

Gospel of Mark: Jesus, Alone to Death

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Date: 24 November 2013

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[0 : 0 0] Mark 14, that's on page 1021 in the Red Bible.

Johnny's told me to give everyone a little bit of time, so I'll pause. So starting at verse 27, You will all fall away, Jesus told them, for it is written, I will strike the shepherd and the sheep will be scattered.

But after I have risen, I will go ahead of you into Galilee. Peter declared, Even if all fall away, I will not. I tell you the truth, Jesus answered, Today, yes, tonight, before the cock crows twice, you yourself will disown me three times.

But Peter insisted empathetically, Even if I have to die with you, I will never disown you. And all the others said the same. Verse 43. Just as he was speaking, Judas, one of the twelve, appeared. With him was a crowd of armed, with swords and clubs, sent from the chief priests, the teachers of the law, and the elders. Now the betrayer had arranged a signal with them.

[1 : 1 3] The one I kiss is the man. Arrest him and lead him away under guard. Going at once to Jesus, Judas said, Rabbi, and kissed him. The men seized Jesus and arrested him.

Then one of those standing near drew his sword and struck the servant of the high priest, cutting off his ear. Am I leading a rebellion, Jesus said, that you have come out with swords and clubs to capture me?

Every day I was with you, teaching in the temple courts, and you did not arrest me. But the scriptures must be fulfilled. Then everyone deserted him and fled. A young man wearing nothing but a linen garment was following Jesus.

When they seized him, he fled naked, leaving his garment behind. They took Jesus to the high priest, and all the chief priests, elders, and teachers of the law came together.

Peter followed him at a distance, right into the courtyard of the high priest. There he sat with the guards and warmed himself at the fire. The chief priests and the whole Sanhedrin were looking for the evidence against Jesus so that they could put him to death, but they did not find any.

[2 : 1 6] Many testified falsely against him, but their statements did not agree. Then someone stood up and gave this false testimony against him. We heard him say, I will destroy this man-made temple, and in three days will build another, not made by man.

Yet even their testimony did not agree. Then the high priest stood up before them and asked Jesus, Are you not going to answer? What is this testimony that these men are bringing against you? But Jesus remained silent and gave no answer.

Again the high priest asked him, Are you the Christ, the Son of the Blessed One? I am, said Jesus, and you will see the Son of Man sitting at the right hand of the Mighty One and coming on the clouds of heaven.

The high priest tore his clothes. Why do we need any more witnesses? he asked. You have heard the blasphemy. What do you think? They all condemned him as worthy of death. Then some began to spit at him.

They blindfolded him, struck him with their fists, and said, Prophecy. And the guards took him and beat him. While Peter was below in the courtyard, one of the servant girls of the high priest came by.

[3 : 2 0] When she saw Peter warming himself, she looked closely at him. You were also with that Nazarene Jesus, she said, but he denied it. I don't know or understand what you're talking about, he said, and went out into the entrance.

When the servant girls saw him there, she said again to those standing around, This fellow is one of them. Again he denied it. After a little while, those standing near said to Peter, Surely you are one of them, for you are a Galilean.

He began to call down curses on himself, and he swore to them, I don't know this man you're talking about. Immediately the cock crows the second time. Then Peter remembered the word Jesus had spoken to him.

Before the cock crows twice, you will disown me three times. And he broke down and wept. Thanks very much Lucy and Graham.

So if you keep your Bibles open there at Mark 14, 27 to 31, and then from 43 through to verse 72.

[4 : 36] And we're in a section of Mark's Gospel, which has become known as the Passion, which is really the last week, the last few days coming up to the death of Jesus.

So with that in mind, I want to commend to you a book with that very same title. It's called Passion. So this is something I'm suggesting to put on your Christmas list to either buy for yourself, if you like yourself that much, or you can give it to somebody else.

Now here's the difference. Yes, it's looking at the Passion the last few days of Jesus' life, but it's not through Mark's Gospel, it's through Luke's Gospel.

It's just one that I read a little while ago, found it very helpful. Kirstie's now reading it and also enjoying it and finding it very helpful. Written by Mike McKinley, who is somebody who's a part of the Radstock board that Ralph serves on as well.

Very easy to read, very helpful as it goes through the last week of the life of Jesus on earth before his death. So that's the Passion.

[5 : 48] You can get the title and any more details afterwards. Well, we're going to pray and ask for God's help.

Amen. Father, we thank you for Mark's Gospel.

We thank you for this record, this account, this true story of the last few days, the last hours of Jesus' life on earth.

we pray that this event would not just be some historical event in the past, but that it would be something that speaks to us afresh today, changing our lives, helping us to see the wonder and the greatness of who Jesus is and how we should live in response to him.

We pray that we may grasp something of the Passion of Jesus this morning. We pray it in Jesus' name. Amen.

[7 : 19] His words were very hurtful and they cut right to the heart.

Look at verse 27. You will all fall away, Jesus told him. How could he say that?

I mean, we've left everything to follow him. Verse 31, Peter insisted emphatically, even if I have to die with you, I will never disown you.

And all the others said the same. Even if we have to die with you, we will never disown you.

Well, within just a few hours, those words would come back to haunt them. As those desperate for Jesus' death moved in, look at these die-hard disciples now in verse 50.

[8 : 39] Then everyone deserted him and fled. Jesus is left standing alone, abandoned and rejected by those who called him friend.

In fact, they are so desperate to get away from Jesus. Look at verse 51. a young man wearing nothing but a linen garment was following Jesus.

when they seized him. He fled naked, leaving his garment behind. The first streaker ever recorded. But it's not meant to be funny. This is tragic. He would rather suffer the shame of being found without his clothes on than to be associated as a friend of Jesus.

You see, we're like this young man. There are times we will do anything to protect our own reputation. We will do whatever it takes to avoid being associated with Jesus.

[9 : 55] What if somebody knows? Maybe they won't be my friend anymore. In fact, we're also like Peter.

Look at verse 54. Brave Peter who followed at a distance right into the courtyard of the high priest and there he sat with the guards as if to say I'm now one of them.

And he warmed himself at the fire safe comfortable and distant while Jesus stands vulnerable rejected and alone.

What's going on here? What's happened? Well, through this encounter while everybody else is faithless Jesus remains faithful.

faithful. While Judas goes to betray him and while the Sanhedrin gather to kill him and while Peter curses and denies him Jesus remains the loyal friend willing to die providing hope and offering grace.

[11 : 21] first Jesus willingly dies for those who betray him. Look at verse 44 Now the betrayer had arranged a signal with them the religious authorities the one that I kiss is the man arrest him and lead him away under guard.

Going at once to Jesus Judas said Rabbi a term of affection and kissed him.

Judas we know was one of the twelve. He spent the last three years in the intimate company of Jesus eating with him working with him going on trips with him learning from him enjoying the friendship.

But now Judas comes and he betrays him with a kiss. It's like a husband who takes his wife to the very place that they got engaged only to tell her that he's leaving her for another woman.

Only the closest and intimate of friends can betray you. It's painful. It breaks you and it destroys you.

[12 : 50] I wonder how we respond or how we would respond if a friend were to do that to us. Lash out in our words.

Hit out with our fists. But look at Jesus. Look at him. There is no retaliation.

there is no opposition to Judas or to those that he has brought along with him. Yes, there are others who are getting angry.

Verse 47 Then one of those standing near drew his sword and struck the servant of the high priest cutting off his ear. But not Jesus.

Verse 48 Am I leading a rebellion? Said Jesus, that you would come out with me to me with swords and clubs to capture me. Look, every day I was with you teaching in the temple courts and you didn't arrest me.

[13 : 58] But the scriptures must be fulfilled. Jesus knew all along that this would happen. Jesus has not been taken by surprise at what Judas has done.

Remember back to the meal they just shared together? Chapter 14 verse 18 While they were reclining at the table eating, Jesus said, I tell you the truth, one of you will betray me, one who is eating with me.

You see, it's in the knowledge that those closest to Jesus will betray him, that he willingly dies for them.

Jesus doesn't resist, he doesn't fight, he doesn't run for his life as everybody else does. He gives up his life.

You see, it's people just like you and me who can betray Jesus. Those of us who say, yep, I'm a friend of Jesus, we read our Bibles, we serve in church, we can be teaching or preaching, we seek to be faithful year after year in our walk with him, but then something happens.

[15 : 37] Perhaps like Judas we become disappointed with Jesus. He doesn't do what we expect him to do. And maybe Jesus doesn't do what you want him to do.

We ask him to change a circumstance in our life, we ask him to remove it, but he doesn't and there's no change. Or maybe Jesus let something happen into our lives that we don't expect or we don't want.

We get sick, we lose our job, something goes wrong in our life, and we're disappointed, and so we sell him out.

We turn our backs on Jesus in search of something else or someone else, and we betray him. But in the very act of betrayal, look at the one who does not retaliate.

Look at the one who does not lash out in anger, who does not oppose what the betrayer does to him. Instead, he willingly goes to the cross to die for those who betray him, because Jesus is a faithful, loyal friend.

[17 : 12] Second, Jesus provides hope for those who will kill him. Look at verse 55. The chief priests and the whole Sanhedrin, that was the religious authorities, they were looking for evidence against Jesus so that they could put him to death, but they didn't find any.

Many testified falsely against him, but their statements didn't agree. Why all these lies? Why is there such desperation to get rid of Jesus?

Well, the answer is crystal clear. It comes to us in verse 61. Jesus had remained silent and gave no answer to all their false accusations.

Again, the high priest asked Jesus, are you the Christ, the son of the blessed one? Jesus, are you claiming to be God?

Are you claiming to be God? Verse 62, I am, said Jesus. I am this one with universal power.

[18 : 35] I am the one with supreme authority. I am God. And I am the Messiah, the Christ, the only one who can provide hope for people like you.

At this point, for Jesus to admit that he is God, the son of the blessed one, is basically to sign his death sentence. But the proof that Jesus is God will be seen by his resurrection from the dead. Look at the rest of verse 62. And you will see the son of man, that's Jesus sitting at the right hand of the mighty one and coming on the clouds of heaven.

Jesus is saying to the court that is before him, I will be killed, you will kill me, but I will rise, I will conquer death, and I will reign victoriously, and I will establish my kingdom, because I am the one who provides hope for this broken world.

Of course, as Jesus made clear his identity, look at their response in verse 64. You have heard the blasphemy, what do you think?

[20 : 04] They all condemned him as worthy of death, and they began to spit on him, and blindfold him, and struck him with their fists, and said, prophesy, and the guards took him, and beat him.

You see, we might not be present at the trial. We might not be the ones bringing false accusations, but every one of us in this room have all played our part, in wanting to get rid of Jesus.

You see, we don't like the idea that Jesus is who he says he is. We don't like the idea that Jesus is God. Because if Jesus is God with all power and all authority, then that means my life belongs to him.

And if Jesus is God, the one who is going to come on the clouds of heaven, then I must listen to him because one day I'm going to stand before him.

He will be my judge and I will be answerable to him. And we don't like that. And so it's much easier for us if we can somehow explain Jesus away as some kind of fiction.

[21 : 40] If we can reason that the gospel of Mark is not a true historical account it's all just been made up. If we can somehow remove Jesus' Godness.

if we can get rid of his divine status and reduce Jesus to nothing more than just an interesting teacher who lived hundreds of years ago then that means I can live my life however I want.

You see we've all wanted him killed so that we don't have to deal with him and so that we don't have to answer to him. But look again in the act of trying to kill Jesus look at the one who dies for you and for me look at the one who rises again the one who will conquer death who breaks free from the grave and providing hope as he comes on the clouds of heaven to establish his eternal kingdom to live with him forever and ever providing hope to all who will bow their knee to him as God why would he do that because

Jesus is the faithful loyal friend third Jesus offers grace to those who deny him look at verse 66 while Peter was below in the courtyard one of the servant girls of the high priest came by when she saw Peter warming himself she looked closely at him you also were with that Nazarene Jesus she said remember Peter who's been so consistently portrayed as the faithful loyal and true disciple I'll die for you Jesus I won't disown you verse 68 but he denied it I don't know or understand what you're talking about he said and he went out into the entrance the distance the physical distance between

Jesus and Peter gets greater and greater signifying his own relationship with him and with every question and every accusation in the courtyard comes a greater denial look at verse 70 again he denied it and after a little while those standing near said to Peter surely you are one of them for you are a Galilean and he began to call down curses on himself and he swore to them and I think Mark has carefully edited it here I don't know this man that you're talking about Peter the strong and the brave is nothing but a weak and a broken failure Peter you see there's something that draws us into the story here with

[25 : 25] Peter we don't like to say it do we and we don't often like to admit it but we all know that this is me I'm Peter and you're Peter the promises that we make the commitments that we give and then when we know we should be speaking up or we should be saying something we just keep quiet and we move away it might be at a conversation at work it could be as we're socializing with friends the opportunity arises for us to say what we think and what we believe but then inside we're thinking but what about my reputation what will people think of me

I might lose their friendship we don't want to be the one who's left standing alone and so like Peter we pretend we don't hear or we don't understand what they're talking about at times we'll do anything to avoid association with Jesus and you know those times maybe it's been through this

past week but in the moment of our denial look at Jesus look at the one who is loyal and faithful and true the one who remains steadfast and he offers grace to sinners like you and me jump forward to chapter 16 verse 7 a minute this is after

Jesus has died and after he has risen again from the dead and at the tomb the empty tomb the angels are there and this is the message they give to the women to go and tell the others just look at the beginning of verse 7 of chapter 16 but go tell his disciples and who and Peter don't forget to tell Peter Jesus the risen Jesus needed to meet with Peter Jesus knew his denial Jesus knew all about his sin Jesus saw his guilt and he saw his shame and so as the risen saviour he goes to meet Peter to offer him the grace of forgiveness while everyone else is faithless

Jesus remains faithful as we betray him as we kill him and as we deny him Jesus remains the loyal friend willing to die providing hope and offering grace but you know what there's only one person in this encounter with Jesus who knows him as the loyal friend there's only one person who knows him as the loyal friend it's Peter who came in repentance look back at chapter 14 verse 72 chapter 14 verse 72 immediately the cock crowed the second time and

Peter remembered the words Jesus had spoken to him before the cock crows twice you will disown me three times and he broke down and wept as Peter remembered the words of Jesus so Peter repents for his sin and if we are to know Jesus as our loyal friend the faithful one who does not give up if we are to know him personally and intimately then we must repent as Peter did he broke down and he wept literally he threw himself on the ground and he cried he sees his sin but more than that he's admitting to his sin these are tears not of self pity but these are cries for a saviour and that's the difference between remorse and repentance remorse is just being sorry because you've been found out and you feel bad about yourself repentance is to own what you have done and to seek forgiveness so as we look at

[31 : 39] Peter on the ground weeping and as we by the Holy Spirit are confronted with our own sin don't run away and hide learn to fall on your knees and repent and as you do you will see Jesus the loyal and faithful friend who went to the cross for you who took your very acts of betrayal and denial and was killed in your place for you and look at the one who rose from the grave and who is one day going to come again on the clouds of heaven providing hope the eternal kingdom of God for people like you and me and be amazed be amazed at the one who now stands with all power and supreme authority and offers his grace enough to cover every one of our sins

Jesus Jesus is our faithful friend he does not give up and he will remain loyal let's pray father father there's a side of us that wants to crawl away and hide and yet there's another side that wants us to rejoice and celebrate the faithfulness of Jesus and so in our own minds we do crawl out of that dark corner no longer hiding no longer sitting in our guilt and shame but coming to our faithful friend Jesus receiving forgiveness receiving hope and receiving grace thank you Jesus for your amazing love towards people like us and may this change us so that we will go on as Peter did following you and serving you and living for you may you pour out your grace upon us every day to be the people you call us to be we pray this in Jesus name Amen to love and if to