

Mark 14 pt. 3 v.43-72

V.43-46 - The betrayal of Jesus by Judas Iscariot

Immediately - This is one of the unique key words that distinguishes Mark's writing style from the other gospel writers.

He uses it to move from event to event in his narrative one must rely on context to determine how much time has passed between each event.

In this instance the immediately occurs, "while Jesus was still speaking to his disciple."

What was Jesus saying? (v.42) "Rise, let us be going. See, My betrayer is at hand." The following events develop relatively quickly.

Mark makes a point to note here that Judas was "one of the twelve." This is important because we know that Jesus had far more than twelve disciples but that the twelve were specially chosen by Jesus to receive intensive instruction by Him. In short, they were closer to Him than the multitudes were. Judas too!

Judas received just as much instruction as the other eleven disciples. He saw just as many miracles. He was sent out two by two just like the others to preach. But here he is...the betrayer.

This affects how we consider our own selves in Christ's kingdom. Judas' experience lends some perspective and some humility to our own discipleship.

Unlike Judas we have not taken bread directly from the Lord's hands, we have not see the Lord move across the surface of the waters, and preach to the multitudes, and yet there are times when we are so self-assured that we cry out like Peter and the rest "Even if all are made to stumble, yet I will not be." (v.29)

Rather, we ought to consider our own faithfulness is at times faulty. We are to watch and pray and trust in Christ's faithfulness rather than our own.

Also, as we read about Judas' betrayal with a kiss, two things stand out to me.

The first is that Judas calls Jesus Rabbi which is not necessarily uncommon. It certainly helped identify this Rabbi, Jesus, who was so despised by the chief priests, scribes, and elders. But, consider the

reality of Judas' words - that Jesus was his teacher! Judas, the betrayer, was a student of Christ!

The second thing that stands out to me is that Judas' ordained betrayal, sealed with a kiss, started in his heart, not in the garden, and as we are instructed by scripture that sin, beginning in the heart brings forth death - even his own. (James 1:14-15)

The Tyranny of Covetousness. Chrysostom (mid 4th century - early 5th century): "Consider what befell him, how he simultaneously lost the money, committed the sin, and destroyed his own soul. Such is the tyranny of covetousness. He did not even enjoy the money in this life nor did he have any benefits in the life to come. He lost everything at once and, branded as a bad character even by his co-conspirators, hanged himself."
Oden, T. C., & Hall, C. A. (Eds.). (1998). Mark (Revised) (p. 204). Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press.

V.47-50 Peter's big show of resistance.

This is recorded in all four gospels, only John tells us this was Peter.

We live in a culture where we have been raised to stand up for ourselves and to defend our God-given rights.

Those ideals are precious to us. In our culture we have even adopted the ideology that it is right and good not only to defend ourselves but to defend those who are unable to defend themselves.

It appears that Peter believed likewise during Jesus' arrest. He had professed his own fervent loyalty earlier in the evening and now was his time to shine.

So Peter begins a violent, uncoordinated flailing of steel against the Lord's enemies. Peter has to be convinced of the rightness of his actions. Who is more worthy of defending than Jesus Christ?

See Peter's bravery - almost like a New Testament version of Jonathan, sans armor bearer (1 Sam 14), willing to stand against this armed gang by himself if need be.

There are several hang-ups with Peter's plan. First, Jesus doesn't need Peter's defending. Second, Peter doesn't know what he's doing. Third, Peter's defense by violence ignores the Spirit of Jesus' ministry. Fourth, it ignores the deity and sovereignty of Jesus. Fifth, it ignores the command of Jesus that this is the hour that He is to be delivered into the hands of sinners for our redemption.

This IS the plan! Violence against Jesus for our sakes, not violence for Jesus.

Matthew records Jesus' rebuke of Peter and chilling warning against taking up violence in the name of Kingdom work and reminds all present of Christ's own power and dominion.

[Mat 26:51-54 NKJV] ... 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?"

How does this impact our understanding of who Jesus is today, and how we defend Jesus?

Sometimes we reverse the power equation and we think that we are God's defender, that unless it were for our enthusiastic efforts then the Kingdom would topple.

That is not the case. WE NEED Jesus as our defender! Lest He defends us we will fall. His kingdom will stand forever, the gates of Hell will not prevail against it. Our kingdoms fall everyday!

So Peter's enthusiastic efforts to defend Jesus are met with a rebuke from the Lord and he is scattered with the rest of the disciples - as Jesus foretold (v.27).

We also see that Jesus addresses the attitude of the force sent to arrest Him.

They were coming against Him with this armed posse like Jesus is a criminal prone to violence. When in fact Jesus moved among them peaceably every day.

Then Jesus announces to all that this MUST take place. It is God's pre-ordained plan, according to the Scriptures.

The Old Testament is filled with God's plan for a suffering savior, a mis-treated messiah, to reconcile mankind to God - this is Jesus of Nazareth, the Jesus of the Bible.

The Scriptures report that the Messiah, Christ, must be, will be "cut off but not for himself," "despised and rejected by men," "a man of

sorrows acquainted with grief.” Ref: Psalm 22, Psalm 69, Isa 53, Dan 9

V.51-52 Many Bible teachers have taken in hand to demonstrate who this youth could have been. Some propose that it was potentially the author of this Gospel, John Mark with first-hand knowledge of this night, although it is unclear, unstated and not recorded in any of the other gospels.

Whoever it was he was still in his pajamas/or lack of pajamas - some believe this linen cloth to be more like a bed sheet.

What I find most interesting about this is that it is recorded at all.

There are times when we read scriptures like this and we wonder what is going on here, and what we find is that God’s word is so faithful and true and that the Holy Spirit inspired these authors to record even those things that are not perfectly polished.

If I were recording this gospel I might leave this part out but the Holy Spirit inspired Mark to record this happening as a testament to the other witnesses that were there, who saw what was going on in the dead of night where perhaps this young man, wondering what all of

the commotion was about found himself “in the wrong place at the wrong time.”

V.53-65 Our High Priest, THE PERFECT High Priest, stands accused by an imperfect and worldly High Priest.

A harmony of the gospels gives us a better understanding of the events that transpired after Jesus’ arrest.

We know that Jesus was tried several times by people of various offices to include two men identified as the High Priest, Annas and Caiphas, (Luke 3:2) - Annas preceded Caiphas in office as high-priest and was also Caiphas’ father-in-law. So there appears to be some sort of nepotism going on there.

Additionally, King Herod - who was the tetrarch of Galilee under Roman rule; and Pontius Pilate - the Roman Procurator of Judea.

David Guzik gives a helpful timeline regarding the trials of Christ.

b. Upon His arrest, Jesus was first taken to Annas, then to an illegal night court of the Sanhedrin (which Mark will describe next), then to an official daylight trial of the Sanhedrin, then to Pilate, who sent Jesus to Herod, who sent Jesus back to Pilate,

where He then went to the cross. *Guzik, D. (2013). Mark (Mk 14:53–72). Santa Barbara, CA: David Guzik.*

In all of this we find that earthly powers, kings and priests, stand in judgment against the one true heavenly king and priest.

These courts are both unwilling and unable to faithfully carry out justice but Jesus Christ who experiences mankind's fraudulent show of justice is alone worthy to be the perfect High-Priest, perfect King, perfect Judge.

And one day all creation shall stand in His perfect court for judgment.

[Psa 9:7-8 NKJV] 7 But the LORD shall endure forever; He has prepared His throne for judgment. 8 He shall judge the world in righteousness, And He shall administer judgment for the peoples in uprightness.

Pay attention to v. 61-62! Did Jesus ever claim to be the Messiah, did He ever claim to be God? Yes.

And He uses wording here that while not explicitly controversial does invoke the scripturally significant name of God as Jesus responds, "I

am.” This is not the first time Jesus has adopted this as His nature (ref. John 8:58).

[Exo 3:13-14 NKJV] ...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.' "

Jesus is very clear here but His clarity is not enough to move men to repentance. These men had their hearts hardened in the face of Jesus declaring who He was. The same happens today. As a matter of fact they did not accept Jesus' words as true but something worthy of the death sentence.

It is here that, even in hearing the truth, they are not moved to repentance and recognition of “God with us,” but being entrenched in their views and convinced of their own rightness and righteousness they begin to humiliate Jesus in the worst ways by spitting on him, assaulting him, and mocking him - even though everything He said is true and right and good.

[Isa 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.

In this we find that the Scriptures are being fulfilled even as Christ said in v.49.

V.66-72 Peter's denial of Christ.

The Bible is not only a book of victories. It contains many heart-wrenching human failures and clearly demonstrates the need for restoration, reconciliation, and redemption.

In the most certain terms it is a book of our need for a Redeemer individually and collectively.

In these verses we find that Christ's words are true. Peter does in fact deny Jesus despite his vehement protests that he will never do so.

Peter's will is not as strong as he once thought it was. That is a learning point for Peter and an instructive point for us.

We also see here that throughout our study Peter has followed Jesus at a distance. Why? So he can know what's going on? So he can say at the end of the day that he didn't forsake Jesus?

Unfortunately so many people share this similarity with Peter - following from a distance and when pressed to identify as a Jesus follower rather than doing so, adopting the language and parlance of the world - cursing and swearing (see I'm just like anybody else), bullying their way out of a firm commitment just like Peter.

Why does he do that, curse and swear and deny Jesus? So he can keep following from a distance without being harassed? Because Jesus said he would?

Whatever the reason, it breaks his heart. Coming face to face with his own weakness, pride, poisoned mouth, he knows that Jesus has always been right. Peter was deceived by himself and still the Lord never cast him away even knowing what would come.

Luke records for us a bit more detail, stating that Jesus was within sight of Peter and that the two made eye contact during this denial.

[Luk 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.

This denial broke Peter. But I would argue that Peter needed this. His own self-assuredness needed to be checked, and the broken Peter would be the one that Jesus commissioned to feed His little lambs.

Why? Humility. Peter needed to discard his own brash personality in favor of Jesus' personality.

And that came through breaking, Jesus knew this was going to happen, he saw it happen, and he saw what was to come out the other side - a man usable by Him, less assured in his own self and more dependent on Christ.

This time, while bitter, was so necessary for Peter. And it is so necessary for the self-assured saints among us. That breaking softens our edges and focuses our attention on Christ, and reaffirms our dependence on His grace.

And you know what, Jesus is ever faithful to us. Even when we, like Peter, follow from a distance, when we adopt the language of the

world to convince those around us that we aren't a Jesus follower, when we in a moment of weakness deny Him, we are not beyond Christ's grasp.