

Presbyterian Church of Henderson

Worship Service 10:00 AM

May 16, 2021

Gospel of Mark Series

Ringing of the Bell

Welcome and Announcements Pastor Eric Hoey

Organ Prelude Kristin Jones, Director of Music

*Call to Worship

Happy are those who do not ridicule and scoff

but who delight in God's teachings

and meditate on them day and night.

They are like trees planted by streams of water.

They yield fruit in due season,

and their leaves do not wither.

*Hymn PH 379 "My Hope is Built on Nothing Less"

1 My hope is built on nothing less
Than Jesus' blood and righteousness;
I dare not trust the sweetest frame,
But wholly lean on Jesus' name.

Refrain:

On Christ, the solid Rock I stand;
All other ground is sinking sand,
All other ground is sinking sand.

2 When darkness veils His lovely face,
I rest on His unchanging grace;
In every high and stormy gale,
My anchor holds within the veil.
(Refrain)

3 His oath, His covenant, His blood
Support me in the whelming flood;
When all around my soul gives way,
He then is all my hope and stay.
(Refrain)

4 When He shall come with trumpet
sound,
Oh may I then in Him be found,
Dressed in His righteousness alone,
Faultless to stand before the throne.
(Refrain)

*Call to Confession

The Lord watches over our ways. Let us put our trust in God's grace and confess our sins.

*Prayer of Confession (unison)

God, though you call us to delight in your teachings, we can become cynical and full of doubt. Do not judge us, we pray, but heal us and restore us to you. Guard us and protect us from evil, and sanctify us in truth; in Jesus' name. Amen.

*Assurance of Pardon

In Christ Jesus, God has promised to forgive us and reconcile us to God and each other. With joy, let us share that peace with one another.

*Gloria Patri (PH 579)

Glory be to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Ghost; As it was in the beginning, is now, and ever shall be, world without end. Amen. Amen.

***Passing the Peace**

Please turn and bow to someone out of respect and love— “The peace of Christ be with you”

Prayer for Illumination

May the reading of your Word sanctify us in the truth and bring us to perfect joy. Amen.

First Reading Psalm 1:1-6

1 Happy are those who do not follow the advice of the wicked, or take the path that sinners tread, or sit in the seat of scoffers; 2 but their delight is in the law of the LORD, and on his law they meditate day and night. 3 They are like trees planted by streams of water, which yield their fruit in its season, and their leaves do not wither. In all that they do, they prosper.

4 The wicked are not so, but are like chaff that the wind drives away. 5 Therefore the wicked will not stand in the judgment, nor sinners in the congregation of the righteous; 6 for the LORD watches over the way of the righteous, but the way of the wicked will perish.

Special Music Piano & Organ Duet - Susan Thomas, Piano

Second Reading Mark 13:1-37

As he came out of the temple, one of his disciples said to him, “Look, Teacher, what large stones and what large buildings!” Then Jesus asked him, “Do you see these great buildings? Not one stone will be left here upon another; all will be thrown down.”

When he was sitting on the Mount of Olives opposite the temple, Peter, James, John, and Andrew asked him privately, “Tell us, when will this be, and what will be the sign that all these things are about to be accomplished?” Then Jesus began to say to them, “Beware that no one leads you astray. Many will come in my name and say, ‘I am he!’ and they will lead many astray. When you hear of wars and rumors of wars, do not be alarmed; this must take place, but the end is still to come. For nation will rise against nation, and kingdom against kingdom; there will be earthquakes in various places; there will be famines. This is but the beginning of the birthpangs.

“As for yourselves, beware; for they will hand you over to councils; and you will be beaten in synagogues; and you will stand before governors and kings because of me, as a testimony to them. And the good news must first be proclaimed to all nations. When they bring you to trial and hand you over, do not worry beforehand about what you are to say; but say whatever is given you at that time, for it is not you who speak, but the Holy Spirit. Brother will betray brother to death, and a father his child, and children will rise against parents and have them put to death; and you will be hated by all because of my name. But the one who endures to the end will be saved.

“But when you see the desolating sacrilege set up where it ought not to be (let the reader understand), then those in Judea must flee to the

mountains; the one on the housetop must not go down or enter the house to take anything away; the one in the field must not turn back to get a coat. Woe to those who are pregnant and to those who are nursing infants in those days! Pray that it may not be in winter. For in those days there will be suffering, such as has not been from the beginning of the creation that God created until now, no, and never will be. And if the Lord had not cut short those days, no one would be saved; but for the sake of the elect, whom he chose, he has cut short those days. And if anyone says to you at that time, 'Look! Here is the Messiah!' or 'Look! There he is!'—do not believe it. False messiahs and false prophets will appear and produce signs and omens, to lead astray, if possible, the elect. But be alert; I have already told you everything. "But in those days, after that suffering, the sun will be darkened, and the moon will not give its light, and the stars will be falling from heaven, and the powers in the heavens will be shaken. Then they will see 'the Son of Man coming in clouds' with great power and glory. Then he will send out the angels, and gather his elect from the four winds, from the ends of the earth to the ends of heaven.

"From the fig tree learn its lesson: as soon as its branch becomes tender and puts forth its leaves, you know that summer is near. So also, when you see these things taking place, you know that he is near, at the very gates. Truly I tell you, this generation will not pass away until all these things have taken place. Heaven and earth will pass away, but my words will not pass away.

"But about that day or hour no one knows, neither the angels in heaven, nor the Son, but only the Father. Beware, keep alert; for you do not know when the time will come. It is like a man going on a journey, when he leaves home and puts his slaves in charge, each with his work, and commands the doorkeeper to be on the watch. Therefore, keep awake—for you do not know when the master of the house will come, in the evening, or at midnight, or at cockcrow, or at dawn, or else he may find you asleep when he comes suddenly. And what I say to you I say to all: Keep awake."

Children's Sermon Pastor Eric

SERMON "Jesus' Farewell Prophecy"

Mark 13:1-37

- Today we are skipping back one chapter because Mother's Day prompted me to preach on a section of Scripture that was more Mother's Day friendly.
- In today's text, we have Jesus' final warnings to the disciples before he goes to the cross.
- This passage is often called the Olivet Discourse.
- This section of Scripture and its parallel accounts in the other Gospels is one of the most difficult texts to understand not only in Mark, but in the entire New Testament.

- The reason for the difficulty is because of the prophetic language that Jesus used.
- No one is quite sure if Jesus was referring to something in the present, near future, or future.
- But today, before my vacation, I was challenged to communicate these verses to you in the simplest way possible.
- Allow me to summarize where we are in the Gospel of Mark.
- Jesus made his Triumphal entry into Jerusalem, prophesied the destruction of Israel in cursing the fig tree, cleansed the temple, and entered into debates with the religious establishment...which he repeatedly won.
- Then, he lifts up as an example of a poor widow and her offering.
- Jesus leaves the temple with the disciples, never to return again because the cross awaited Jesus.

1 As he came out of the temple, one of his disciples said to him, "Look, Teacher, what large stones and what large buildings!"

- When I see this reaction, it reminds me of someone who wants to change the direction of a conversation toward something positive and happy.
- I would imagine as the stress of Jesus pending death, and his interactions with the religious leaders; I think it would be fair to say that Jesus was probably not quite his normal self, and it was noticeable.
- "Look Teacher, what large stones and what large buildings!"
- This disciple was not exaggerating, the temple was beautiful.
- The Temple was considered one of the great wonders of the Roman world.
- It had been under construction for 46 years, and was just nearing completion.
- Because of its spectacular location on the Temple Mount, to the Jews, nothing was as magnificent and intimidating as their temple.

2 Then Jesus asked him, "Do you see these great buildings? Not one stone will be left here upon another; all will be thrown down."

- Jesus must have shattered the disciples pride in their temple.
- What Jesus is doing here is prophesying that the temple buildings would be completely destroyed.
- If you think about it, the withering fig tree, the turning of the tables inside the temple courts were pointing toward a final judgement of God to fall upon the temple and its sacrificial system.
- In fact, in 70 A.D. that is exactly what happened.
- The Roman general Titus ordered his soldiers to demolish the city and level its buildings to the ground.
- Its destruction was so great that no trace of the temple remains today only the Western Wall or what is known as the Wailing Wall.

3 When he was sitting on the Mount of Olives opposite the temple, Peter, James, John, and Andrew asked him privately, 4 "Tell us, when will this be, and what will be the sign that all these things are about to be accomplished?"

- After hearing about the destruction of the temple, the disciples naturally asked Jesus for an explanation with two questions: "When" will this occur and "what" will be the signs that this fulfillment would take place?

- You see, with only the knowledge of the OT, the disciples assumed that the destruction of the temple would bring about the end of the present age and usher in the long anticipated Messianic kingdom
- In reply Jesus skillfully wove together a prophetic scene involving basically two main perspectives: (a) the near event, the destruction of Jerusalem (A.D. 70); and (b) the far event, the coming of the Son of Man in clouds with power and glory.
- To help us understand what Jesus is saying in his prophetic visions, consider a pair of glasses with trifocal lenses. One to see far, one to see midrange, and the other to see close.
- Lets begin with the close up lens.

1. The First Vision (Reading glasses)

5 Then Jesus began to say to them, "Beware that no one leads you astray. 6 Many will come in my name and say, 'I am he!' and they will lead many astray.

- In this close up lens, Jesus describes the events prior to the destruction of the temple
- Jesus speaks very pastorally here and begins to warn the disciples against messianic impostors.
- Many false messiahs will arise in times of crisis making use of His title and authority claiming that he is the great I AM.
- They will lead many people astray.

7 When you hear of wars and rumors of wars, do not be alarmed; this must take place, but the end is still to come. 8 For nation will rise against nation, and kingdom against kingdom; there will be earthquakes in various places; there will be famines. This is but the beginning of the birthpangs.

- The second warning Jesus offers is interpreting wars and natural events as indicators that the end is any hand.
- Jesus tells the disciples to not be alarmed.
- Wars, rumors of wars, and natural disasters such as earthquakes, and famines will occur and as they always have.
- Isn't it true when we see war's destruction or natural disasters, we think it is the end of the world? People say that all the time!
- But Jesus is warning his people not to be deceived by those who take advantage of these situations as false Christs who say that they have an answer.
- Remember he said, "Beware that no one leads you astray."
- Having warned them about what will happen **in** the world, Jesus then continues to warn them what will happen **to them** personally.

9 "As for yourselves, beware; for they will hand you over to councils; and you will be beaten in synagogues; and you will stand before governors and kings because of me, as a testimony to them. 10 And the good news must first be proclaimed to all nations.

- The religious leaders will accuse, condemn, punish, the disciples and be dragged into their courts and be called to give an answer for what they do.
- What is interesting here is the wide reach of Jesus warning.

- If they were only in a Jewish context, Jesus would stop at what will happen in synagogues, but he doesn't.
 - The disciples will be brought before governors and kings.
 - These are rulers in other cultures!
 - Jesus seems to urge them to continue to share the gospel regardless of who they stand before and in places of threat.
 - Everyone needs to hear the gospel because it was intended for all people.
- 11 When they bring you to trial and hand you over, do not worry beforehand about what you are to say; but say whatever is given you at that time, for it is not you who speak, but the Holy Spirit.*
- Jesus tells them not to worry about what they will say before these governors and kings, but God is with them.
 - They are not to be anxious about the words of their defense, but they are to speak whatever God gives them to say at the moment.
 - Under hostile situations, the Holy Spirit will give them words to say.
- 12 Brother will betray brother to death, and a father his child, and children will rise against parents and have them put to death; 13 and you will be hated by all because of my name.*
- Jesus again warns them that people will not generally rush forward with open arms but basically reject them.
 - Because of the allegiance to Jesus, His disciples will be hated by all kinds of people not just hostile authorities or family members.
 - Later Peter will write:
 - 1Peter 4:16 *Yet if any of you suffers as a Christian, do not consider it a disgrace, but glorify God because you bear this name.*
- But the one who endures to the end will be saved.*
- See the last phrase.
 - By this verse, one can easily say that salvation is only obtained if we are persecuted when we die.
 - What this is saying is that a person genuinely saved by grace through faith who endures to the end and will experience the finalization of his salvation here in this world.

2. The Second Vision (Mid-range glasses)

14 "But when you see the desolating sacrilege set up where it ought not to be (let the reader understand), then those in Judea must flee to the mountains; 15 the one on the housetop must not go down or enter the house to take anything away; 16 the one in the field must not turn back to get a coat. 17 Woe to those who are pregnant and to those who are nursing infants in those days! 18 Pray that it may not be in winter. 19 For in those days there will be suffering, such as has not been from the beginning of the creation that God created until now, no, and never will be.

- This next section seems to be clearly about an historical event.
- See the phrase "desolating sacrilege" in other translations is the "abomination that causes desolation"
- The word "sacrilege" means something that is detestable to God.
- The word desolating is someone that causes separation and isolation
- So the idea here is an act that is detestable to God that leads to isolation

- Basically this means when the time comes when the Roman armies are ready to destroy the temple mount which happened in 70 A.D.

20 And if the Lord had not cut short those days, no one would be saved; but for the sake of the elect, whom he chose, he has cut short those days.

- So Jesus is telling his disciples, when they see preparations of the attack upon the temple, they are to flee.
- They are to flee to the hill country and not to go back to Jerusalem, and they are not to try and go back to get their possessions.
- Jesus becomes very specific and compassionate about hardship upon those pregnant and/or nursing, and pray that it does not happen during the winter because of the difficulty traveling during the rainy season crossing flooded streams.
- This will be the worse suffering Israel will ever experienced.

21 And if anyone says to you at that time, 'Look! Here is the Messiah!' or 'Look! There he is!'—do not believe it. 22 False messiahs and false prophets will appear and produce signs and omens, to lead astray, if possible, the elect. 23 But be alert; I have already told you everything.

- In the midst of this scene of utter chaos of people running for their lives, Jesus adds there will be false prophets offering easy solutions and impressive actions.
- Notice the difference between these false Messiahs and the Jesus the actual Messiah.
- The false ones do everything they can with signs to have people be impressed with them whereas Jesus in his ministry did everything he could to not prove his divinity.
- Their main goal is to distract believers from their task to endure.
- These disciples should be on their guard because they have been forewarned.

3. The Third Vision (Farsighted lenses)

24 "But in those days, after that suffering, the sun will be darkened, and the moon will not give its light, 25 and the stars will be falling from heaven, and the powers in the heavens will be shaken.

- This section turns to Jesus' vision for the end of all things.
- In light of all the false Messiahs the true Messiah will come again.
- So Jesus goes from a near sighted vision, to a mid-range vision to a far range vision of the future
- This text is seen in *Isaiah 13:10 For the stars of the heavens and their constellations will not give their light; the sun will be dark at its rising, and the moon will not shed its light.*
- These words are about a cosmic vision of the future.
- *Daniel 7:13-14 As I watched in the night visions, I saw one like a human being coming with the clouds of heaven. And he came to the Ancient One and was presented before him. 14 To him was given dominion and glory and kingship, that all peoples, nations, and languages should serve him. His dominion is an everlasting dominion that shall not pass away, and his kingship is one that shall never be destroyed.*
- Watch the similarities in our text:

26 Then they will see 'the Son of Man coming in clouds' with great power and glory. 27 Then he will send out the angels, and gather his elect from the four winds, from the ends of the earth to the ends of heaven.

- What we see here is that at the second coming of Jesus, sometimes known as the "parousia," where Jesus finally becomes the reigning Messiah as he comes in power and glory.
- When Jesus came to earth, he came as a suffering servant.
- Now when Jesus comes a second time, he will come in triumph with great power and glory.

28 "From the fig tree learn its lesson: as soon as its branch becomes tender and puts forth its leaves, you know that summer is near.

- In Palestine most trees remain green throughout the year, but the fig tree is an exception.
- In the fall it loses its leaves; and when in the spring the tree begins to leaf out, summer cannot be far off.
- This parable was meant to be a solution to despair.
- In contrast to the suffering described earlier, the idea of the coming of the Son of Man is offered.
- The timing of all of this is what scholars have debated for hundreds of years.

29 So also, when you see *these things* taking place, you know that he is near, at the very gates. 30 Truly I tell you, this generation will not pass away until *all these things* have taken place. 31 Heaven and earth will pass away, but my words will not pass away.

- The chief problem in this text is what is meant by "these things"
- Is it the things before the destruction of Jerusalem or the things at the end of the age when the universe is altered by the coming of Christ.
- We are unsure. I lean toward the latter.

32 "But about that day or hour no one knows, neither the angels in heaven, nor the Son, but only the Father. 33 Beware, keep alert; for you do not know when the time will come. 34 It is like a man going on a journey, when he leaves home and puts his slaves in charge, each with his work, and commands the doorkeeper to be on the watch. 35 Therefore, keep awake—for you do not know when the master of the house will come, in the evening, or at midnight, or at cockcrow, or at dawn, 36 or else he may find you asleep when he comes suddenly. 37 And what I say to you I say to all: Keep awake."

- Basically Jesus is warning his disciples and us today, to not get caught up with times and dates.
- Only God knows.
- They are not what matters.
- The words used repeatedly in this text: beware, keep alert.
- What matters is to be ready, vigilant, and live with the expectation that Jesus is coming at any time.

Offering

Christ has called us to be his witnesses to the ends of the earth. So let us give generously to fulfill that call.

***Doxology**

Praise God from whom all blessing flow.

Praise Him all creatures here below.

Praise him above the heavenly host.

Praise Father, Son, and Holy Ghost

***Prayer of Dedication**

Holy One, we clap our hands and shout for joy! We give you praise and these offerings, for, with Christ ascended by your side, you are God, awesome and Most High! Amen.

***Affirmation of Faith** (Apostle's Creed)

Minister:

Brothers and Sisters in Christ, what do you believe?

All:

I BELIEVE in God the Father Almighty, Maker of heaven and earth, and in Jesus Christ his only Son our Lord; who was conceived by the Holy Ghost, born of the Virgin Mary, suffered under Pontius Pilate, was crucified, dead, and buried; he descended into hell; the third day he rose again from the dead; he ascended into heaven, and sitteth on the right hand of God the Father Almighty; from thence he shall come to judge the quick and the dead. I believe in the Holy Ghost; the holy catholic Church; the communion of saints; the forgiveness of sins; the resurrection of the body; and the life everlasting. Amen.

Prayers of the People

Let us pray for the world and ask that we may be given the grace to be faithful disciples of Jesus. May we be like trees planted by streams of water.

Holy God, this world is peopled by those who delight in your teachings and those who scoff at your ways. Guide us to meditate on you day and night, that we may be an influence for good in the world.

We pray for the people and the leaders of the world in all our diversity. Sanctify them in your truth, that there may be peace and harmony on earth.

We pray for those who are sick or suffering, that they may know your protection and care through our faithful service.

We pray for your church, that by the marriage of your grace and our faith we may serve you and our neighbors.

We pray for Earth itself, your marvelous creation. Inspire and help us to be the good stewards that you ask us to be, now and for the future.

Make holy all for which we pray—the poor, the infirm, the church, the world—for holiness and wholeness come from you. Receive these prayers both spoken and unspoken, for we are yours, and now, with confidence as children of God, let us pray:

Lord's Prayer

Our Father, who art in Heaven, hallowed be thy name. Thy Kingdom come, thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread and forgive us our debts as we forgive our debtors. And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil. For Thine is the Kingdom, and the Power, and the Glory forever. Amen.

***Hymn** PH 272 "God of the Sparrow"

1. God of the sparrow
God of the whale
God of the swirling stars
How does the creature say Awe
How does the creature say Praise

2. God of the earthquake
God of the storm
God of the trumpet blast
How does the creature cry Woe
How does the creature cry Save

3. God of the rainbow
God of the cross
God of the empty grave
How does the creature say Grace
How does the creature say Thanks

4. God of the hungry
God of the sick
God of the prodigal
How does the creature say Care
How does the creature say Life

5. God of the neighbour
God of the foe
God of the pruning hook
How does the creature say Love
How does the creature say Peace

6. God of the ages
God near at hand
God of the loving heart
How do your children say Joy
How do your children say Home

***Benediction**

The LORD bless you and keep you; the LORD make his face to shine upon you, and be gracious to you; the LORD lift up his countenance upon you, and give you peace both now and evermore.

***Organ Postlude** (please be seated for the postlude)