right hand of God.

Jesus’ Enemies His Footstool

The significance of Jesus sitting at the right hand of God, confirms His enemies are defeated, death and sin, just as prophesied:

Psalms 110:1 (NKJV) ¹ *The LORD said to my Lord, “Sit at My right hand, Till I make Your enemies Your footstool.”*

1 Corinthians 15:50–58 (NKJV) ⁵⁰ Now this I say, brethren, that flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God; nor does corruption inherit incorruption. ⁵¹ Behold, I tell you a mystery: We shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed—⁵² in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trumpet. For the trumpet will sound, and the dead will be raised incorruptible, and we shall be changed. ⁵³ For this corruptible must put on incorruption, and this mortal must put on immortality. ⁵⁴ So when this corruptible has put on incorruption, and this mortal has put on immortality, then shall be brought to pass the saying that is written: “Death is swallowed up in victory.” ⁵⁵ “O Death, where is your sting? O Hades, where is your victory?” ⁵⁶ The sting of death is sin, and the strength of sin is the law. ⁵⁷ But thanks be to God, who gives us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ. ⁵⁸ Therefore, my beloved brethren, be steadfast, immovable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, knowing that your labor is not in vain in the Lord.

High Priest – Offer Sacrifice / Intercession

Luke's gospel tells us that Jesus blessed them. And this is the priestly blessing. And this is Jesus' role as the high priest. And as the high priest would bless the people with the word of God. Bless the people with the heart of God. And now the transitioning to his role as high priest as he sits at the right hand of the throne of God. We're told that he lives to make intercession. Jesus' main ministry now in heaven is the ministry of intercession for you and for I. This is an amazing thought if we can just ponder it for about a moment and think upon it. Jesus Christ is praying for you right now. The high priest would make sacrifice on behalf of man and the high priest would intercede on behalf of man. And here we see a strong transition from Jesus' ministry as the high priest who makes the sacrifice for a man before God. Amazingly, he himself, Jesus being the very sacrifice, and now he transitions into the predominant role in his priestly ministry. And that is as the high priest praying and interceding.

Jesus' earthly ministry we read of it, the summation of what his ministry was in Luke chapter four and here he is as he arrives in heaven, he arrives as the victorious general. He arrives as the victorious conquer. He arrives and he's leading captivity free. Those who are once captive, those who were once blind, he now is leading the processional as the first fruit. He's bringing them into the heavenly kingdom. The Book of Hebrews opens up the depths of Jesus being our High Priest, and His power at the right hand of God:

Hebrews 10:11–14 (NKJV) ¹¹ And every priest stands ministering daily and offering repeatedly the same sacrifices, which can never take away sins. ¹² But this Man, after He had offered one sacrifice for sins forever, sat down at the right hand of God, ¹³ from that time waiting till His enemies are made His footstool. ¹⁴ For by one offering He has perfected forever those who are being sanctified.

Hebrews 12:1–2 (NKJV) ¹ Therefore we also, since we are surrounded by so great a cloud of witnesses, let us lay aside every weight, and the sin which so easily ensnares us, and let us run with endurance the race that is set before us, ² looking unto Jesus, the author and finisher of our faith, who for the joy that was set before Him endured the cross, despising the shame, and has sat down at the right hand of the throne of God.

And 1 Peter tells us of what happens with Jesus sitting at the right hand of the throne of God. It speaks of the power that he has and now we need to tie together his power through his intercession onto us as we work in fellowship, in communion and be one with him. He is flowing power to us as he intercedes for us.

1 Peter 3:21–22 (NKJV) ²¹ There is also an antitype which now saves us—baptism (not the removal of the filth of the flesh, but the answer of a good conscience toward God), through the resurrection of Jesus Christ, ²² who has gone into heaven and is at the right hand of God, angels and authorities and powers having been made subject to Him.

Jesus Lives to Make Intercession

Jesus lives to make intercession for us, Jesus is praying for you! We will talk more of that and what it means in the verse, as the two verses tie together on what Jesus is doing in this life of intercession.

Hebrews 7:24–25 (NKJV) ²⁴ But He, because He continues forever, has an unchangeable priesthood. ²⁵ Therefore He is also able to save to the uttermost those who come to God through Him, since He always lives to make intercession for them.

Romans 8:33–39 (NKJV) ³³ Who shall bring a charge against God's elect? It is God who justifies. ³⁴ Who is he who condemns? It is Christ who died, and furthermore is also risen, who is even at the right hand of God, who also makes intercession for us. ³⁵ Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? Shall tribulation, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or peril, or sword? ³⁶ As it is written: "For Your sake we are killed all day long; We are accounted as sheep for the slaughter." ³⁷ Yet in all these things we are more than conquerors through Him who loved us. ³⁸ For I am persuaded that neither death nor life, nor angels nor principalities nor powers, nor things present nor things to come, ³⁹ nor height nor depth, nor any other created thing, shall be able to separate us from the love of God which is in Christ Jesus our Lord.

Romans 8:27–30 (NKJV) ²⁷ Now He who searches the hearts knows what the mind of the Spirit is, because He makes intercession for the saints according to the will of God. ²⁸ And we know that all things work together for good to those who love God, to those who are the called according to His purpose. ²⁹ For whom He foreknew, He also predestined to be conformed to the image of His Son, that He might be the firstborn among many brethren. ³⁰ Moreover whom He predestined, these He also called; whom He called, these He also justified; and whom He justified, these He also glorified.

The Lord Goes with Them (16:20)

Mark 16:20 And they went out and preached everywhere, the Lord working with them and confirming the word through the accompanying signs. Amen.

The Lord Working With Them

The disciples didn't just work for the Lord, "the Lord working with them..." He was "confirming the word through signs..." This is Christian ministry. It's not just serving God - it's partnering with Him. Joining forces. We work together to fulfill the great commission.

By Being With Them – and Empowering Them

The Lord worked with them, by being with them, "Lo I am with you always" (Matthew 28:20), and by empowering them through the Baptism of the Holy Spirit (Acts 2), just as He promised them He would (Luke 24, Acts 1). Now we know the ascension happened 40 days after the resurrection (Luke 24), and the baptism of the Spirit ten days after that (Acts 2).

Matthew 28:18–20 (NKJV) ¹⁸ And Jesus came and spoke to them, saying, "All authority has been given to Me in heaven and on earth. ¹⁹ Go therefore and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, ²⁰ teaching them to observe all things that I have commanded you; and lo, I am with you always, even to the end of the age." Amen.

Luke 24:49–53 (NKJV) ⁴⁹ "Behold, I send the Promise of My Father upon you; but tarry in the city of Jerusalem until you are endued with power from on high." ⁵⁰ And He led them out as far as Bethany, and He lifted up His hands and blessed them. ⁵¹ Now it came to pass, while He blessed

them, that He was parted from them and carried up into heaven. ⁵² And they worshiped Him, and returned to Jerusalem with great joy, ⁵³ and were continually in the temple praising and blessing God. Amen.

Acts 1:1–3 (NKJV) ¹ The former account I made, O Theophilus, of all that Jesus began both to do and teach, ² until the day in which He was taken up, after He through the Holy Spirit had given commandments to the apostles whom He had chosen, ³ to whom He also presented Himself alive after His suffering by many infallible proofs, being seen by them during forty days and speaking of the things pertaining to the kingdom of God.

Acts 1:8 (NKJV) ⁸ But you shall receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you; and you shall be witnesses to Me in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the end of the earth.”

Acts 2:1–4 (NKJV) ¹ When the Day of Pentecost had fully come, they were all with one accord in one place. ² And suddenly there came a sound from heaven, as of a rushing mighty wind, and it filled the whole house where they were sitting. ³ Then there appeared to them divided tongues, as of fire, and *one* sat upon each of them. ⁴ And they were all filled with the Holy Spirit and began to speak with other tongues, as the Spirit gave them utterance.

Feast Pentecost – The First fruit of the Harvest

Last week we discussed the Feast of Passover and Feast of Unleavened Bread; and now the significance of the next feast is the Feast of Pentecost, which happened 50 (pente) days after the Passover. It was the celebration of the spring harvest.

Matthew 9:37–38 (NKJV) ³⁷ Then He said to His disciples, “The harvest truly *is* plentiful, but the laborers *are* few. ³⁸ Therefore pray the Lord of the harvest to send out laborers into His harvest.”

Acts 2:1–4 (NKJV) ¹ When the Day of Pentecost had fully come, they were all with one accord in one place. ² And suddenly there came a sound from heaven, as of a rushing mighty wind, and it filled the whole house where they were sitting. ³ Then there appeared to them divided tongues, as of fire, and *one* sat upon each of them. ⁴ And they were all filled with the Holy Spirit and began to speak with other tongues, as the Spirit gave them utterance.

Ephesians 1 – Same Power

The same power that rose Jesus from the grave is given to each and every believer. That is both for our personal lives, and our personal ministries.

Ephesians 1:19–23 (NKJV) ¹⁹ and what is the exceeding greatness of His power toward us who believe, according to the working of His mighty power ²⁰ which He worked in Christ when He raised Him from the dead and seated Him at His right hand in the heavenly places, ²¹ far above all principality and power and might and dominion, and every name that is named, not only in this age but also in that which is to come. ²² And He put all things under His feet, and gave Him to be head over all things to the church, ²³ which is His body, the fullness of Him who fills all in all.

What Does this Mean – Specifically Since Jesus is Right Hand of God

So now, let's follow this thread through what that means to us, and specifically what it means now that Jesus sits at the right hand of God, and lives to make intercession for us.

New Section – Public Ministry / Final 3 Years / His Mission Statement / When we setup Church

A study through the Book of Luke beginning in chapter 4, as Jesus now enters into the public ministry, it is the final three years of our Saviors Life, and He begins to call all men to follow Him for eternal life. What we will read in our passage today is what I call “The Mission Statement of Jesus Christ”; Jesus will declare to us what His mission was when He came. When we set up this Church, when we incorporated it with the State of Maryland, the first article (statement) in the official State documents was our mission statement. We stated why we came, what our purpose is, what our goal is, so it was clear to all exactly why we existed. This is what Jesus does very clearly for us in the passage before us.

His Mission Statement – See God’s heart for Us – Passion – Love / What Our Hearts should Be

In this mission statement, we will see God’s heart towards us, what His passion is towards us, what He wants to do for us; we will read a depth of love that this world does not know, and cannot provide, and we will be shown the heart that we are to have for others (regardless who they are, and where they are with the Lord).

Let’s Read the Mission Statement

Let me read the heart of the passage, the heart of God, the mission statement of Jesus Christ before we get going into our verse-by-verse study.

Luke 4:14–22 (NKJV) ¹⁴ Then Jesus returned in the power of the Spirit to Galilee, and news of Him went out through all the surrounding region. ¹⁵ And He taught in their synagogues, being glorified by all. ¹⁶ So He came to Nazareth, where He had been brought up. And as His custom was, He went into the synagogue on the Sabbath day, and stood up to read. ¹⁷ And He was handed the book of the prophet Isaiah. And when He had opened the book, He found the place where it was written: ¹⁸ *“The Spirit of the LORD is upon Me, Because He has anointed Me To preach the gospel to the poor; He has sent Me to heal the brokenhearted, To proclaim liberty to the captives And recovery of sight to the blind, To set at liberty those who are oppressed; ¹⁹ To proclaim the acceptable year of the LORD.”* ²⁰ Then He closed the book, and gave it back to the attendant and sat down. And the eyes of all who were in the synagogue were fixed on Him. ²¹ And He began to say to them, “Today this Scripture is fulfilled in your hearing.” ²² So all bore witness to Him, and marveled at the gracious words which proceeded out of His mouth. And they said, “Is this not Joseph’s son?”

Jesus’ Mission Statement

- To preach the gospel to the poor,
- To heal the brokenhearted,
- To proclaim liberty to the captives,
- To give recovery of sight to the blind,
- To set at liberty those who are oppressed,
- To proclaim the acceptable year of the Lord.

This is why the Father Sent the Son / Your Need – was His Mission / Your Heart – is His Passion

Verse 18 – He has sent Me – This is why the Father sent the Son, to preach the gospel to the poor, to heal the brokenhearted, to proclaim liberty to the captives, to give recovery of sight to the blind, to set at liberty those who are oppressed, and to proclaim the acceptable year of the Lord. **Your need, was and is His mission!** Your heart, is His passion; eyes to see is His desire; broken chains, freedom, new life – at whatever the cost, even if it meant His life.....What a God of love, what a God who is in love with you, what a God who right now today says to you, what is your need today, bring it to Me and more so, bring yourself to Me that I might hold you, comfort you, and speak to you My love and My passion for you.

When Jesus Intercedes for You – Here is What He Prays

When Jesus prays for you, here is what He is praying, for this was what He came to do for you.

- To preach the gospel to the poor,
- To heal the brokenhearted,
- To proclaim liberty to the captives,
- To give recovery of sight to the blind,
- To set at liberty those who are oppressed,
- To proclaim the acceptable year of the Lord.

As the Father has sent Me – So I send You

Verse 18 – He has sent Me – Just as Jesus was sent, so He sends us. In John 20 Jesus says, “as the Father has sent me, I also send you.” The word for sent in both Luke 4 and John 20 are the word “apostello” it is where we get our English word “apostle”. We look at it as a title, a position, but it really is a “commission”. The word simply means, “sent out”. And so we are.

John 20:21–23 (NKJV) ²¹ So Jesus said to them again, “Peace to you! As the Father has sent Me, I also send you.” ²² And when He had said this, He breathed on them, and said to them, “Receive the Holy Spirit. ²³ If you forgive the sins of any, they are forgiven them; if you retain the sins of any, they are retained.”

Pneuma – Breath of God / Anointed – Furnished with Power – Saturated / I’ve asked 10K times

In both passages we see the same “formula” (if you would), as Jesus says the Spirit of the Lord is upon Him, and He is anointed. The word for “Spirit” is “pneuma” and it means “wind, to breath upon”, and the word “anointed” means “furnishing with power”, it also means to fully soak and saturate (we saw that when they would pour the oil upon a person or instrument for the dedication to God’s service). How I ten thousand times have ask the Lord to anoint me for service, to breath His Spirit upon me and saturate me with Himself for His service; but this week as I

sat and fellowshiped with Him and His Word, asked the Holy Spirit to teach me (John 14:16-17), the Lord opened this Scripture up in a fresh and powerful way to me.

God Revealed – This is what it means to be Anointed

God through the Scriptures, clearly revealed to me what it means to be anointed, what a person who is anointed does, when I will know that the anointing of the Lord is upon me, for my heart will be a heart that desires - - -

- To preach the gospel to the poor,
- To heal the brokenhearted,
- To proclaim liberty to the captives,
- To give recovery of sight to the blind,
- To set at liberty those who are oppressed,
- To proclaim the acceptable year of the Lord.

This is His Mission Statement – Needs to be Our / Whatever you Doing for the Lord – This is Mission

This is Jesus' mission statement, and as sent out ones it needs to be mine, and it needs to be yours.....Whatever you are doing for the Lord, be that Sunday School Teacher, Street Evangelism, Film Ministry, parenting, marriage, your mission statement is this (Luke 4:18-19), your means and places of fulfilling that mission statement is what varies, but the mission inside every ministry is the same. It is a life of grace, of tenderness, of caring, of going out of the way, it is a life of love – to every person God places in our life and on our path. In the hometown, and the outer parts of the world.

- To preach the gospel to the poor,
- To heal the brokenhearted,
- To proclaim liberty to the captives,
- To give recovery of sight to the blind,
- To set at liberty those who are oppressed,
- To proclaim the acceptable year of the Lord.

He Intercedes and Prays – That we Will Have His Heart

When Jesus is interceding and praying for us, His prayer is that we will have His heart.

That we will have a heart for “His Creation”, everyone dear and precious to Him.

[Mark 16:15 \(NKJV\)](#) ¹⁵ And He said to them, “Go into all the world and preach the gospel to every creature.

Luke 4:18 “The Spirit of the LORD is upon Me, Because He has anointed Me To preach the gospel to the poor; He has sent Me to heal the brokenhearted, To proclaim liberty to the captives And recovery of sight to the blind, To set at liberty those who are oppressed;

Luke 4:19 To proclaim the acceptable year of the LORD.”

Preach – Glad Tidings / Good news – God has Come / I have news for the Poor

[Verse 18 - To preach the gospel to the poor](#), - preach (euaggelizo – English for evangelize), and it means to bring glad tidings, joyful tidings. Evangelism isn't doom and gloom, it is good news! The good news that God has come, that God loves you so much that He has come. Jesus says I have good news, I have good news to the poor, I have come, I have been sent from the Father to them.

Physical Illustration to make Spiritual Point / Poor – reduced to Begging / Feel Forgotten

In each point Jesus will take a physical illustration and use them to make a spiritual point; the word poor means “reduced to begging, empty, destitute of wealth, influence, position, honor. The poor, the downtrodden, the outcast, the unattractive, and the forgotten people, this is who Jesus looked for, whom the Father sent Him to reach out to. Do you feel forgotten, do you feel there is something missing in your life, do you feel this world has left you broke and hopeless, does your heart say I wish someone or something could come and fill this emptiness of my life. Jesus' mission statement is to do just that, to take you from poverty to the riches of God blessings, a

personal relationship with Him. For those have been, remember what it was like, and remember how it felt to be filled with His love and in time you celebrated “He came for me – He loves me”.

His Mission Statement – Thus Ours / As Father Sent Me – so I send You

This was His mission statement, and thus it is ours; for as the Father has sent me, so I send you.

John 20:21 (NKJV) ²¹ So Jesus said to them again, “Peace to you! As the Father has sent Me, I also send you.”

May we remember the Desperate, Empty, Destitute, Forgotten, and Hopeless / Bring Glad Tidings

And remember, there are those who are desperate, destitute, feel forgotten and hopeless.....they are all around us, who will bring the glad tidings, who will tell them, He has come!

Heal – to Make Whole / Broken – Shattered / Heart – Center of Circulation / People just hanging On

[Verse 18 - To heal the brokenhearted](#), - the word heal means “to make whole”, for the word broken means “broken into shivers, break into pieces”, and the word heart means “center of circulation”. Jesus’ mission was to come and make whole hearts that were broken into pieces, and because of the fractures the circulation was disrupted from smooth flow. How many people are just hanging on for the day because their hearts are broken, their lives seem to be in pieces, they see all the pieces, but they don’t know nor have the power to put the pieces back together again so their lives be whole again. Life and love can’t seem to flow through their bodies anymore. A few years ago I blew out my knee; I thought it would heal on its own but it just didn’t, and every day for a year I would have an ache in my knee. I started to go to physical therapy and the doctor immediately put his finger on a large portion of scar tissue on my ligament. He said that the tissues of the ligament ran vertically, but the scar tissue was laying horizontally, it was like a mat of fiber now, and thus when the blood pumped through my body, it could not flow freely through my knee ligament, and the only thing that could heal the damage was the blood (as it contains the healing properties), but the blood could not get through the scarring. So the doctor began to apply heat, electro pulses to warm the area up, and then he would run his thumbs over the area to break up the scar tissue so the blood would flow through the ligament and bring with it healing and restoration.

Jesus gives Picture of Great Physician / Setting the Broken Bone / My Mission statement why I Came

Jesus gives us a tender look at Himself as the Great Physician. A physician that come to ailing and broken person, and performs surgery on them. He comes to the broken bone and He gently puts His hands upon it, He begins to use His touch to set it straight again, His bedside manner is one of gentleness and warmth. He looks into the eyes of the patient, He gives a word of comfort that He will make things whole again. He sets the broken bone, He wraps the broken bone, and He comes back again and again, changing the bandages, running His hands upon the fracture, and He does it as often and as long as it takes to bring complete healing. It is My mission statement, it is why I came He declares, I know the ills and the hurts of the world, but I Am your great Physician, and I can make all things whole again. I can give you love again, I can give you hope again, I can give you all these because it is who I am, and I give you Myself.

His Mission Statement – Thus Ours / As Father Sent Me – so I send You

This was His mission statement, and thus it is ours; for as the Father has sent me, so I send you.

John 20:21 (NKJV) ²¹ So Jesus said to them again, “Peace to you! As the Father has sent Me, I also send you.”

Have You set Out to set broken Bones / A Gentle Touch – Warm Embrace – a Comforter

Have you set out to set some broken bones, some broken hearts, are you asking the Lord to be that gentle touch, that warm embrace, that comforter – for those who are brokenhearted?

Proclaim – to Herald / Boston Herald – Report the News / Herald the Captives are Free / Release the Guilty

[Verse 18 - To proclaim liberty to the captives](#), - to proclaim means to “herald”; we call them newspapers, but in the early days, and many still today, call them “heralds” (Boston Herald, Miami Herald, Zimbabwe Herald). They simply reported news that was truth. Jesus heralds that the captives are free. The immediate picture is a person imprisoned, held captive. The Jews under Babylon and then Roman occupation had many citizens wrongly imprisoned, held captive because they stood up against the tyrant. The Jews wanted their Messiah to deliver them from the oppressor and occupier. But this word, it means to release from prison the guilty – it means to grant a

pardon, remove the penalty for breaking the law, it was setting the guilty free. It is the whole message of the gospel, we were guilty, God forgave us through the Son that He sent. Jesus came to herald, state a truth, all the guilty I will set free.

His Mission Statement – Thus Ours / As Father Sent Me – so I send You

This was His mission statement, and thus it is ours; for as the Father has sent me, so I send you.

John 20:21 (NKJV) ²¹ So Jesus said to them again, "Peace to you! As the Father has sent Me, I also send you."

We are to Herald to the Guilty / Little more Personal – the Guilty who Hurt You

We are to herald the truth of this gospel, that Jesus has come to set the captives (the guilty) free, to tell people that they can be freed from their sin; maybe you never considered this either, but some people war against God because they know they are guilty but think He won't forgive them, and thus they feel there can never be peace between them. But how about something even more personal and closer to your heart, have you conveyed this very same truth to the person that has hurt you, the person who is guilty before you, have you heralded the truth to them, that you forgive them, the past is over, and they no longer have to live captive to what they did against you in the past? They may continue the war against you because they know they are guilty and think there will never be peace between you, because they don't know what God has done in you, that you carry and live the same mission statement as Him, to proclaim liberty to the captives.

Recovery – Means they Once Saw / Jesus will Receive the Backslider

[Verse 18 - To give recovery of sight to the blind](#), - recover, means that once saw, but now they don't. Jesus heralds that He has come to give second, thirds, and ten thousands chances. That He will receive the backslider, He will receive the person who once saw Him so clearly, but has become blinded by the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life.

His Mission Statement – Thus Ours / As Father Sent Me – so I send You

This was His mission statement, and thus it is ours; for as the Father has sent me, so I send you.

John 20:21 (NKJV) ²¹ So Jesus said to them again, "Peace to you! As the Father has sent Me, I also send you."

We can become Frustrated with them – Why can't they See It / Tell them the 1001 Time

Of the spiritually blind, we are tempted to say in frustration, "Why can't they see it? How could spiritual truth be any clearer?" We can say I've told them this a thousand times, they just don't get it. Beloved, tell then tell them 1001 times, don't weary of telling them, but always tell them in the same heart, same passion, and same compassion as this mission statement.

Oppressed means Crushed – Broken – Lose Vitality / They Beaten and Can't get up / Addiction - Depression

[Verse 18 - To set at liberty those who are oppressed](#), - The difference between the captive (prior sentence) and oppressed, is that the word for oppressed here means "crushed, broken into pieces, to lose its vitality". The picture is someone who is simply beaten, they feel this is life, it will never change, they will never get out from under this weight, this burden, that they are under. There are countless that feel it is no use they will never overcome their addiction, their depression, their past! They feel they are damaged goods, they feel nobody wants them, but Jesus heralds this truth, I have come and I will, and I can. Whatever is crushing you, Jesus says I will and I can.

His Mission Statement – Thus Ours / As Father Sent Me – so I send You

This was His mission statement, and thus it is ours; for as the Father has sent me, so I send you.

John 20:21 (NKJV) ²¹ So Jesus said to them again, "Peace to you! As the Father has sent Me, I also send you."

Crying Out for "Those Nobody Wants"

(Story from a Pastor – Leadership Magazine) The Tuesday night prayer meeting at Brooklyn Tabernacle felt like skydiving into a tornado, exhausting and exhilarating all at once. I'd read about the meeting in Pastor Jim Cymbala's book Fresh Wind, Fresh Fire, but nothing prepared me for the event itself: 3,500 God-hungry people storming heaven for two hours.

Afterward, my friend and I went out to dinner with the Cymbalas. In the course of the meal, Jim turned to me and said, "Mark, do you know what the number one sin of the church in America is?" I wasn't sure, and the question was rhetorical anyhow. "It's not the plague of internet pornography that is consuming our men. It's not that the divorce rate in the church is roughly the same as society at large."

Jim named two or three other candidates for the worst sin, all of which he dismissed. "The number one sin of the church in America," he said, "is that its pastors and leaders are not on their knees crying out to God, 'Bring us the drug-addicted, bring us the prostitutes, bring us the destitute, bring us the gang leaders, bring us those with AIDS, bring us the people nobody else wants, whom only you can heal, and let us love them in your name until they are whole.'"

I had no response. I was undone. He had laid me bare, found me out, and exposed my fraudulence. I was the chief of sinners. I had never prayed, not once, for God to bring such people to my church. So I went home and repented. I stopped sinning. I began to cry out for "those nobody wants."

Reference is to Year of Jubilee / Economic Balance / Their Fault or Misfortunes

[Verse 19 - To proclaim the acceptable year of the Lord.](#) - The reference here is the "Year of Jubilee" described in Leviticus 25. Every seventh year was a "Sabbatical year" for the nation, when the land was allowed to rest; and every fiftieth year (after seven Sabbaticals) was set apart as the "Year of Jubilee." The main purpose of this special year was the balancing of the economic system: slaves were set free and returned to their families, property that was sold reverted to the original owners, and all debts were canceled. The land lay fallow as man and beast rested and rejoiced in the Lord. Some people lost their land and home because they fell behind to their creditors and couldn't pay their debt. Some people owed so much they could only pay the debt off by becoming a servant in the home of their creditor. Sometimes it was because of their own fault, sometimes by no fault of their own, just a series of misfortunes, but none the less, they have lost home and possession, and even their own freedom.

Began with blowing of Shofar on Day of Atonement / High Priest goes into Holy of Holies

The Year of Jubilee began with the blowing of the shofar (a trumpet like instrument that was made from a ram's horn) on the Day of Atonement. The Day of Atonement was the day (the one and only day) that the High Priest would enter the Holy of Holies in the Temple and represent the people of the Nation of Israel before the Lord, and seek forgiveness for their sins.

Primary Purpose – Reunite Owner with Possessions

The primary purpose of the Year of Jubilee was to reunite the owner back to their possessions. Jesus has come to reunite you to the Father.

Jesus says My Mission Statement is to Restore You / Spiritual Jubilee – Physical Jubilee

Jesus is saying my mission statement is to restore to you all that you have lost in this world, regardless if it was your mistake or a series of misfortunes, I can give you a spiritual year of Jubilee today, I can make all things new to you, regardless of past failings. And, let it be known there will come a day that there will be a physical year of Jubilee and all you who have physical ailments, disease, children with special needs.....there will be a day in a blink of an eye, that all things will be restored and made new.

His Mission Statement – Thus Ours / As Father Sent Me – so I send You

This was His mission statement, and thus it is ours; for as the Father has sent me, so I send you.

[John 20:21 \(NKJV\)](#) ²¹ So Jesus said to them again, "Peace to you! As the Father has sent Me, I also send you."

The Mission Statement

- To preach the gospel to the poor,
- To heal the brokenhearted,
- To proclaim liberty to the captives,
- To give recovery of sight to the blind,

- To set at liberty those who are oppressed,
- To proclaim the acceptable year of the Lord.

How Do you Apply This – Look at Peter

Peter would know. Peter would know what it is to be prayed for by Jesus, and then used by Jesus.

Luke 22:31–34 (NKJV) ³¹ And the Lord said, “Simon, Simon! Indeed, Satan has asked for you, that he may sift you as wheat. ³² But I have prayed for you, that your faith should not fail; and when you have returned to Me, strengthen your brethren.” ³³ But he said to Him, “Lord, I am ready to go with You, both to prison and to death.” ³⁴ Then He said, “I tell you, Peter, the rooster shall not crow this day before you will deny three times that you know Me.”

Seeing the Resurrection

Believing his Restoration

Receiving the Baptism of the Holy Spirit

Believing he has been forgiven and restored, comes first with Peter’s confession and repentance.

Freewill Choses

Freewill, choses. He gives us freewill and will not violate that; but He prays we will chose His will, for His will is always the best for us. He intercedes that you will choose to believe.

Reflect on Him / Communion

I’d like to take a moment to reflect on Him, on His mission, and the words that He spoke that are His thoughts and heart for us, settle in our hearts, calm our minds, turn this meeting room into the sanctuary of God, and let Him soak (anoint) us with His Spirit, to breath His breath (Spirit) upon us. Let’s settle into a time of worship, let’s take communion together, and then see what the Lord speaks to our heart through His word.

1 Corinthians 11:23–26 (NKJV) ²³ For I received from the Lord that which I also delivered to you: that the Lord Jesus on the same night in which He was betrayed took bread; ²⁴ and when He had given thanks, He broke it and said, “Take, eat; this is My body which is broken for you; do this in remembrance of Me.” ²⁵ In the same manner He also took the cup after supper, saying, “This cup is the new covenant in My blood. This do, as often as you drink it, in remembrance of Me.” ²⁶ For as often as you eat this bread and drink this cup, you proclaim the Lord’s death till He comes.

God Says Come

Today we come and are gifted this Word from God Himself, His very heart opened before us, the calling to come near, be drawn to Him.

Matthew 11:28 (NKJV) ²⁸ Come to Me, all you who labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest.

The Word of God is Living and Powerful, and is ready, and will do a mighty work in our lives.

Hebrews 4:12 (NKJV) ¹² For the word of God is living and powerful, and sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing even to the division of soul and spirit, and of joints and marrow, and is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart.

In Every Study

- Who Is God? (How Great is He?)
- What Does He Think of Me? (How Wonderful Are His Thoughts Towards Me?)
- What Does He Want Me to Do?
- What Can I Boldly Request of Him?
- What Do I Need to Be on Guard of When I Leave Here Today?

Boldly come to the throne of grace, ask God to reveal Himself in a mighty way to you, and to do I might work in you, and through you.

Hebrews 4:16 (NKJV) ¹⁶ Let us therefore come boldly to the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy and find grace to help in time of need.

End of Study

Notes – The 613 Commandments

Positive

Belief in God and Our Duties Toward Him

- P1 Believing in God Ex 20:2 , Dt 5:6
- P2 Unity of God Dt 6:4
- P3 Love of God Dt 6:5
- P4 Fear of God Dt 6:13 , Dt 10:20
- P5 Worshipping God Ex 23:25 , Dt 6:13 , Dt 11:13 , Dt 13:4
- P6 Cleaving to God Dt 10:20 , Dt 11:22
- P7 Taking an Oath by God's Name Dt 6:13 , Dt 10:20
- P8 Walking in God's Ways Dt 10:12 , Dt 28:9
- P9 Sanctifying God's Name Le 22:32
- P10 Reading the Shema Dt 6:7
- P11 Studying the Torah Nu 15:39 , Dt 6:7 , Dt 11:19 , Dt 31:12
- P12 The Phylactery of the Head Ex 13:9 , Ex 13:16 , Dt 6:8 , Dt 11:18
- P13 The Phylactery of the Arm Ex 13:9 , Ex 13:16 , Dt 6:8 , Dt 11:18
- P14 The Fringes Nu 15:38
- P15 The Mezuzah Dt 6:9 , Dt 11:20
- P16 The Assembly During the Feast of Tabernacles Dt 31:12
- P17 A King to Write a Scroll of Law Dt 17:18
- P18 Acquiring a Scroll of Law Dt 31:19
- P19 Grace After Meals Dt 8:10

The Sanctuary, Priesthood and Sacrifices

- P20 Building the Sanctuary Ex 25:8
- P21 Revering the Sanctuary Le 19:30 , Le 26:2
- P22 Guarding the Sanctuary Nu 18:4
- P23 Levitical Services in the Sanctuary Nu 18:23
- P24 Ablutions of the Priests Ex 30:19
- P25 Priests Kindling the Lamps Ex 27:21 , Le 24:3
- P26 Priests Blessing Israel Nu 6:23
- P27 The Showbread Ex 25:30
- P28 Burning the Incense Ex 30:7
- P29 The Perpetual Fire on the Altar Le 6:19–20
- P30 Removing the Ashes from the Altar Le 6:17
- P31 Removing the Unclean Nu 5:2 , Dt 23:10
- P32 Honoring the Priests Le 21:8
- P33 The Priestly Garments Ex 28:2 , Ex 29:8
- P34 The Priests Bearing the Ark Nu 7:9
- P35 The Oil of Anointment Ex 30:31
- P36 Priests Ministering in Courses Dt 18:6–8
- P37 Priests Defiling Themselves for Deceased Relatives Le 21:2–3
- P38 The High Priest Marrying Only a Virgin Le 21:13
- P39 The Daily Burnt-Offering Nu 28:3
- P40 The High Priest's Daily Meal-Offering Le 6:20
- P41 The Sabbath Additional Offering Nu 28:9
- P42 The New Moon Additional Offering Nu 28:11
- P43 The Passover Additional Offering Le 23:36
- P44 The Meal-Offering of the New Barley Le 2:14 , Le 23:10
- P45 The Shevuoth Additional Offering Nu 28:26–27
- P46 The Bringing of the Two Loaves on Shevuoth Le 23:17
- P47 The New Year Additional Offering Nu 29:1–2
- P48 The Tenth Day of Tishri Additional Offering Nu 29:7–8
- P49 The Service of the Day of Atonement Le 16:1–34

- P50 The Feast of Tabernacles Additional Offering Nu 29:13
- P51 The Shemini Atzereth Additional Offering Nu 29:35–39
- P52 The Three Annual Pilgrimages Ex 23:14
- P53 Appearing Before the Lord During Festivals Ex 34:23 , Dt 16:16
- P54 Rejoicing on the Festivals Dt 16:14 , Dt 27:7
- P55 Slaughtering the Passover-Offering Ex 12:6
- P56 Eating the Passover-Offering Ex 12:8
- P57 Slaughtering the Second Passover-Offering Nu 9:11
- P58 Eating the Second Passover-Offering Nu 9:11
- P59 Blowing the Trumpets in the Sanctuary Nu 10:10
- P60 Offering Cattle of a Minimum Age Ex 22:30 , Le 22:27
- P61 Offering Only Unblemished Sacrifices Le 22:21
- P62 Salt Being Brought With Every Offering Le 2:13
- P63 The Burnt-Offering Le 1:2–3
- P64 The Sin-Offering Le 6:25 , Le 7:3–7
- P65 The Guilt-Offering Le 7:1 , Le 7:3–7
- P66 The Peace-Offering Le 3:1 , Le 7:11–12
- P67 The Meal-Offering of the New Barley Le 2:1 , Le 2:5 , Le 2:7
- P68 Offering of a Court That Has Erred Le 4:13
- P69 The Fixed Sin-Offering Le 4:27 , Le 5:1
- P70 The Suspensive Guilt-Offering Le 5:17–18
- P71 The Unconditional Guilt-Offering Le 5:15 , Le 19:20–21
- P72 The Offering of Higher or Lower Value Le 5:1–11
- P73 Making Confession Nu 5:6–7
- P74 Offering Brought by a Zav Le 15:13–14
- P75 Offering Brought by a Zavah Le 15:28–29
- P76 The Offering After Childbirth Le 12:6
- P77 Offering Brought by a Leper Le 14:10
- P78 The Tithe of Cattle Le 27:32
- P79 Sanctifying the First-Born Ex 13:2 , Ex 13:13
- P80 Redeeming the First-Born Ex 12:28 , Nu 18:15
- P81 Redeeming the Firstling of an Ass Ex 34:20
- P82 Breaking the Neck of the Firstling of an Ass Ex 13:13 , Ex 34:20
- P83 Bringing Due Offerings on the First Festival Dt 12:5–6
- P84 All Offerings to Be Brought to the Sanctuary Dt 12:14
- P85 All Offerings Due from Outside the Land of Israel to Be Brought to the Sanctuary Dt 12:26
- P86 Redeeming Blemished Offerings Dt 12:15
- P87 Holiness of a Substituted Offering Le 27:10 , Le 27:33
- P88 The Priests Eating the Residue of the Meal-Offerings Le 6:23
- P89 The Priests Eating the Meat of Consecrated Offerings Ex 29:33
- P90 Consecrated Offerings That Have Become Unclean to Be Burnt Le 7:19
- P91 The Remnant of Consecrated Offerings to Be Burnt Ex 12:10 , Le 7:17
- P92 The Nazirite to Let His Hair Grow Nu 6:5
- P93 Nazirite Obligations on Completion of Vow Nu 6:9 , Nu 6:18
- P94 All Oral Commitments to Be Fulfilled Dt 23:22
- P95 Revocation of Vows Nu 30:1–15
- [The Sources of Uncleaness and the Modes of Purification](#)
- P96 Defilement Through the Carcasses of Animals Le 11:34
- P97 Defilement Through the Carcasses of Certain Creeping Creatures Le 11:29–30
- P98 Defilement of Food and Drink Le 11:34
- P99 The Menstruant Le 15:19–24
- P100 After Childbirth Le 12:2–5
- P101 The Leper Le 13:3

- P102 Garments Contaminated by Leprosy Le 13:47–59
- P103 A Leprous House Le 13:47–59
- P104 The Zav Le 15:2
- P105 Semen Le 15:16–18
- P106 The Zavah Le 15:19 , Le 15:28
- P107 Uncleanliness of a Corpse Nu 19:14–16
- P108 Law of the Water of Sprinkling Nu 19:9–21
- P109 Immersing in a Ritual Bath Le 15:16
- P110 Cleansing Form Leprosy Le 14:1–7
- P111 A Leper to Shave His Head Le 14:9
- P112 The Leper to Be Made Distinguishable Le 13:45
- P113 The Ashes of the Red Heifer Nu 19:9

Gifts to the Temple, the Poor, the Priests and Levites; the Sabbatical Year and the Jubilee; the Preparation of Food

- P114 Valuation of a Person Le 27:2–8
- P115 Valuation of Beasts Le 27:11–12
- P116 Valuation of Houses Le 27:14
- P117 Valuation of Fields Le 27:16 , Le 27:22
- P118 Restitution for Sacrilege Le 5:16 , Le 22:14
- P119 The Fruits of Fourth-Year Plantings Le 19:24
- P120 Peah for the Poor Le 19:9
- P121 Gleanings for the Poor Le 23:22
- P122 The Forgotten Sheaf for the Poor Le 19:9 , Dt 24:19
- P123 Defective Grape-Clusters for the Poor Le 19:10
- P124 Grape-Gleanings for the Poor Le 19:10
- P125 First-Fruits to Be Brought to the Sanctuary Ex 23:19
- P126 The Great Heave-Offering Dt 18:4
- P127 The First Tithe Le 27:30 , Nu 18:24
- P128 The Second Tithe Dt 14:22
- P129 The Levites' Tithe for the Priests Nu 18:26
- P130 The Poor Man's Tithe Dt 14:28
- P131 The Avowal of the Tithe Dt 26:13
- P132 Recital on Bringing the First-Fruits Dt 26:5
- P133 The Dough-Offering Nu 15:20
- P134 Renouncing as Ownerless Produce of the Sabbatical Year Ex 23:11
- P135 Resting the Land During the Sabbatical Year Ex 34:21 , Le 25:4
- P136 Sanctifying the Jubilee Year Le 25:10
- P137 Blowing the Shofar on the Tenth Day of Tishri in the Jubilee Year Le 25:9
- P138 Reversion of Land in the Jubilee Year Le 25:24
- P139 Redemption of Property in a Walled City Le 25:29
- P140 Counting the Years to the Jubilee Le 25:8
- P141 Cancelling Claims in the Sabbatical Year Dt 15:2–3
- P142 Exacting Debts from Idolaters Dt 15:3
- P143 The Priest's Due in the Slaughter of Every Clean Animal Dt 18:3
- P144 The First of the Fleece to Be Given to the Priest Dt 18:4
- P145 Devoted Things Le 27:21 , Le 27:28
- P146 Shechitah Dt 12:21
- P147 Covering the Blood of Slain Birds and Animals Le 17:13
- P148 Releasing a Dam When Taking Its Nest Dt 22:7
- P149 Searching for Prescribed Tokens in Cattle and Animals Le 11:2
- P150 Searching for the Prescribed Tokens in Birds Dt 14:11
- P151 Searching for the Prescribed Tokens in Grasshoppers Le 11:22
- P152 Searching for the Prescribed Tokens in Fishes Le 11:9 , Dt 14:9

The Holy Days and the Observances Connected With Them

- P153 Determining the New Moon Ex 12:2 , Dt 16:1
- P154 Resting on the Sabbath Ex 34:21 , Le 23:3
- P155 Proclaiming the Sanctity of the Sabbath Ex 20:8 , Dt 5:12
- P156 Removal of Leaven Ex 12:15
- P157 Recounting the Departure from Egypt Ex 13:8
- P158 Unleavened Bread to Be Eaten on the Eve of the Fifteenth Day of Nisan Ex 12:18
- P159 Resting on the First Day of Pesach Le 23:7
- P160 Resting on the Seventh Day of Pesach Le 23:8
- P161 Counting the Omer Le 23:15
- P162 Resting on Shevuoth Le 23:21
- P163 Resting on Rosh Hashanah Le 23:24
- P164 Fasting on Yom Kippur Le 16:29 , Le 23:32
- P165 Resting on Yom Kippur Le 16:31
- P166 Resting on the First Day of Sukkoth Le 23:35
- P167 Resting on Shemini Atzereth Le 23:36
- P168 Dwelling in a Booth During Sukkoth Le 23:42
- P169 Taking a Lulab on Sukkoth Le 23:40
- P170 Hearing the Shofar on Rosh Hashanah Nu 29:1
- P171 Giving Half a Shekel Annually Ex 30:12–14

The Proper Functioning of the Jewish State

- P172 Heeding the Prophets Dt 18:15
- P173 Appointing a King Dt 17:15
- P174 Obeying the Great Court Dt 17:11
- P175 Abiding by a Majority Decision Ex 23:2
- P176 Appointing Judges and Officers of the Court Dt 16:18
- P177 Treating Litigants Equally Before the Law Le 19:15
- P178 Testifying in Court Le 5:1
- P179 Inquiring into the Testimony of Witnesses Le 5:6–12
- P180 Condemning Witnesses Who Testify Falsely Dt 19:19
- P181 Eglah Arufah Dt 21:4
- P182 Establishing Six Cities of Refuge Dt 19:3
- P183 Assigning Cities to the Levites Nu 35:2
- P184 Removing Sources of Danger from Our Habitations Dt 22:8
- P185 Destroying All Idol-Worship Ex 34:13 , Dt 7:5 , Dt 12:2
- P186 The Law of the Apostate City Dt 13:15
- P187 The Law of the Seven Nations Dt 20:17
- P188 The Extinction of Amalek Dt 25:19
- P189 Remembering the Nefarious Deeds of Amalek Dt 25:17
- P190 The Law of Non-Obligatory War Dt 20:10–11
- P191 Appointing a Priest for War Dt 20:2
- P192 Preparing a Place Beyond the Camp Dt 23:12
- P193 Including a Paddle Among War Implements Dt 23:13

Our Duties Towards Our Fellow Men

- P194 A Robber to Restore the Stolen Article Le 6:11
- P195 Charity Dt 15:11
- P196 Lavishing Gifts on a Hebrew Bondman on His Freedom Dt 15:14
- P197 Lending Money to the Poor Ex 22:26 , Dt 15:8
- P198 Interest Dt 23:20
- P199 Restoring a Pledge to a Needy Owner Dt 24:13
- P200 Paying Wages on Time Dt 24:15
- P201 An Employee to Be Allowed to Eat of the Produce Among Which He Is Working Dt 23:24–25
- P202 Unloading a Tired Animal Ex 23:5
- P203 Assisting the Owner in Lifting Up His Burden Dt 22:4

- P204 Returning Lost Property to Its Owner Ex 23:4 , Dt 22:1
- P205 Rebuking the Sinner Le 19:17
- P206 Loving Our Neighbor Le 19:18
- P207 Loving the Stranger Le 19:18
- P208 The Law of Weights and Measures Le 19:36
- P209 Honoring Scholars and the Aged Le 19:32

The Duties Attaching to Family Life

- P210 Honoring Parents Ex 20:12 , Dt 5:16
- P211 Respecting Parents Le 19:3
- P212 Be Fruitful and Multiply Ge 1:28
- P213 The Law of Marriage Dt 24:1
- P214 The Bridegroom Devoting Himself to His Wife for One Year Dt 24:5
- P215 The Law of Circumcision Ge 17:10
- P216 The Law of Levirate Marriage Dt 25:5
- P217 Chalitzah Dt 25:9
- P218 A Violator to Marry the Maiden Whom He Has Violated Dt 22:29
- P219 The Law of the Defamer of a Bride Dt 22:19
- P220 The Law of a Seducer Ex 22:17
- P221 The Law of the Captive Woman Dt 21:11
- P222 The Law of Divorce Dt 24:1
- P223 The Law of a Suspected Adulteress Nu 5:15

The Enforcement of Criminal Law

- P224 Whipping Transgressors of Certain Commandments Dt 25:2
- P225 The Law of Manslaughter Nu 35:25
- P226 Transgressors of Certain Commandments to Be Beheaded Ex 21:20
- P227 Transgressors of Certain Commandments to Be Strangled Le 20:10
- P228 Transgressors of Certain Commandments to Be Put to Death by Burning Le 20:14
- P229 Transgressors of Certain Commandments to Be Stoned Dt 22:24
- P230 The Bodies of Certain Transgressors to Be Hanged After Execution Dt 21:22
- P231 The Law of Burial Dt 21:23

The Laws Relating to Property, Real and Personal

- P232 The Law of a Hebrew Bondman Ex 21:2 , Dt 15:12
- P233 A Hebrew Bondmaid to Be Married by Her Master or His Son Ex 21:8
- P234 Redemption of a Hebrew Bondmaid Ex 21:8
- P235 The Law of a Canaanite Bondman Ex 21:26 , Le 25:46
- P236 Penalty for Inflicting Injury Ex 21:18 , Le 24:19
- P237 The Law of Injuries Caused by an Ox Ex 21:35
- P238 The Law of Injuries Caused by a Pit Ex 21:33
- P239 The Law of Theft Ex 22:2
- P240 The Law of Damage Caused by a Beast Ex 22:6
- P241 The Law of Damage by a Fire Ex 22:7
- P242 The Law of an Unpaid Bailee Ex 22:8
- P243 The Law of a Paid Bailee Ex 22:11
- P244 The Law of a Borrower Ex 22:15
- P245 The Law of Buying and Selling Le 25:14
- P246 The Law of Litigants Ex 22:10
- P247 Saving the Life of the Pursued Dt 25:11–12
- P248 The Law of Inheritance Nu 27:8 , Dt 21:7

Negative

Idolatry and Related Subjects

- N1 Believing in or Ascribing Any Deity to Any but Him Ex 20:3 , Dt 5:7
- N2 Making Images for the Purpose of Worship Ex 20:4 , Ex 34:17 , Dt 5:8
- N3 Making an Idol for Others to Worship Ex 20:4 , Ex 34:17 , Le 19:4 , Dt 5:8

- N4 Making Figures of Human Beings Ex 20:20 , Ex 34:17
- N5 Bowing Down to an Idol Ex 20:5 , Dt 5:9
- N6 Worshipping Idols Ex 20:5 , Dt 5:9
- N7 Handing Over Some of Our Offspring to the Molech Le 18:21
- N8 Practicing the Sorcery of the Ob Le 19:31
- N9 Practicing the Sorcery of the Yidde'oni Le 19:31
- N10 Studying Idolatrous Practices Le 19:4
- N11 Erecting a Pillar Which People Will Assemble to Honor Le 26:1 , Dt 16:22
- N12 Making Figured Stones Upon Which to Prostrate Ourselves Le 26:1
- N13 Planting Trees Within the Sanctuary Dt 16:21
- N14 Swearing by an Idol Ex 23:13
- N15 Summoning People to Idolatry Ex 23:13
- N16 Seeking to Persuade an Israelite to Worship Idols Dt 13:11
- N17 Loving the Person Who Seeks to Mislead Him into Idolatry Dt 13:7
- N18 Relaxing One's Aversion to the Misleader Dt 13:7
- N19 Saving the Life of the Misleader Dt 13:7
- N20 Pleading for the Misleader Dt 13:7
- N21 Suppressing Evidence Which Is Unfavorable to the Misleader Dt 13:7
- N22 Benefitting Form Ornaments Which Have Adorned an Idol Dt 7:25
- N23 Rebuilding an Apostate City Dt 13:15
- N24 Deriving Benefit from the Property of an Apostate City Dt 13:16
- N25 Increasing Our Wealth from Anything Connected With Idolatry Dt 7:26
- N26 Prophesying in the Name of an Idol Dt 18:20
- N27 Prophesying Falsely Dt 18:20
- N28 Listening to the Prophecy of One Who Prophesies in the Name of an Idol Dt 13:2
- N29 Having Pity on a False Prophet Dt 18:22
- N30 Adopting the Habits and Customs of Unbelievers Le 20:23
- N31 Practicing Divination Dt 18:10
- N32 Regulating Our Conduct by the Stars Dt 18:10
- N33 Practicing the Art of the Soothsayer Dt 18:10
- N34 Practicing Sorcery Dt 18:10
- N35 Practicing the Art of the Charmer Dt 18:10–11
- N36 Consulting a Necromancer Who Uses the Ob Dt 18:10–11
- N37 Consulting a Sorcerer Who Uses the Yido'a Dt 18:10–11
- N38 Seeking Information from the Dead Dt 18:10–11
- N39 Women Wearing Men's Clothes or Adornments Dt 22:5
- N40 Men Wearing Women's Clothes or Adornments Dt 22:5
- N41 Imprinting Any Marks Upon Our Bodies Le 19:28
- N42 Wearing a Garment of Wool and Linen Dt 22:11
- N43 Shaving the Temples of Our Heads Le 19:27
- N44 Shaving the Beard Le 19:27
- N45 Making Cuttings in Our Flesh Le 19:28 , Dt 14:1
- N46 Settling in the Land of Egypt Dt 17:16
- N47 Accepting Opinions Contrary to Those Taught in the Torah Nu 15:39
- N48 Making a Covenant With the Seven Nations of Canaan Ex 23:32 , Dt 7:2
- N49 Failing to Observe the Law Concerning the Seven Nations Dt 20:16
- N50 Showing Mercy to Idolaters Dt 7:2
- N51 Suffering Idolaters to Dwell in Our Land Ex 23:33
- N52 Intermarrying With the Heretics Dt 7:3
- N53 Intermarrying With Male Ammonite or Moabite Dt 23:2
- N54 Excluding Descendants of Esau Dt 23:6
- N55 Excluding Descendants of Egyptians Dt 23:6
- N56 Offering Peace to Ammon or Moab Dt 23:5

- N57 Destroying Fruit-Trees During a Siege Dt 20:19
- N58 Fearing the Heretics in Time of War Dt 3:22 , Dt 7:21
- N59 Forgetting What Amalek Did to Us Dt 25:19
- [Our Duties to God, the Sanctuary, and the Services Therein](#)
- N60 Blaspheming the Great Name Ex 22:29 , Le 24:16
- N61 Violating a Shebuat Bittui Le 19:12
- N62 Violating a Shebuat Shav Ex 20:7 , Dt 5:11
- N63 Profaning the Name of God Le 22:32
- N64 Testing His Promises and Warnings Dt 6:16
- N65 Breaking Down Houses of Worship Dt 12:2–4
- N66 Leaving the Body of a Criminal Hanging Overnight After Execution Dt 21:23
- N67 Interrupting the Watch Over the Sanctuary Nu 18:5
- N68 The High Priest Entering the Sanctuary at Any but the Prescribed Time Le 16:2
- N69 A Priest With a Blemish Entering Any Part of the Sanctuary Le 21:23
- N70 A Priest With a Blemish Ministering in the Sanctuary Le 21:17
- N71 A Priest With a Temporary Blemish Ministering in the Sanctuary Le 21:18
- N72 The Levites and Priests Performing Each Other's Allotted Services Nu 18:3
- N73 Entering the Sanctuary or Giving a Decision on Any Law of the Torah Whilst Intoxicated Le 10:8–11
- N74 A Zar Ministering in the Sanctuary Nu 18:4
- N75 An Unclean Priest Ministering in the Sanctuary Le 22:2
- N76 A Priest Who Is a Tevul Yom Ministering in the Sanctuary Le 21:6
- N77 Any Unclean Person Entering Any Part of the Sanctuary Nu 5:3
- N78 Any Unclean Person Entering the Camp of the Levites Dt 23:9
- N79 Building an Altar of Stones Which Have Been Touched by Iron Ex 20:25
- N80 Ascending the Altar by Steps Ex 20:26
- N81 Extinguishing the Altar Fire Le 6:20
- N82 Offering Any Sacrifice Whatever on the Golden Altar Ex 30:9
- N83 Making Oil Like the Oil of Anointment Ex 30:32
- N84 Anointing Any One Except the High Priests and Kings With the Oil of Anointment Prepared by Moses Ex 30:32
- N85 Making Incense Like That Used in the Sanctuary Ex 30:37
- N86 Removing the Staves from Their Rings in the Ark Ex 25:15
- N87 Removing the Breastplate Form the Ephod Ex 28:28 , Ex 39:21
- N88 Tearing the Edge of the High Priest's Robe Ex 28:32 , Ex 39:23
- [Sacrifices, Priestly Gifts, Priests, Levites, and Related Subjects](#)
- N89 Offering Any Sacrifice Outside the Sanctuary Court Dt 12:13–14
- N90 Slaughtering Any of the Holy Offerings Outside the Sanctuary Court Le 17:3–4
- N91 Dedicating Blemished Beasts to Be Offered Upon the Altar Le 22:20
- N92 Slaughtering Blemished Beasts for Sacrifice Le 22:22
- N93 Dashing the Blood of Blemished Beasts Upon the Altar Le 22:24
- N94 Burning the Sacrificial Portions of a Blemished Beast Upon the Altar Le 22:22
- N95 Sacrificing a Beast With Temporary Blemish Dt 17:1
- N96 Offering Blemished Sacrifices of a Gentile Le 22:25
- N97 Causing an Offering to Become Blemished Le 22:21
- N98 Offering Leaven or Honey Upon the Altar Le 2:11
- N99 Offering a Sacrifice Without Salt Le 2:13
- N100 Offering on the Altar the Hire of a Harlot or the Price of a Dog Dt 23:17
- N101 Slaughtering the Mother and Her Young on the Same Day Le 22:28
- N102 Putting Olive Oil on the Meal-Offering of a Sinner Le 5:11
- N103 Bringing Frankincense With the Meal-Offering of a Sinner Le 5:11
- N104 Mingling Olive Oil With the Meal-Offering of a Suspected Adulteress Nu 5:15
- N105 Putting Frankincense on the Meal-Offering of a Suspected Adulteress Nu 5:15
- N106 Changing a Beast That Has Been Consecrated as an Offering Le 27:10

N107 Changing One Holy Offering for Another Le 27:26
N108 Redeeming the Firstling of a Clean Beast Nu 18:17
N109 Selling the Tithe of Cattle Le 27:33
N110 Selling Devoted Property Le 27:28
N111 Redeeming Devoted Land Without Any Specific Statement of Purpose Le 27:28
N112 Severing the Head of the Bird of a Sin-Offering During Melikah Le 5:8
N113 Doing Any Work With a Dedicated Beast Dt 15:19
N114 Shearing a Dedicated Beast Dt 15:19
N115 Slaughtering the Passover Offering While Leavened Bread Remains in Our Possession Ex 34:25
N116 Leaving the Sacrificial Portions of the Passover Offering Overnight Ex 23:18
N117 Allowing Any of the Meat of the Passover Offering to Remain Until Morning Ex 12:10
N118 Allowing Any of the Meat of the Festival Offering of the Fourteenth of Nisan to Remain Until the Third Day Dt 16:4
N119 Allowing Any of the Meat of the Second Passover Offering to Remain Until Morning Nu 9:12
N120 Allowing Any of the Meat of the Thank-Offering to Remain Until Morning Le 22:30
N121 Breaking Any of the Bones of the Passover Offering Ex 12:46
N122 Breaking Any of the Bones of the Second Passover Offering Nu 9:12
N123 Removing the Passover Offering from Where It Is Eaten Ex 12:46
N124 Baking the Residue of a Meal-Offering With Leaven Le 6:24
N125 Eating the Passover Offering Boiled or Raw Ex 12:9
N126 Allowing a Ger Toshab to Eat the Passover Offering Ex 12:45
N127 An Uncircumcised Person Eating the Passover Offering Ex 12:48
N128 Allowing an Apostate Israelite to Eat the Passover Offering Ex 12:43
N129 An Unclean Person Eating Hallowed Food Le 7:20
N130 Eating Meat of Consecrated Offerings Which Have Become Unclean Le 7:19
N131 Eating Nothar Le 19:6–8
N132 Eating Piggul Le 7:18
N133 A Zar Eating Terumah Le 22:10
N134 A Priest's Tenant or Hired Servant Eating Terumah Le 22:10
N135 An Uncircumcised Priest Eating Terumah Le 22:10
N136 An Unclean Priest Eating Terumah Le 22:4
N137 A Chalalah Eating Holy Food Le 22:12
N138 Eating the Meal-Offering of a Priest Le 6:30
N139 Eating Meat of Sin-Offerings Whose Blood Has Been Brought Within the Sanctuary Le 6:30
N140 Eating Invalidated Consecrated Offerings Dt 14:3
N141 Eating the Unredeemed Second Tithe of Corn Outside Jerusalem Dt 12:17
N142 Consuming the Unredeemed Second Tithe of Wine Outside Jerusalem Dt 12:17
N143 Consuming the Unredeemed Second Tithe of Oil Outside Jerusalem Dt 12:17
N144 Eating an Unblemished Firstling Outside Jerusalem Dt 12:17
N145 Eating the Sin-Offering and the Guilt-Offering Outside the Sanctuary Court Dt 12:17
N146 Eating the Meat of a Burnt-Offering Dt 12:17
N147 Eating Lesser Holy Offerings Before Dashing Their Blood on the Altar Dt 12:17
N148 A Priest Eating First-Fruits Outside Jerusalem Dt 12:17
N149 A Zar Eating the Most Holy Offerings Ex 29:33
N150 Eating an Unredeemed Unclean Second Tithe, Even in Jerusalem Dt 26:14
N151 Eating the Second Tithe During Mourning Dt 26:14
N152 Spending the Redemption Money of the Second Tithe Except on Food and Drink Dt 26:14
N153 Eating Tevel Le 22:15
N154 Altering the Prescribed Order of Harvest Tithing Ex 22:30
N155 Delaying Payment of Vows Dt 23:20
N156 Appearing on a Festival Without a Sacrifice Ex 23:15
N157 Infringing Any Oral Obligation, Even If Undertaken Without an Oath Nu 30:1
N158 A Priest Marrying a Zonah Le 21:7

- N159 A Priest Marrying a Chalalah Le 21:7
- N160 A Priest Marrying a Divorced Woman Le 26:7
- N161 A High Priest Marrying a Widow Le 26:14
- N162 A High Priest Having Intercourse With a Widow Le 21:15
- N163 Priests With Disheveled Hair Entering the Sanctuary Le 10:6
- N164 Priests Wearing Rent Garments Entering the Sanctuary Le 10:6
- N165 Ministering Priests Leaving the Sanctuary Le 10:7
- N166 A Common Priest Defiling Himself for Any Dead Person Except Those Prescribed in Scripture Le 21:1
- N167 A High Priest Being Under One Roof With a Dead Body Le 21:11
- N168 A High Priest Defiling Himself for Any Dead Person Le 21:11
- N169 Levites Acquiring a Portion of the Land of Israel Dt 18:1
- N170 Levites Sharing in the Spoil on the Conquest of the Land of Israel Dt 18:1
- N171 Tearing Out Our Hair for the Dead Le 21:5

Prohibitions Affecting Food

- N172 Eating Any Unclean Animal Le 11:4 , Le 11:4–6 , Dt 14:7
- N173 Eating Any Unclean Fish Le 11:11
- N174 Eating Any Unclean Fowl Le 11:13 , Dt 14:12
- N175 Eating Any Swarming Winged Insect Le 11:20 , Dt 14:19
- N176 Eating Anything Which Swarms Upon the Earth Le 11:41
- N177 Eating Any Creeping Thing That Breeds in Decayed Matter Le 11:44
- N178 Eating Living Creatures That Breed in Seeds or Fruit Le 11:42
- N179 Eating Any Swarming Thing Le 11:43
- N180 Eating Nevelah Dt 14:21
- N181 Eating Terefah Ex 22:31
- N182 Eating a Limb of a Living Creature Dt 12:23
- N183 Eating Gid Ha-Nasheh Ge 32:31
- N184 Eating Blood Le 7:26
- N185 Eating the Fat of a Clean Animal Le 7:23
- N186 Cooking Meat in Milk Ex 23:19
- N187 Eating Meat Cooked in Milk Ex 34:26
- N188 Eating the Flesh of a Stoned Ox Ex 21:28
- N189 Eating Bread Made from the Grain of the New Crop Le 23:14
- N190 Eating Roasted Grain of the New Crop Le 23:14
- N191 Eating Fresh Ears of Grain Le 23:14
- N192 Eating Orlah Le 19:23
- N193 Eating Kilai Ha-Kerem Dt 22:9
- N194 Drinking Yain Nesech Dt 32:38
- N195 Eating and Drinking to Excess Le 19:26
- N196 Eating on Yom Kippur Le 23:29
- N197 Eating Chametz During Pesach Ex 13:3
- N198 Eating Anything Containing Chametz During Pesach Ex 13:3 , Ex 13:7
- N199 Eating Chametz After the Middle of the Fourteenth of Nisan Dt 16:3
- N200 Chametz Being Seen in Our Habitations During Pesach Ex 13:7
- N201 Possessing Chametz During Pesach Ex 12:19
- N202 A Nazirite Drinking Wine Nu 6:3
- N203 A Nazirite Eating Fresh Grapes Nu 6:3
- N204 A Nazirite Eating Dried Grapes Nu 6:3
- N205 A Nazirite Eating the Kernels of Grapes Nu 6:4
- N206 A Nazirite Eating the Husks of Grapes Nu 6:4
- N207 A Nazirite Rending Himself Unclean for the Dead Nu 6:7
- N208 A Nazirite Rending Himself Unclean by Entering a House Containing a Corpse Nu 6:5–7
- N209 A Nazirite Shaving Nu 6:5

Cultivation of the Land

- N210 Reaping All the Harvest Le 19:9
- N211 Gathering Ears of Corn That Fell During the Harvest Le 19:9
- N212 Gathering the Whole Produce of the Vineyard at Vintage Time Le 19:10
- N213 Gathering Single Fallen Grapes During the Vintage Le 19:10
- N214 Returning for a Forgotten Sheaf Dt 24:19
- N215 Sowing Kilayim Le 19:19
- N216 Sowing Grain or Vegetables in a Vineyard Dt 22:9
- N217 Mating Animals of Different Species Le 19:19
- N218 Working With Two Different Kinds of Animals Together Dt 22:10
- N219 Preventing a Beast from Eating of the Produce Amidst Which It Is Working Dt 25:4
- N220 Cultivating the Soil in the Seventh Year Le 25:4
- N221 Pruning Trees in the Seventh Year Le 25:4
- N222 Reaping a Self-Grown Plant in the Seventh Year as in an Ordinary Year Le 25:5
- N223 Gathering a Self-Grown Fruit in the Seventh Year as in an Ordinary Year Le 25:5
- N224 Cultivating the Soil in the Jubilee Year Le 25:11
- N225 Reaping the Aftergrowths O the Jubilee Year as in an Ordinary Year Le 25:11
- N226 Gathering Fruit in the Jubilee Year as in an Ordinary Year Le 25:11
- N227 Selling Our Holdings in Israel in Perpetuity Le 25:23
- N228 Selling the Open Lands of the Levites Le 25:33

[Our Duties Towards Our Fellow Men, Towards the Poor and Towards Employees](#)

- N229 Forsaking the Levites Dt 12:19
- N230 Demanding the Payment of Debts After the Sabbatical Year Dt 15:2
- N231 Withholding a Loan to Be Cancelled by the Sabbatical Year Dt 15:9
- N232 Failing to Give Charity to Our Needy Brethren Dt 15:7
- N233 Sending Away a Hebrew Bondman Empty-Handed Dt 15:13
- N234 Demanding Payment Form a Debtor Known to Be Unable to Pay Ex 22:26
- N235 Lending at Interest Le 25:37
- N236 Borrowing at Interest Le 25:37
- N237 Participating in a Loan at Interest Ex 22:26
- N238 Oppressing an Employee by Delaying Payment of His Wages Le 19:13
- N239 Taking a Pledge from a Debtor by Force Dt 24:10
- N240 Keeping a Needed Pledge from Its Owner Dt 24:12
- N241 Taking a Pledge from a Widow Dt 24:17
- N242 Taking in Pledge Food Utensils Dt 24:6
- N243 Abducting an Israelite Ex 20:15 , Dt 5:19
- N244 Stealing Money Le 19:11
- N245 Committing Robbery Le 19:13
- N246 Fraudulently Altering Land Boundaries Dt 19:14
- N247 Usurping Our Debts Le 19:13
- N248 Repudiating Our Debts Le 19:11
- N249 Swearing Falsely in Repudiating a Debt Le 19:11
- N250 Wronging One Another in Business Le 25:14
- N251 Wronging One Another by Speech Le 25:17
- N252 Wronging a Proselyte by Speech Ex 22:22
- N253 Wronging a Proselyte in Business Ex 22:22
- N254 Handing Over a Fugitive Bondman Dt 23:14
- N255 Wronging a Fugitive Bondman Dt 23:15
- N256 Dealing Harshly With Fatherless Children and Widows Ex 22:23
- N257 Employing a Hebrew Bondman in Degrading Tasks Le 25:39
- N258 Selling a Hebrew Bondman by Public Auction Le 25:42
- N259 Employing a Hebrew Bondman on Unnecessary Work Le 25:43
- N260 Allowing the Maltreatment of a Hebrew Bondman Le 25:53
- N261 Selling a Hebrew Bondmaid Ex 21:8

- N262 Afflicting One's Espoused Hebrew Bondmaid Ex 21:10
- N263 Selling a Captive Woman Dt 21:14
- N264 Enslaving a Captive Woman Dt 21:14
- N265 Planning to Acquire Another's Property Ex 20:17 , Dt 5:21
- N266 Coveting Another's Belongings Ex 20:14 , Dt 5:18
- N267 A Hired Laborer Eating Growing Crops Dt 23:24
- N268 A Hired Laborer Putting of the Harvest in His Own Vessel Dt 23:23
- N269 Ignoring Lost Property Dt 22:3
- N270 Leaving a Trapped Person Ex 23:5 , Dt 22:4

The Administration of Justice, the Authority of the Courts, and Similar Matters

- N271 Cheating in Measurements and Weights Le 19:35
- N272 Keeping False Weights and Measures Dt 25:13
- N273 A Judge Committing Unrighteousness Le 19:15
- N274 A Judge Accepting Gifts from Litigants Ex 23:8
- N275 A Judge Favoring a Litigant Le 19:15
- N276 A Judge Being Deterred by Fear from Giving a Just Judgment Dt 1:17
- N277 A Judge Deciding in Favor of a Poor Man Through Pity Ex 23:3
- N278 A Judge Perverting Judgment Against a Person of Evil Repute Ex 23:6
- N279 A Judge Pitying One Who Has Slain a Man Dt 19:21
- N280 A Judge Perverting the Justice Due to Proselytes or Orphans Dt 24:17
- N281 A Judge Listening to One of the Litigants in the Absence of Another Ex 23:1
- N282 A Court Convicting in a Capital Case by a Majority of One Ex 23:2
- N283 A Judge Relying on the Opinion of a Fellow-Judge Ex 23:2
- N284 Appointing an Unlearned Judge Dt 1:17
- N285 Bearing False Witness Ex 20:16 , Dt 5:20
- N286 A Judge Receiving a Wicked Man's Testimony Ex 23:1
- N287 A Judge Receiving Testimony from a Litigant's Relative Dt 24:16
- N288 Convicting on the Testimony of a Single Witness Dt 19:15
- N289 Killing a Human Being Ex 20:13 , Dt 5:17
- N290 Capital Punishment Based on Circumstantial Evidence Ex 23:7
- N291 A Witness Acting as an Advocate Nu 35:30
- N292 Killing a Murderer Without a Trial Nu 35:12
- N293 Sparing the Life of a Pursuer Dt 25:12
- N294 Punishing a Person for a Sin Committed Under Duress Dt 22:26
- N295 Accepting a Ransom from One Who Has Committed Willful Murder Nu 35:31
- N296 Accepting a Ransom from One Who Has Committed Murder Unwittingly Nu 35:32
- N297 Neglecting to Save an Israelite in Danger of His Life Le 19:16
- N298 Leaving Obstacles on Public or Private Domain Dt 22:8
- N299 Giving Misleading Advice Le 19:14
- N300 Inflicting Excessive Corporal Punishment Dt 25:2
- N301 Bearing Tales Le 19:16
- N302 Hating One Another Le 19:17
- N303 Putting One to Shame Le 19:17
- N304 Taking Vengeance on One Another Le 19:18
- N305 Bearing a Grudge Le 19:18
- N306 Taking the Entire Bird's Nest Dt 22:6
- N307 Shaving the Scall Le 13:33
- N308 Cutting or Cauterizing Signs of Leprosy Dt 24:8
- N309 Ploughing a Valley in Which the Rite of Eglah Arufah Has Been Performed Dt 21:4
- N310 Permitting a Sorcerer to Live Ex 22:19
- N311 Taking a Bridegroom Away from His Home Dt 24:5
- N312 Differing from Traditional Authorities Dt 17:11
- N313 Adding to the Written or Oral Law Dt 12:32

- N314 Detracting from the Written or Oral Law Dt 12:32
- N315 Cursing a Judge Ex 22:29
- N316 Cursing a Ruler Ex 22:29
- N317 Cursing an Israelite Le 19:14
- N318 Cursing Parents Ex 21:17
- N319 Smiting Parents Ex 21:15

The Sabbath and Festivals

- N320 Working on the Sabbath Ex 20:10 , Dt 5:14
- N321 Journeying on the Sabbath Ex 16:29
- N322 Punishing on the Sabbath Ex 35:3
- N323 Working on the First Day of Pesach Ex 12:16
- N324 Working on the Seventh Day of Pesach Ex 12:16
- N325 Working on Aztereth Le 23:21
- N326 Working on Rosh Hashanah Le 23:25
- N327 Working on the First Day of Sukkoth Le 23:35
- N328 Working on Shemini Atzereth Le 23:36
- N329 Working on Yom Kippur Le 23:31

The Forbidden Degrees of Marriage and Related Subjects

- N330 Having Intercourse With One's Mother Le 18:7
- N331 Having Intercourse With One's Father's Wife Le 18:8
- N332 Having Intercourse With One's Sister Le 18:8
- N333 Having Intercourse With the Daughter of One's Father's Wife If She Be His Sister Le 18:11
- N334 Having Intercourse With One's Son's Daughter Le 18:10
- N335 Having Intercourse With One's Daughter's Daughter Le 18:10
- N336 Having Intercourse With One's Daughter Le 18:10
- N337 Having Intercourse With a Woman and Her Daughter Le 18:17
- N338 Having Intercourse With a Woman and Her Son's Daughter Le 18:17
- N339 Having Intercourse With a Woman and Her Daughter's Daughter Le 18:17
- N340 Having Intercourse With One's Father's Sister Le 18:12
- N341 Having Intercourse With One's Mother's Sister Le 18:13
- N342 Having Intercourse With the Wife of One's Father's Brother Le 18:14
- N343 Having Intercourse With One's Son's Wife Le 18:15
- N344 Having Intercourse With One's Brother's Wife Le 18:16
- N345 Having Intercourse With a Sister of His Wife During the Latter's Lifetime Le 18:18
- N346 Having Intercourse With a Menstruant Le 18:19
- N347 Having Intercourse With Another Man's Wife Le 18:20
- N348 Men Lying With Beasts Le 18:23
- N349 Women Lying With Beasts Le 18:23
- N350 A Man Lying Carnally With a Male Le 18:22 , Dt 23:17
- N351 A Man Lying Carnally With His Father Le 18:7
- N352 A Man Lying Carnally With His Father's Brother Le 18:14
- N353 Intimacy With a Kinswoman Le 18:6
- N354 A Mamzer Having Intercourse With a Jewess Dt 23:1
- N355 Having Intercourse Without Marriage Dt 23:16
- N356 Re-Marrying One's Divorced Wife After She Has Re-Married Dt 24:4
- N357 Having Intercourse With a Woman Subject to a Levirate Marriage Dt 25:5
- N358 Divorcing a Woman He Has Raped and Been Compelled to Marry Dt 22:29
- N359 Divorcing a Woman After Having Falsely Brought an Evil Name Upon Her Dt 22:19
- N360 A Man Incapable of Procreation Marrying a Jewess Dt 22:30
- N361 Castration Le 22:24

The Head of the Jewish State and Its Officers

- N362 Appointing a King Not Born an Israelite Dt 17:15
- N363 A King Owning Many Horses Dt 17:16

- N364 A King Taking Many Wives Dt 17:17
- N365 A King Amassing Great Personal Wealth Dt 17:17