

# (Through the Bible) Mark 14

by Chuck Smith

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*Chuck Smith's sermon on Mark 14 emphasizes the significance of the Passover, Jesus' impending death, and the lessons learned from His last moments with His disciples.*

**Duration:** 1:03:08

**Scripture:** Psalm 118:22-24, Isaiah 53:10, Matthew 24:35, Mark 14:26-30, Mark 14:36, Mark 14:58, Mark 14:61-64, Luke 22:19, Hebrews 12:2, Revelation 5:6-7

**Topics:** "Jesus Betrayal", "Gods Love"

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## Description

In this sermon, the preacher discusses the betrayal and arrest of Jesus. He describes how Jesus was condemned to death and how the prophecy of Isaiah was fulfilled as people spat on him and buffeted him. The preacher then talks about the reflex actions of the body and how it can cushion blows. He emphasizes the importance of trusting in God's love and receiving his blessings. The sermon concludes with Jesus waking up his disciples and telling them that the hour of his betrayal has come.

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## Transcript

Now, after two days was the Feast of the Passover. Now, we have followed and traced Jesus in Mark's Gospel through Sunday, his triumphant entry, Monday, when he came back to the temple and cleansed it, and Tuesday, when he came back again and fielded these questions, and where the disciples showed him the building, and he said, not one stone is going to be left, saying to one or the other, back to the Mount of Olives on Tuesday evening with his disciples as he sits down there and makes these prophecies and predictions of the end times. Now, after two days, that would be two days after Tuesday, or Thursday was going to be the Feast of the Passover.

But the day, as we've told you, begins at 6 o'clock the evening before. So, two days after Tuesday in the afternoon would actually, the second day would begin in the evening of Thursday, or in the evening, actually, of Wednesday. That's when the day would begin.

And so, the Passover was probably held with his disciples, the Passover Feast on Thursday night, and it was quite likely that Christ was crucified then on Thursday rather than Friday. It is hard to get three days and three nights in the grave with a Friday crucifixion. But crucified on Thursday, buried before the sun went down because they didn't want him hanging on the cross on the Sabbath day, and that being the Feast days, the double Sabbath, they quite possibly crucified him on Thursday instead of the traditional Friday.

And that gives you the three days and the three nights. That's only a matter of speculation. Take it or leave it, you know, the main difference.

But a lot of people get real hung up on the day, and they get so hung up on the day, and all of these articles and all of these theses on the day, you know. And that's not the important thing. The important thing is that Christ died for us.

You know, that's the important thing. And whether it was a Thursday or Friday makes absolutely no difference to your salvation at all. That's why I don't get hassled by those things.

So, after two days was the Feast of the Passover and of unleavened bread. And the chief priests and the scribes sought how they might take him by craft and put him to death. But they said, not on the Feast day, lest there be an uproar of the people.

Now, they were determined they were going to take him and put him to death, but there was one day they wanted to avoid, and that was the Feast day, the day of Passover. But they weren't in control. Jesus was in control.

And in order to fulfill the type in the Old Testament, in order that he might fulfill his mission as the Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world, in order that he might fulfill all of the symbolism of the Passover Lamb in Egypt, it was important that he be crucified on the day of the Passover, which he was. And thus, on that day which they wanted to avoid, Jesus was crucified, and thus was the fulfillment of that whole Passover feast. So that as we observe the Passover today, no longer do we remember God's deliverance of his people out of Egypt, but we remember God's deliverance of his people out of the bondage of sin through the Lamb of God, who through his sacrifice takes away the sin of the world.

Three important feasts in the Jewish calendar in which the adult males were required by law to present themselves before the Lord. Feast of the Passover, the Feast of Pentecost, and the Feast of Tabernacles. The Feast of the Passover, of course, was the memorial of God's deliverance of their fathers from the bondage in Egypt through the sacrifice of the Lamb, the Lamb for the family, the breaking of the unleavened bread, the hiding of that loaf, that broken bread.

The whole Passover feast itself has so much fabulous symbolism. Why is it that they break the middle loaf? Why is it they hide it then and not bring it out until the end of the feast? Again, during the feasting it's not there, but then they bring it out at the end again. So much beautiful symbolism within the Passover.

Jesus fulfilled it. The second major feast in the Jewish calendar came 50 days after the Passover and thus received the name Pentecost, Penta for 50. The 50 days after the Passover, this was the Feast of the First Fruits where they would go out and they would harvest a corner of their field and they would wrap the sheaves of wheat into bundles and then they would offer them as a wave offering before the Lord.

And prior to this offering of this wave offering and the first fruits of Pentecost, they weren't allowed to sell any of the new crop. They weren't allowed to harvest or sell any of the new crop until they had first offered the first fruits unto God. And so it was quite significant that the Holy Spirit was poured out on the church on the second Jewish feast day, the Feast of Pentecost, as they were celebrating the first fruits given unto God.

The first fruits of the church and the ministry of the church came to pass on that day of Pentecost as Peter preached the gospel to those that assembled and 2,000 souls were added to the church. The first fruits of

what we see the continuing fruit today as God is continuing to draw out a body for Jesus Christ, the church of Christ. Now the third Jewish feast, the Feast of Tabernacles, was a memorial feast in which they celebrated God's miraculous preservation of their fathers through the 40 long years of roaming in the wilderness and bringing them into the promised land.

The wilderness experience is over. We're entering into the glorious promised day of the Lord. Now that particular feast has not yet had its New Testament fulfillment.

But it is quite easy to, in your mind, imagine what event will mark the fulfillment of the Feast of the Tabernacles. The old long pilgrimage in the wilderness is over. We're entering into the glorious land of promise.

I am convinced that when Jesus comes again, not necessarily the rapture of the church, that could happen any time, but I believe that when he comes again to establish God's kingdom upon the earth, he will come during the Feast of the Tabernacles. Because that will then complete the feast in the new covenant that God has established through Christ. The Feast of the Passover was fulfilled in the crucifixion, the death of Christ, the Lamb of God slain for the sins of the world.

The Feast of Pentecost was fulfilled with the first fruits of the church being brought in, the outpouring of the Holy Spirit, the first fruit of that great work of God. But the Feast of Tabernacles awaits its fulfillment when he comes again to establish God's kingdom and he delivers us out of this years of wandering in the wilderness and we enter into that glorious kingdom age. So, they said not on the feast day, but Jesus had different plans.

And being in Bethany, in the house of Simon the leper, as he sat at meat, there came a woman having an alabaster box of ointment of spikenard, very precious, and she broke the box and poured it on his head. Now, as a rule, it was customary. This ointment is a very expensive perfume.

It usually was brought from India. And if you were a guest and you went into a house, the host would often take some of this beautiful perfume and just take a dab and put it on you. Like, you usually just put perfume on in dabs.

At least that's the way my wife does. I don't know about that kind of stuff. But, I have more of a manly smell, I think.

But, you dab the stuff. But, this woman poured it on him. Broke the little box and just poured the whole thing on him.

And it was so expensive, you just didn't do that. You just dabbed it. But, she just poured the whole box on him.

And there were some that had indignation within themselves. And they said, why was this waste of ointment made? In John's Gospel, we are told that it was Judas Iscariot that made the objection to it. And it said, not because he really cared for the poor, but because he kept the purse and had been thieving out of it.

And so, he said, why was this waste of ointment made? It might have been sold for more than 300 pence or denarius. Now, a denarius was a day's wage for a laboring man. So, this was almost a year's wages.

Three quarters of a year's wages. The value of this perfume. It could have been sold for more than 300 denarius.

And been given to the poor. Yeah, poor Judas. And they murmured against her.

But Jesus said, let her alone. Don't trouble her. She has wrought a good work on me.

For you have the poor with you always. And whensoever you may do them good if you want. You can give the poor any time.

You always have them around. But you will not always have me. And she has done what she could.

She has come beforehand to anoint my body for the burying. So, at this moment, Jesus is very conscious of his impending death. Verily I say unto you, Wheresoever this gospel shall be preached throughout the whole world, this also shall be spoken what she has done.

And it will be spoken as a memorial for her. Interesting, isn't it, that Jesus knew he was going to die and yet he knew, in spite of the fact that he was dying, that this gospel was going to be preached into all the world. He had that confidence.

She's done this for my burial. But let me tell you something. Wherever in all the world this gospel is preached, this will be mentioned about this woman, what she did.

A memorial unto her. So, he predicts the preaching of the gospel. So, here we are talking about this woman tonight who did this marvelous deed of sacrificing and breaking this box of expensive perfume over Jesus, anointing his body for his burial.

The question, why was this waste of ointment made, let me just say, nothing that is given to Jesus or done for Jesus is ever wasted. Paul the Apostle tells us that your labor for the Lord is not in vain. Now, I have done a lot of things that ended up wasted.

I've been involved in a lot of projects that ended up wasted. But nothing that I've ever done for the Lord is wasted. And Judas Iscariot, one of the twelve, after this event, now Jesus had just rebuked him, let her alone, don't trouble her.

And so, Judas Iscariot, one of the twelve, went to the chief priest to betray him unto them. And when they heard it, they were glad. And they promised to give him money.

And he sought how he might conveniently betray him. And the first day of unleavened bread, when they killed the Passover, his disciples said unto him, where will you that we go and prepare that you might eat the Passover? And he sent forth two of his disciples and he said to them, go into the city and there you will meet a man bearing a pitcher of water, follow him. And wherever he shall go in, say to the good men of the house, the master says, where is the guest chamber where I shall eat the Passover with my disciples? And he will show you a large upper room furnished and prepared.

There make ready for us. And his disciples went forth and came into the city and found as he had said unto them, and there they made ready the Passover. And in the evening, he came with the twelve.

And as they sat and did eat, Jesus said, verily I say unto you, one of you which is eating with me shall betray me. And they began to be troubled and they said unto him one by one, is it I? And another said, is it

I? And he answered and said unto them, it is one of the twelve that dips with me in the dish. The son of man indeed goes as it is written of him, but woe to that man by whom the son of man is betrayed.

It were good for him, or it were good for that man, if he had never been born. Isn't that a tragic thing to have the Lord say about an individual? And yet, that also might be said about everyone who has rejected Jesus Christ. It had been better off had they never been born.

You know, if you don't have Christ as your Lord and Savior, you'd be better off if you were never born. That's just plain, bare truth. You'd be much better off if you were never born than to live without Jesus Christ.

Because to live without Jesus Christ is to live without hope. And it is only to face that certain, fearful wrath of God by which he will devour his adversaries. That certain looking forward to the judgment of God, the fiery judgment of God, or indignation whereby he will devour his adversaries.

It's better that you've never been born. What a horrible, tragic thing. And as they were eating, Jesus took bread and he blessed it and he broke it.

And he gave it to them and he said, Take, eat, this is my body. And he took the cup. And when he had given thanks, he gave it to them and they all drank of it.

And he said unto them, This is my blood of the new covenant which is shed for many. Verily I say unto you, I will not drink any more of the fruit of the vine until that day that I drink it new in the kingdom of God. So Jesus is giving to them a totally new understanding now of their Passover ceremony.

As he breaks the bread, he said, This is my body broken for you. As he takes the cup, he said, This is a new covenant. It's my blood which is shed for the remission of sins.

Then he told them, This do in remembrance of me. You don't remember anymore the lamb in Egypt that was slain and the blood placed in the basin and sprinkled upon the lintels and the doorpost of the house. You don't remember that lamb that was eaten in order that you might have strength for your flight.

But now you remember me. This do in remembrance of me, my body, my blood. And when they had sung a hymn, they went out into the Mount of Olives.

Now the traditionally, the hymn that is sung at the end of the Passover feast is Psalm 118. Significantly, it is a prophetic psalm of the Messiah. Here Jesus was singing about himself.

The stone which the builders has set it not. The same has become the head cornerstone. This is the work of the Lord.

It's marvelous in our eyes. This is the day that the Lord hath made. We will rejoice and be glad in it.

Hosanna! Hosanna! Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord. And Jesus singing with his disciples and then leaving the upper room and going out to the Mount of Olives. And Jesus said unto them, All of you will be offended because of me tonight.

For it is written, I will smite the shepherd and the sheep shall be scattered. That was the prophecy of Zachariah. Jesus is making reference to that prophecy.

But Peter thought he knew better than the prophecy. And Peter argues with the Word of God. Let this be a lesson to you.

Never argue with the Word of God. For you can be sure that any time you find yourself arguing with the Word of God, you're wrong. No two ways about it.

Jesus said, Heaven and Earth will pass away, but my Word will never pass away. Now Peter is arguing with the Lord. Arguing with his Word.

All of you are going to be offended tonight because of me. Because the Scripture says, Smite the shepherd and the sheep are going to be scattered. But after I am risen, Jesus said, I will go before you to Galilee.

And Peter said unto him, Although all shall be offended, yet will not I. The big I. Always a dangerous position to be in. Bragging on yourself. Putting yourself up above others.

Though all of these guys here, Lord, might... But never me. I won't. Yes, they might be offended, but not me, Lord.

Not I. And Jesus said unto him, Verily I say unto you, that this day, even in this night... You see, the day had already begun at sundown. Even in this night, before morning, before the cock crows twice, you will deny me three times. Now, Peter spoke more vehemently.

If I should die with thee, I will not deny thee in any wise. And likewise also, said they all. They all chimed in.

That's right. Again, Peter arguing with the Word of the Lord. Now, I believe that Peter was absolutely sincere.

I believe that Peter loved the Lord. Completely. I have not one question or qualm in regards to Peter's love for Jesus Christ.

I do not believe that Peter's failure was a failure of faith. Or a failure of love. I believe that his failure was just that failure of the weakness of our flesh.

That thinking of ourselves more highly than we ought. That boasting in ourselves or what we so often are guilty of making these rash vows and promises to the Lord that He knows better anyhow. How many times when you're on your knees saying, oh Lord, please do this for me.

And I promise Lord, I'll pray an hour every day. And you, I believe, are very sincere when you say that. But the Lord just sort of shakes His head.

Oh, come on. He knows you. And thus, the vows, the promises that we make unto God are number one, needless.

I don't have to promise God anything to get something from Him. If God is going to give me anything, He's going to give it to me on the basis of His grace. Never on the basis of my merit.

And yet, I'm so often trying to give God reason to give me something. And usually the reason isn't what I am, but what I'm going to be. This is what I'm going to do for you, God.

You know, what I've done is pretty miserable. But I'm going to do, you know. And so on the basis of what I'm promising God I'm going to do, I try and then get God to bestow upon me in sort of a reward kind of a situation.

But God doesn't give to me on the basis of my merit, on the basis of my deserving, on the basis of my goodness, upon the basis of my effort, and surely not upon the basis of my false promises. But God gives to me strictly on the basis of His grace. So I don't have to make any crazy promises to God in order to receive from Him.

I don't have to promise Him I'm going to be better. All I have to do is just believe that He loves me and wants to do for me because I'm His child. And the blessings of God are bestowed upon those children who will just trust the Father to bless them because they know He loves them.

So, Peter is making all of these boasts. And it's interesting, somehow when we speak more vehemently we think that it sounds more true. You know, when you have to start yelling you usually have weak points.

I heard of a minister who used to outline his sermons, but then also he had all of his gestures outlined on the side. And so he said, you know, at this point, move your fist forward with a thrust, for emphasis, you know. And on this point, bow your head and shake it sadly, you know.

And he had the whole thing all worked out so that all of the gestures and everything were all worked out through the whole sermon. And down a ways in the notes on one of the points it said, at this point, yell like everything. It's a weak point.

So, the weak points you've got to really yell to get them across. Peter began to speak more vehemently, Lord, you know, if I would die with you, I would not deny you in any way. Now they came to a place which was named Gethsemane.

The word Gethsemane means the olive press. And the Mount of Olives, as you might guess, was an olive orchard. You hear of the Garden of Gethsemane, but it wasn't a garden as we think of gardens.

It was just an orchard, an olive orchard. And the Gethsemane is the olive press. Now, they, of course, in the olive orchards would have these olive press where they press the olives to get the oil, to extract the oil out of the olives.

And so they came to the place on the Mount of Olives which was called Gethsemane. And he said to his disciples, sit here while I shall pray. And he took with him Peter and James and John and he began to be sore amazed and very heavy.

And he said unto them, my soul is exceeding sorrowful unto death. Tarry here and watch. Evidently, Jesus beginning now to feel some of the emotions as he was contemplating the events that were going to be taking place the next day.

Perhaps he began to sob. He began to breathe heavily. Very heavy.

He wasn't really his normal self. Disciples probably never had seen him like this before. And he confessed to them, my soul is exceeding sorrowful unto death.

Stay here and watch with me. And he went forward just a little ways and fell on the ground. And he prayed that if it were possible, the hour might pass from him.

And he said, Abba, Father. Abba is just another word for Father. Father, all things are possible unto Thee.

Take this cup from me. Colon. The colon signifies just a space of time.

Jesus is requesting to be freed from the commitment to the cross because all things are possible with the Father. He said if it's possible, let this hour pass from me, Father. Now all things are possible with You.

Take away this cup from me. This is heavy, heavy stuff. Sometimes we are prone to take the cross for granted.

Because Jesus when facing it said, to this hour was I born. For this hour I have come. We think, well, he had it all in hand.

It wasn't just a slight thing to Jesus. It was heavy. Very heavy to Him.

Because we see Him the next day bravely facing the whole thing, we are prone to sometimes forget the real battle was waged here in Gethsemane. The reason why He was so strong and brave the next day, He already had gained the victory, as always is the case. We gain the victory through prayer.

Here was the real victory wrought for you and for me. Here in the garden was the real battle. Once the victory was accomplished in the garden, the rest was academic.

The real battles are wrought in the prayer closets, not on the battlefields. Jesus said, you don't go in and spoil a strong man's house until you first of all bind the strong man of the house and then you go in and take the spoil. And through prayer, we bind the strong man of the house and then our service is just going in and taking spoils.

You can do more than pray after you've prayed, but you really can't do any more for God than pray until you have prayed. You can't really do any real work or service for God apart from prayer. And here Jesus, praying to the Father.

Now in Isaiah 53, as it speaks of His taking upon Himself our sins, it declares in verse 10, the middle portion, He shall see His seed. When thou shalt make His soul an offering for sin, He shall see His seed and He shall prolong His days and the pleasure of the Lord shall prosper in His hands. And He shall see the travail of His soul and shall be satisfied.

In Hebrews we are told, who for the joy that was set before Him endured the cross, despising the shame. I believe that at this moment of agony there in the garden as Jesus is saying, Father, all things are possible for You, take away this cup. I believe that the Father at that point gave to Him a vision of that glorious day in heaven when the redeemed of the earth are gathered around the throne of God.

And as He takes the scroll out of the right hand of Him who is sitting upon the throne and the elders are offering their golden vials full of odors which are the prayers of the saints, and the saints break out in that glorious song, worthy is the Lamb to take the scroll and loose the seals for He was slain and has redeemed us by His blood out of every nation, tribe, tongue and people and has made us unto our God kings and priests and we shall reign with Him on the earth. I think as He saw that glorious moment in heaven and saw the redemption complete in your life, in my life, He then continued His prayer. Nevertheless, not what I will, but what you will.

And there He won the victory. How? By surrendering. Surrendering to the will of God.

As long as you are fighting the will of God for your life, you're destined for defeat. It's a paradox, I know. But the way to victory is by surrendering.

By giving up. When you give up your will to God, in that moment you triumph, you conquer. You've come to the path of victory.

And He came to that point of surrendering Himself to the will of the Father. Father, all things are possible for You. Take away this cup from me.

Many times we pray that. Father, we know that all things are possible with You. Touch now and heal now, Lord.

We know that all things are possible with You. Lord, now we want You to do this. But oh, how wise it is to complete the prayer and say, nevertheless, not what I will, but what You will.

Surrender it. Surrender that situation. Surrender it to God tonight.

And if you will just surrender it over to the Lord, you will experience real victory in your life. And so, He came back and He found the disciples sleeping. And He said to Peter, Simon, are you asleep? Could you not watch one hour? Watch and pray lest you enter into temptation.

The Spirit truly is ready, but the flesh is weak. And again, He went away and He prayed and He spoke the same words. Some people say, well, you should never repeat a prayer twice.

Well, I guess Jesus didn't know that. And when He returned, He found them asleep again. For their eyes were heavy.

And of course, they were speechless. They didn't know what to answer. And so, He came to them the third time and He said unto them, Sleep on now and take your rest.

Now notice, there's a colon again. Passage of time. He came back the third time.

They're asleep again. And He said, oh, go ahead guys. Just go ahead and sleep on.

Take your rest. And He sat down, I believe, and just watched them. You can't watch with me, so I will watch over you.

How long a time intervened in this colon, I don't know. But maybe an hour or more. Maybe two or three hours.

As Jesus sat there and watched the sleeping disciples. But as He sat there watching them, I am certain that He was praying for them. As He went around the circle and saw them.

Oh, Peter. Man, you're so gung-ho. I love it, Peter.

But you've got so much to learn. You've got the potential there. Great potential that God can use, Peter.

Oh, Father, strengthen Peter. So that when he is really converted, he'll be able to strengthen his brothers. Don't let his faith fail, Father.

Hold him, Father, strong. John, oh, bless you. I love you.

What a loving spirit you have. And I think that Jesus just sat there watching them as they slept. And His heart just reaching out to them and interceding for them as He watched them.

Go ahead, sleep on, take your rest. And then, how long a time might have elapsed, I don't know. But no doubt Jesus heard the commotion coming down the hillside, the long, the wall of the city from the house of Caiaphas.

The noise of the soldiers and all as they were excitedly talking and Judah speaking with them and heard them coming and approaching the garden. And so, Jesus then said to His disciples, It's enough. You've slept long enough, fellows.

The hour has come. Behold, the Son of Man is betrayed into the hands of sinners. Rise up.

Let's go. For He that betrays Me is here. And immediately, while He was yet speaking, Judas came, one of the twelve, and with him a great multitude with swords and staves from the chief priests and the scribes and the elders.

And He that betrayed Him had given them a token saying, Whomsoever I shall kiss, that same is He. Take Him and lead Him away safely. And as soon as He was come, He went straightway to Jesus and said, Master, Master, and kissed Him.

Notice, Judas never did call Jesus Lord. Others of the disciples addressed Him as Lord. Never Judas.

Not once in the Scripture is it recorded where Judas called Him Lord. But here is an enigma where it said, and He kissed Him. In the Greek language, there are a couple of words for kiss.

There is one, that friendly little peck you put on the forehead of your child. That motion of endearment. But then the Greek language has another word for kiss, which is a passionate kiss of lovers.

And it's rather sickening that that is the Greek word that is used here as Judas kissed Jesus with a passionate kiss in betraying Him. And they laid their hands on Him and took Him. And one of those that stood by Him, from another Gospel, we know that it is Peter.

He drew a sword and smote the servant of the high priest and cut off his ear. He was lucky Peter was still sleepy. He had it cut off his head.

Another Gospel tells us that Jesus picked up the ear and put it back on and healed it. And Jesus answered and said unto them, Are you come out to get Me like a thief? Or as though I were a thief with swords and staves? I was daily with you in the temple teaching and you didn't take Me. But the Scriptures must be fulfilled.

The divine imperative. The Scriptures must be fulfilled. Prophecy must be fulfilled.

You can't stop it. Because prophecy must be fulfilled, I don't get excited about a lot of things. Because you know that the prophecies have to be fulfilled.

What God has said is going to be is going to be. And I don't care what you might do to try and change it. You can't.

Because prophecy must be fulfilled, I take a very different attitude towards a lot of things that are happening today. I hear a lot of preachers get upset and you know a lot of ranting and raving about things of which, hey, it's all prophesied. It's going to have to happen.

I don't care how much you rant and rave and you're not going to change it. The prophecies must be fulfilled. And He of course was referring to that prophecy that they would all forsake Him, which they did.

And they all forsook Him and fled. Now, Mark did not write his Gospel from personal recollection or experience because he was only about 12 years old at this time. But Mark became a companion and traveled with Peter and no doubt heard Peter telling over and over the story of Jesus.

So in Mark's Gospel you pretty much have Peter's account of the story of Christ as Mark records what he heard Peter telling. There is only one portion of the Gospel of Mark that perhaps is a personal account of Mark as he remembered it. And that is this particular verse.

And there followed him a certain young man who had a linen cloth about his naked body. And the other young men grabbed hold of him and he left the linen cloth and fled from them naked. Now, inasmuch as none of the other Gospels record the event of this young man who was following along and was grabbed and fled naked from the garden, most scholars agree that Mark is here putting in his own little personal story.

As a little boy he was probably fascinated with Jesus and the disciples and inasmuch as his mother was very active in the ministry, in cooking for them and helping them and all, Mark probably was just, you know, one of these little boys that tag along and just entranced by the whole thing. And was very positive. Well, he was there in the garden when they arrested Jesus and some of the young fellows that came grabbed hold of him and he wriggled free leaving his coat in their hands and fled from the garden.

And they led Jesus away to the high priest and with him, that is the high priest, there were assembled the chief priest and the elders and the scribes. At this time in their history they had two high priests, one appointed by the Roman government and the other was the one recognized by the people. Caiaphas was the high priest appointed by the Roman government.

Annas was the high priest recognized by the people. Peter followed him afar off, even into the palace of the high priest and he sat with the servants and warmed himself at the fire. And the chief priest and all of the council sought for witnesses against Jesus to put him to death but they found none.

Many came and bore false witness against him but they could not get the witnesses to agree together. And then there arose certain who bore false witness against him and said, we heard him say, I will destroy this temple that is made with hands and within three days I will build another that is made without hands. Of course, that is misquoting what Jesus said.

He at one time said, destroy this temple and in three days I will build it again. But he wasn't talking about the temple of stone made by Herod the Great. He was talking about his own body.

He said, I have the power to lay it down. No man takes my life from me. I have the power to lay it down.

I have the power to take it up again. So he said, destroy this temple. Three days I will build it again.

Talking about his own body. But neither did these witnesses agree together and they had to have agreement. So the high priest finally stood up in the midst and he asked Jesus saying, don't you answer anything? What are these charges that they are witnessing against you? But Jesus held his peace and answered nothing.

As a sheep before her shears is dumb, so he opened not his mouth. Again the high priest asked him and said unto him, are you the Messiah? The son of the blessed? And Jesus said, I am. Asked him point blank.

Jesus answered him straight. And Jesus said, and you shall see the son of man sitting on the right hand of power and coming in the clouds of heaven. Then the high priest tore his clothes and he said, why do we need any further witnesses? You've heard his blasphemy.

What do you think? And they all condemned him to be guilty of death. And some began to spit on him. Prophecy of Isaiah was fulfilled in this.

And they covered his face and began to buffet him. That is, hit him with a fist. The clenched fist with his face covered.

Now that's tough. Our bodies are marvelously made. And when we see a blow coming, there are certain reflex actions that help to cushion the blow.

You move with the punch. And in so doing, you cushion the blow. Our bodies are beautifully coordinated so that you can walk down these steps without jarring yourself to death.

But have you ever stepped off of a step, Alice, that was longer than you thought? Where you were not mentally prepared and your body wasn't coordinated for it and just an inch or two, you can jar yourself so much that you can break bones. If you step off not realizing that you're stepping off and you haven't prepared yourself for that shock, I mean, it goes all the way through you. So, if you are hit and you don't see the blow, when does the quarterback really hurt? When he's blindsided.

You see these little quarterbacks and you see these big jocks coming in and smothering them, you know. And man, he'll never get up. You know, those big old 280-pound guards just nailing him and all.

And the guy jumps right up and, you know, back into the huddle. Why? Because he was able to see them coming and so he goes limp and he rolls with it, you know, and they hit him and he rolls with it and all. And you're prepared for it.

But the quarterbacks get hurt when they get blindsided, when they don't see the guy coming in on his blind side and they get hit without being able to cushion themselves or without being able to roll with it. Then is when you really get injured. So, in order that they might really hurt him, they covered his face and then they began to hit him with their fists.

Not being able to see the blows coming, he wasn't able to move with it. And you can really hurt a person that way. And even some of the servants started to get in on the thing and they began to slap him with the palms of their hands.

When they were through with him, according to the prophecy of Isaiah, his face was so marred, you couldn't recognize him as a human being. You ever seen someone that was really beaten up in a fight? I

mean, really beaten up? Where their face was so swollen and all that, you know, you thought, oh. In fact, have you ever seen someone that looks so horrible that you couldn't bear to look? It's so horrible, you can't even stand to look at them.

That's what Isaiah said. And we, as it were, hit our face from him. In other words, it's so horrible, you just sort of, you can't look.

You hide your face from it. His face, his visage was so marred, more than any man, literally so that you could not recognize him as a man. But he was wounded for our transgressions.

He was bruised for our iniquities. And as Peter was beneath in the palace, there came one of the maids of the high priest. And when she saw Peter warming himself, she looked upon him and said, and you also were with Jesus of Nazareth.

But he denied saying, I don't know or understand what you're talking about. And he went out into the porch and the cock crew. And a maid saw him again and began to say to those that were standing around, this is one of them.

And he denied it again. And a little later, they that were standing by said again to Peter, surely you are one of them, for you are a Galilean. You've got the accent of a Galilean.

But he began to curse and to swear saying, I know not this man of whom you speak. And the second time, the cock crew. And Peter called to mind the word that Jesus said unto him, before the cock crows twice, you will have denied me three times.

And as he was thinking on this, he wept. Oh, God bless you, Peter. I understand where you're at.

I think we can all empathize with Peter. We were sincere in our promise. We do love the Lord.

We didn't really intend. In fact, we thought we would stand up. We didn't intend to fall.

The Spirit was indeed ready and willing, but oh, the flesh was weak. How is it that Peter failed so miserably, first of all? He was trusting in himself. Beware of self-confidence.

The Bible says, take heed when you think you stand, lest you fall. Beware of that boasting of yourself and what you're going to do for God or not going to do. The second failure or reason for failure was his sleeping while he should have been praying or engaged in other activities other than prayer.

Jesus had said men ought always to pray and not to faint. How often when faced with a difficult situation, we faint instead of pray. Oh, can't do it.

This is terrible. Oh, this is horrible. And we begin to faint rather than pray.

Surely the place of prayer is the place of power. The third reason for his failure, he was warming himself at the enemy's fire. The moment you seek to find comfort or warmth at the fire of the enemy, you're placing yourself in real jeopardy.

There are certain places that you as a child of God have no business being, and one is trying to find excitement or warmth at the enemy's fire. You can be sure that when you do that, you're headed for defeat. And the final reason is in that Peter sought to follow the Lord afar off.

That you can't do. You've got to stick close by. You've got to be identified with him all the way.

You can't be a long-distance Christian. God doesn't have any grandchildren. You've got to have your own personal close relationship with him.

You've got to stick close by. Now, God recorded Peter's failures and the reasons so that we might not fail. And if we will follow close by the Lord, if we will continue steadfastly in prayer, if we will not trust in ourselves, but trust in the Lord, and if we walk in His fellowship and company, surely He is able to keep you from falling and to present you faultless before the presence of His glory with exceeding joy.

For I am persuaded that He is able to keep that which I've committed and as you just commit your life to Him, He will keep you. He'll do for you what you can't do for yourself. There's no way you can keep yourself, but He will keep you.

Kept by the power of God, Peter said, through faith. Father, we thank You for the lessons that we can learn from the mistakes of others. Help us, Lord, to learn well the lessons tonight.

Lord, we marvel at Your love for us. And we thank You that You drank that cup in order that we might be able to gather together here tonight as children of God. We are here, Lord, because You loved us and You gave Yourself for us.

We owe our existence and our life to You, Lord, and we appreciate what You have done. We thank You, Lord, that You were willing to bear this pain spiritual, emotional, and physical of the cross in order that we might be freed from the power of sin and be brought from the kingdom of darkness into the glorious kingdom of light. Thank You, Jesus.

Thank You, Jesus. And I suppose, Lord, throughout all eternity, as we are there in the glory of Thy kingdom, there will be that undertone theme going over and over and over again in our hearts. Thank You, Jesus.

How can we thank You enough, Lord, for the redemption that we have because You were willing to drink the cup by submitting to the will of the Father. Oh, thank You, Jesus. Bless now as we go our separate ways.

Keep Your hand upon our lives. Anoint us for Thy service. In Jesus' name, Father.

Amen.

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