

The Common Thread vs. Jesus

Mark 14:66-15:15

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The bad news:

This time has been described as “a world in panic”. When the world is no longer predictable, when we feel like we are losing control, when we no longer feel safe there is anxiety. Fear and pressure affects us cognitively, physically and spiritually, and can cause us to act stupidly. It also drives us to coping mechanisms, some of which can be self-harming.

The good news:

Anxiety producing circumstances bring out heart and soul issues that give us the opportunity to receive healing, where we can come to the place of experiencing hope, peace and freedom. We can grow through the challenges to be overcomers who are Christ-like and make good decisions in love. Becoming that kind of people comes as we grow through the pressures we face and the anxiety we feel.

Mark wants his readers to get who Jesus is, and to also hear His message, “come follow me”. At this hinge point in history in Mark 8:34-38, Jesus tells his disciples what is involved in following Him. What Jesus said in Mark 8 and 13 is what was happening to the early Christians in the church in Rome. Mark is writing to encourage them and help them grow

There are five key players [individuals or groups] in this particular story. The common thread is that they all opt for self-preservation -- the opposite of what Jesus did. He moved into these circumstances with undeniable love. Notice what pressure and fear did to the others in the story.

The disciples – v. 50

Peter – vv. 66-72

The Chief Priests and the whole Jewish Council - 15:1-15 [v.10]

In contrast to the chief priests, Jesus is giving Himself up to do what must be done. This is Jesus’ choice to love and serve.

This is why the Father loves me—because I lay down my life, so that I may take it back again. No one takes it away from me, but I lay it down of my own free will. I have the authority to lay it down, and I have the authority to take it back again. This commandment I received from my Father.” John 10:17-18 NET

Pilate – v. 15

The crowd – vv. 11- 15

Everybody in this story is about themselves and saving their own skin – in contrast to Jesus’ instruction in Mark 8:34-38.

How do we cope with the pressure, fear and anxiety?

First things first – realize how much Jesus _____

For God so loved the world that He gave His one and only Son... John 3:16a

But God demonstrates his own love for us, in that while we were still sinners, Christ died for us. Therefore, by much more, because we have been declared righteous now by his blood, we will be saved through him from the wrath. For if, while we were enemies, we were reconciled to God through the death of his Son, by much more, having been reconciled, we will be saved by his life. Romans 5:8-10 LEB

What do we do with the fact of God’s love and the anxiety we may feel?

1. Breath deep and _____

2. _____ technology and social media; instead anchor yourself in _____.

And I have said, “My future is ruined, my expectation from Yahweh.” Remember my misery and bitterness, the wormwood and venom! Surely my soul remembers and bows down within me. This I have reminded myself, therefore I will hope. The loyal love of Yahweh does not cease; his compassions do not come to an end. They are new in the morning, great is your faithfulness. “Yahweh is my portion,” says my soul, “Thus I will hope on him.” Lamentations 3:18-24

Don’t be afraid, for I am with you. Don’t be discouraged, for I am your God. I will strengthen you and help you. I will hold you up with my victorious right hand. Isaiah 41:10 NLT

Have mercy on me, O God, have mercy! I look to you for protection. I will hide beneath the shadow of your wings until the danger passes by. Psalm 57:1 NLT

3. Choose to _____

Do not be anxious about anything. Instead, in every situation, through prayer and petition with thanksgiving, tell your requests to God. And the peace of God that surpasses all understanding will guard your hearts and minds in Christ Jesus. Philippians 4:6-7

Worship at home:

Read Romans 8:31-39 and reflect on the love of our Lord Jesus Christ.

Write down as many things as you can that you are thankful for and share some of them. Then take time to pray, praise and worship God.