

## Mark 14:12-26-52

July 28, 2019

Today we see a different side of Jesus. We are going to join Jesus and see how he responds to his impending death.

As his death hovers near, our savior nearly has a breakdown. He does not handle himself like we might expect.

History is littered with valiant and heroic deaths.

- Nathan Hale: The American Revolutionary whose last words he spoke before hanging to death were, "I regret that I have but one life to lose for my country."
- Socrates: Condemned to death by poison in Athens—Plato records what happens at the end,

*"He (the executioner) was carrying a cup that contained (the poison), ground into the drink. When Socrates saw the man he said: "You, my good man, since you are experienced in these matters, should tell me what needs to be done." The man answered: "You need to drink it, that's all. Then walk around until you feel a heaviness in your legs. Then lie down. This way, the poison will do its thing." While the man was saying this, he handed the cup to Socrates. And Socrates took it in a cheerful way, not flinching or getting pale or grimacing."*

- Polycarp: He was brought before a Roman Proconsul. Here is a reporting of conversation between the two of them.

*"Reproach Christ, and I will set you free."*

*“86 years have I have served him,” Polycarp declared, “and he has done me no wrong. How can I blaspheme my King and my Savior?”*

*“I have wild animals here,” the Proconsul said. “I will throw you to them if you do not repent.”*

*“Call them,” Polycarp replied. “It is unthinkable for me to repent from what is good to turn to what is evil. I will be glad though to be changed from evil to righteousness.”*

*“If you despise the animals, I will have you burned.”*

*“You threaten me with fire which burns for an hour, and is then extinguished, but you know nothing of the fire of the coming judgment and eternal punishment, reserved for the ungodly. Why are you waiting? Bring on whatever you want.”*

Many have been amazed at the courage and valor of Hale, Socrates and Polycarp as death snarled in their faces.

Today, we join Jesus in a garden as he faces death and he will not respond anything like Hale, Socrates or Polycarp.

His response should unsettle you.

The reason he responds the way he does will occupy most of our time this morning. Hale, Socrates and Polycarp faced death but Jesus faced something much more.

Jesus faced the prospect not just of dying but of answering for ALL the sins of his followers. He was

not just to die, he was to be the sin bearer for all the saints of all time.

The wonder of this passage is NOT that Jesus fearlessly faces death but that horrified and forlorn he obediently died anyway.

I hope this portrait of a horrified Jesus stays with you.

I hope it unsettles you.

I hope it disturbs you.

I hope it bothers you.

Why?

Grasp his horror to understand his love.

Let's join Jesus again this morning. We come to him late Thursday evening after the Passover meal. We will join them and break this morning down into three different scenes.

### **1. On The Way (Mark 14:26-31)**

“And when they had sung a hymn, they went out to the Mount of Olives. <sup>27</sup> And Jesus said to them, “You will all fall away, for it is written, ‘I will strike the shepherd, and the sheep will be scattered.’ <sup>28</sup> But after I am raised up, I will go before you to Galilee.” <sup>29</sup> Peter said to him, “Even though they all fall away, I will not.” <sup>30</sup> And Jesus said to him, “Truly, I tell you, this very night, before the rooster crows twice, you will deny me three times.” <sup>31</sup> But he said emphatically, “If I must die with you, I will not deny you.” And they all said the same.”

Jesus and his disciples left home they celebrated Passover in, and started the walk to the Garden of Gethsemane on the Mt. of Olives. It wasn't much of a walk but there was enough time for Jesus tell them that all of them would defect.

Remember, there was already a pall over the group because they had just been told that one of them would betray Jesus. Now they hear,

Vs. 27,

“You will all fall away, for it is written, ‘I will strike the shepherd, and the sheep will be scattered.’”

His hand-picked group seem to be more trouble than they are worth. One of them proved to be a traitor and the other 11 were cowards.

In fact, their defection was written in the OT book of Zechariah. This was going to happen.

But Peter trusted himself more than the pages of scripture. He announced,

Vs. 29

“Even though they all fall away, I will not.”

Peter doesn't think much about all the other guys but he is cocksure that he would stay by Jesus' side.

And Jesus says, “Peter you are the worst.”

Vs. 30,

“Truly, I tell you, this very night, before the rooster crows twice, you will deny me three times.” <sup>31</sup> But he said emphatically, “If I must die with you, I will not deny you.” And they all said the same.

So confident.

So self-assured.

So arrogant.

So Wrong.

Talk—especially big talk is cheap. None of them would be able to cash the checks their mouths were writing at this point. Jesus knew this and Jesus responded graciously. He even sets them up for restoration.

Look again at verse 27,

<sup>27</sup> And Jesus said to them, “You will all fall away, for it is written, ‘I will strike the shepherd, and the sheep will be scattered.’ <sup>28</sup> But after I am raised up, I will go before you to Galilee.”

He knew they would all fail him and fall away, but their failure did not disqualify them from his blessing. He makes plans for their restoration by saying he will see them in Galilee after he rises from the dead.

Jesus treats them better than they deserve.

They said—If we must die we will not deny you.  
Jesus said—I MUST die and I will not deny you, yet  
you deny me.

He treats them better than they deserve. Us too.

Failure does not mean disqualification.

There was a whole lot of big talk amongst Jesus' followers on the way Gethsemane. Then they arrived at the garden.

## ***2. In the Garden (Mark 14:32-42)***

“And they went to a place called Gethsemane. And he said to his disciples, “Sit here while I pray.”<sup>33</sup> And he took with him Peter and James and John, and began to be greatly distressed and troubled.<sup>34</sup> And he said to them, “My soul is very sorrowful, even to death. Remain here and watch.”<sup>35</sup> And going a little farther, he fell on the ground and prayed that, if it were possible, the hour might pass from him.<sup>36</sup> And he said, “Abba, Father, all things are possible for you. Remove this cup from me. Yet not what I will, but what you will.”<sup>37</sup> And he came and found them sleeping, and he said to Peter, “Simon, are you asleep? Could you not watch one hour?<sup>38</sup> Watch and pray that you may not enter into temptation. The spirit indeed is willing, but the flesh is weak.”<sup>39</sup> And again he went away and prayed, saying the same words.<sup>40</sup> And again he came and found them sleeping, for their eyes were very heavy, and they did not know what to answer him.<sup>41</sup> And he came the third time and said to them, “Are you still sleeping and taking your rest? It is enough; the hour has come.

The Son of Man is betrayed into the hands of sinners.  
<sup>42</sup> Rise, let us be going; see, my betrayer is at hand.”

At the garden Jesus leaves most of his disciples in one spot and takes Peter, James and John farther on look at what Mark reports. He takes them and,

“began to be greatly distressed and troubled. <sup>34</sup> And he said to them, “My soul is very sorrowful, even to death. Remain here and watch.”

Did you hear that? Jesus is GREATLY distressed and troubled AND sorrowful even to death. Jesus was—you might say—not in a good head space. He is distressed and troubled. Distressed could be rendered astonished.

Don't miss this.

Jesus is troubled and astonished. He is walking the borders of despair and hopelessness here.

When have we seen Jesus like this? Never. To this point he has been unflappable and composed. We've seen him—

- Fasting for 40 days tempted by the Devil in the desert—no problem.
- Face a man with a legion of demons no one can handle—no worries.
- See a dead little girl—and he calls her back.
- Look out on 5000 hungry people—a few bread and fishes will do.
- In a storm that threatens all of them—he speaks a word and its gone.

- Disciples cross the Sea of Galilee without him—he walks on water.
- Clears the temple.
- Takes on the Jewish leaders announcing them to be hypocrites.

Never in any of those situations did we even whiff a scent of distress or trouble. He was not astonished or surprised by anything. He had everything under control. He is not the least bit troubled or distressed.

And so when Mark says he,

*“began to be greatly distressed and troubled. <sup>34</sup> And he said to them, “My soul is very sorrowful, even to death. Remain here and watch.”*

We should take note.

What is happening?

Jesus was recoiling in horror at what was laid out before him. It was not just that he would die that had him troubled and astonished, he had predicted that he would die.

Most recently in Mark 10,

*“See I am going up to Jerusalem, and the Son of man will be delivered over to the chief priests and the scribes and they will condemn him to death and deliver him over to the Gentiles. And they will mock him and spit on him, and flog him and kill him.” Mark 10:33-34*



You see, it wasn't the knowledge that he was going to die that distressed and troubled him. It was something more. He knew this day was coming.

What has him troubled?

What he was facing in the next 24 hours—

Vs. 35

<sup>35</sup> And going a little farther, he fell on the ground and prayed that, if it were possible, the hour might pass from him. <sup>36</sup> And he said, "Abba, Father, all things are possible for you. Remove this cup from me..."

The clue to what he is facing is the word, "cup". Jesus asks that the cup he is facing might be removed from him.

What does that mean?

Cup is a metaphor for the wrath of God. For example, in Ezekiel 23 God references a cup of his wrath and says, "You will drink a cup of wrath, large and deep, full of ruin and desolation, and you will tear at your breasts."

That cup of ruin and desolation stands before Jesus. And he is recoiling in horror.

Jesus is facing something altogether distinctive than Hale OR Socrates OR Polycarp faced. They just faced death. Jesus is facing something far more menacing, something far more horrendous, something far more horrifying, something far more threatening.

What is that something?

God's wrath for sin.

He is facing God's fury for the sins of the world, alone. He faced something far more distressing and troubling than death.

This was astonishing.

He and the Father were inseparable. They were devoted to each other. On earth, Jesus walked with the father, talked with the father, always pleased the father, and always felt love from the father. But in the garden when he went to the father he beheld the cup of his Father's wrath.

Jesus went for comfort and saw the cup.  
Jesus went for strength and saw the cup.  
Jesus went for encouragement and saw the cup.  
Jesus went to his loving father and saw the cup.

There was no comfort—just the cup.  
There was no strength—just the cup.  
There was no encouragement—just the cup.  
There was no sign of his loving father—just the cup.

The father that once thundered from heaven, "This is my son in whom I am well pleased," holds forth his fury for that son.

And Jesus recoils.

And what does Jesus pray?

“he fell on the ground and prayed that, if it were possible, the hour might pass from him. <sup>36</sup> And he said, “Abba, Father, all things are possible for you. Remove this cup from me...”

Don't sugarcoat Jesus' request. Before we get to, not my will but yours look again at what he asks...

“Abba, Father, all things are possible for you. Remove this cup from me...”

Jesus does not want to drink the cup of the wrath of God. Jesus does not want to be the sin-bearer of the world. Remove this cup.

This was no clinical, dispassionate prayer. The writer to the Hebrews says that in the garden Jesus called out to his father with ‘Loud cries and tears.’

What Mark records is just a sentence or two, but this is just a summary of what Jesus said. I can imagine the desperation in those moments. I can imagine him shouting, “NO! NO! NO! NO! Anything but your wrath.”

I can imagine him crying out, “I can't do it. I am not strong enough to bear this weight. Death is one thing but your wrath that is something else. NO! Help. There has to be another way. Let's figure it out together. Surely we can come to some kind of agreement that doesn't involve your wrath on that cross. You can do anything. Can you do this—for me?”

I can imagine him crying through tears, “I thought dying in their place would be....different. This is hard, way harder. Please, rescue me. I’m alone. Help! Do you hear me? I don’t want to, I can’t face your wrath for their sin.”

I can imagine him weeping, “I did no wrong. I always followed you and your will. There has to be another way. Remove this cup. Pour your wrath out somewhere else, anywhere else.”

That is where he starts but look at where he ends up.

**“Yet not what I will, but what you will.”**

Did you hear that?

**“Yet not what I will, but what you will.”**

We have no indication that Jesus changed his mind about receiving the wrath for sin from God. He is clear that this was a road he did not want to go down. He does not change his opinion BUT says that he will do what the Father wants.

One writer said,

*“His victory was not merging his will with the Father’s will. It was choosing what his Father wanted over and against what he wanted.”*

Jesus pushed aside his feelings and did not go with his heart and submitted to the Father. It was not easy—he wrestled in prayer—but he got there....

“Yet not what I will, but what you will.”

In other words, this is not what he wants he submits to the father.

Even though he is troubled and distressed, feeling as if he is about to die, he turns away from his feelings and follows God’s plan for him.

“The wonder of the love of Christ for his people is not that for their sake he faced death without fear, but that for their sake he faced it, terrified.” Donald Macleod

I hope this portrait of a horrified Jesus stays with you.

I hope it unsettles you.

I hope it disturbs you.

I hope it bothers you.

Why?

You have to see his horror begin to grasp his love. May gratefulness well up in our hearts as we consider all Jesus did for us. He loved and obeyed the father for us.

We have a savior who didn’t suffer with us—but our savior suffered for us.

You might be wondering—How can a God of love be so furious with sin?

The reason he is furious at sin is precisely because he is a God of love. He will not sit idly by detached and uncaring as—

- The strong crush the weak
- People are murdered
- Hatred is everywhere
- War is rampant
- People inflict suffering on others
- People inflict suffering on themselves

He can't stand by and do nothing in the face of—

Murder

Cowardice

Disobedience

Rape

Racism

Sexual Abuse

War

Slavery

Genocide

These things and many more cry out for justice. For God to be loving he MUST be wrathful at evil. A God of love MUST punish injustice.

Our problem is NOT just that we live in a broken world, but that we—at one time—were broken too. The evil is not just out there ravaging society but it is in here too.

We have been purveyors of injustice too.

And THAT is the miracle of the cross.

At the cross, the Father treated the Son as if he were personally responsible for the all the sins of his people.

He personally paid for our sins. Thus, the horror. The reason Jesus did not face death as well as Hale or Socrates or Polycarp was because he faced the justice of God for the sins of others.

And that he went means everything for us.

Now, though we deserve wrath—we have received blessing.

Where he deserved blessing—he received wrath.

Though he was horrified he went to the cross and took our place. He went to the cross and faced God's withering wrath alone.

Though he asked for another way—he went to the cross.

How different his response is in this garden than the response of another man in a different garden. In Eden, God said to Adam, "You can enjoy everything, just stay away from that tree or you will die."

And Adam went to the tree.

In Gethsemane, God said to Jesus, "You have nothing to enjoy, you must go to that tree and die."

And Jesus went to that tree.

Adam said of the tree, “There must be another way not his will but mine be done.”

Jesus said of the cross, “There must be another way but not my will but yours be done.”

Adam heard the Father and did what he wanted.

Jesus heard the Father and did what the Father wanted.

All of us would have done what Adam did; none of us would have done what Jesus did.

There was only one man to take our place—Jesus.

And that is what he did.

In his darkest moments, his followers are of no help. They are seemingly deaf to his tears and cries—they fell asleep

Vs. 37,

<sup>37</sup> And he came and found them sleeping, and he said to Peter, “Simon, are you asleep? Could you not watch one hour? <sup>38</sup> Watch and pray that you may not enter into temptation. The spirit indeed is willing, but the flesh is weak.”



He doesn't come out and say, "Hey, I'm doing all of this for you and you can't stay awake? What is your problem?"

Instead, he is kind. He is thinking about them. You guys should be praying because temptation will be coming on you.

And 'the spirit is willing but the flesh is weak.' OR I'm sure that you would watch and pray if you were physically able. OR I know its hard. I'm sure that is what you would want to do if you could.

And that scene is repeated three times in all.

And just like that, it was all over. There would be no more delay. There would be no more waiting around. There would be no more time for sleep.

**It is enough; the hour has come. The Son of Man is betrayed into the hands of sinners. <sup>42</sup> Rise, let us be going; see, my betrayer is at hand."**

As Jesus was speaking these words, a group of men came out to get him. We've walked with Jesus on the way, we have been with him in the garden and now there is yet one more thing for us to see.

His arrest.

### **3. The Arrest (Mark 14:43-52)**

<sup>43</sup> And immediately, while he was still speaking, Judas came, one of the twelve, and with him a crowd with swords and clubs, from the chief priests and the scribes and the elders. <sup>44</sup> Now the betrayer had given them a sign, saying, "The one I will kiss is the man. Seize him and lead him away under guard." <sup>45</sup> And when he came, he went up to him at once and said, "Rabbi!" And he kissed him. <sup>46</sup> And they laid hands on him and seized him. <sup>47</sup> But one of those who stood by drew his sword and struck the servant of the high priest and cut off his ear. <sup>48</sup> And Jesus said to them, "Have you come out as against a robber, with swords and clubs to capture me? <sup>49</sup> Day after day I was with you in the temple teaching, and you did not seize me. But let the Scriptures be fulfilled." <sup>50</sup> And they all left him and fled. <sup>51</sup> And a young man followed him, with nothing but a linen cloth about his body. And they seized him, <sup>52</sup> but he left the linen cloth and ran away naked."

The Jewish leaders finally got their man. They could not have apprehended him without the aid of Judas and his kiss of death. And Jesus, the Son of God was in shackles like a common criminal.

More than that, everything he said previously was spot on when it came to his disciples. His followers who crowed and boasted about being ready to march to their collective death with him, all fled.

It is like a call went out, "Every man for himself." And they ran. Every last one, even Peter.

As he was arrested, he began to reach out and grasp the cup that so horrified him. Just as the scriptures had predicted.

We've been with Jesus to Gethsemane—what can we take away?

- *Gratefulness*

Where would we be without Jesus?

Jesus rejected his own desire to do God's will so that we might not be rejected. What a salvation!

- If it were a treasure, we would never find it forever.
- If it were a task, we would never be able to do well enough.
- If it were a to be purchased, we would never be able to raise the funds even if we gave our very lives.
- If it were a destination, we would never have the strength to make the journey.

BUT our salvation is none of these things. It is a gift. A gift given that cost us nothing and Jesus everything. Everything.

Look today, again at Jesus, and let gratefulness well up. Where would you be without him?

We can take gratefulness away and also,

- *Love*

Our gratefulness should transform into love. Look at what the Father did!

When John said, "God so loved the world..." he was not kidding. He sent his ONLY son to die for you. For me.

Why? Love.

The Father did not send his ONLY son to the horrors of the cross so that he could love us or to make us loveable; rather he sent him BECAUSE he loved us.

No one loves you like the Father. Look at what he did!

- He was deaf to his son's cries.
- He provided no relief in his troubles.
- He gave no comfort in his distress.
- He did not encourage him in sorrow.

Why? He loved you and he loved me.

- There are times when you cry out to the Lord and feel like he doesn't hear you. Because he did not hear his son's cries in Gethsemane, you can know he hears you.
- There are times when you feel there is no relief for you from God in your troubles. Because he provided Jesus no relief in Gethsemane, you can know he will give you relief.
- There are times you feel no comfort in distress. Because he offered no comfort to his Son in Gethsemane, you can know he will comfort you.

- There are times that you feel no encouragement in sorrow. Because of what he gave no help to his son in his sorry, you can know he will help you.

In other words, Jesus WAS rejected by the Father so that we might just feel rejected from time to time. But we are not.

The Father loves us.

We can take love for the Father & the Son away from Gethsemane.

We can take away? gratefulness, love & peace.

- *Peace*

NOT only do now have peace with God—but also does it bring you comfort to see the Son grappling with the Father's will?

It should.

He understands how hard this life is. When you are in the throes of turmoil, Jesus understands. He's been there.

And if you aren't following him—do you see he is safe? He is safe. You can come to Jesus and he has already paid the price with his sins.

PRAY

“May grace and peace be multiplied to you in the knowledge of God and of Jesus our Lord.”



