

Presbyterian Church of Henderson

Worship Service 10:00 AM

July 11, 2021

Gospel of Mark Series

Ringing of the Bell

Welcome and Announcements Pastor Eric Hoey

Organ Prelude Susan Thomas

***Call to Worship**

Come, let us worship God with the passion and joy of King David and all the people who sang and danced before the ark of the covenant.

Let us worship our Savior with the songs of praise and thanksgiving of the apostle Paul and all who are blessed with every spiritual blessing.

God has blessed us in our Lord Jesus Christ, destined us to be children of God, and sealed us in the Holy Spirit.

Let us worship God.

***Hymn** PH 464 "Joyful, Joyful, We Adore Thee"

1 Joyful, joyful, we adore Thee,
God of glory, Lord of love;
Hearts unfold like flowers before Thee,
Opening to the sun above.
Melt the clouds of sin and sadness;
Drive the gloom of doubt away;
Giver of immortal gladness,
Fill us with the light of day.

2 All Thy works with joy surround Thee,
Earth and heaven reflect Thy rays,
Stars and angels sing around Thee,
Center of unbroken praise.
Field and forest, vale and mountain,
Flowery meadow, flashing sea,
Singing bird and flowing fountain,
Call us to rejoice in Thee.

3 Mortals, join the happy chorus
Which the morning stars began;
Love divine is reigning o'er us,
Joining all in heaven's plan.
Ever singing, march we onward,
Victors in the midst of strife,
Joyful music leads us sunward
In the triumph song of life.

***Call to Confession**

The godliness of Jesus Christ calls us to be holy and blameless. The riches of God's grace promise forgiveness of our trespasses. Let us confess our sins.

***Prayer of Confession** (unison)

Holy, holy, holy Lord, you are the God of glory. We confess that we often forget that your holiness illumines our hearts. We take our impurities for granted, and make excuses for the sins we commit. We do not deserve your mercy. Forgive us, and return us to a right relationship with you for the sake of your Son, Jesus Christ. You made us for the purpose of praising you; enliven us with the Holy Spirit so that we can fulfill our calling in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ. Amen.

***Assurance of Pardon**

According to the riches of his grace, which God has lavished upon us and sealed for us by the promised Holy Spirit, hear this good news: In Jesus Christ, we are forgiven.

***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**

May the peace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you!

And also with you!

Let us share with one another a sign of Christ's Peace.

Prayer for Illumination

Spirit of the living God, seal in us your Word of truth, the gospel of salvation, so that we can faithfully follow and joyfully serve our Lord Jesus Christ, for it is in his name that we pray. Amen.

First Reading Ephesians 1:3-8

Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who has blessed us in Christ with every spiritual blessing in the heavenly places, just as he chose us in Christ before the foundation of the world to be holy and blameless before him in love. He destined us for adoption as his children through Jesus Christ, according to the good pleasure of his will, to the praise of his glorious grace that he freely bestowed on us in the Beloved. In him we have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of our trespasses, according to the riches of his grace that he lavished on us.

Special Music Betty Norment, soloist

Second Reading Mark 14:53-72

They took Jesus to the high priest; and all the chief priests, the elders, and the scribes were assembled. Peter had followed him at a distance, right into the courtyard of the high priest; and he was sitting with the guards, warming himself at the fire.

Now the chief priests and the whole council were looking for testimony against Jesus to put him to death; but they found none. For many gave false testimony against him, and their testimony did not agree.

Some stood up and gave false testimony against him, saying, "We heard him say, 'I will destroy this temple that is made with hands, and in three days I will build another, not made with hands.'" But even on this point their testimony did not agree.

Then the high priest stood up before them and asked Jesus, "Have you no answer? What is it that they testify against you?" But he was silent and did not answer. Again the high priest asked him, "Are you the Messiah, the Son of the Blessed One?" Jesus said, "I am; and 'you will see the Son of Man seated at the right hand of the Power,' and 'coming with the clouds of heaven.'"

Then the high priest tore his clothes and said, "Why do we still need witnesses? You have heard his blasphemy! What is your decision?" All of them condemned him as deserving death.

Some began to spit on him, to blindfold him, and to strike him, saying to him, "Prophecy!" The guards also took him over and beat him.

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 stared at him and said, "You also were with Jesus, the man from Nazareth." But he denied it, saying, "I do not know or understand what you are talking about." And he went out into the forecourt. Then the cock crowed. And the servant-girl, on seeing him, began again to say to the bystanders, "This man is one of them." But again he denied it. Then after a little while the bystanders again said to Peter, "Certainly you are one of them; for you are a Galilean." But he began to curse, and he swore an oath, "I do not know this man you are talking about." At that moment the cock crowed for the second time. Then Peter remembered that Jesus had said to him, "Before the cock crows twice, you will deny me three times." And he broke down and wept.

Children's Sermon Pastor Eric

- What does it mean to be adopted? To take a child to become a family
- What does it mean when God adopts us? God makes us a part of his family
-

SERMON "The Trial of Jesus"

Mark 14:53-72

- CONTRAST: "The state of being strikingly different from something else in close association"
- This is exactly what Mark is doing when is he describing the trial of Jesus before Caiaphas.
- Mark's account is not a chronological statement after Jesus arrest and sentencing.
- This is why in other gospels you will find very different details about Jesus' appearance before Annas, Caiaphas, Herod, and Pilate.
- Jesus had to go through two major trials.
- The first is the ecclesiastical/religious trial that involved three phases, and second was the civil trial that also involved three phases.

- Mark jumps straight to the second phase of the ecclesiastical trial to emphasize his contrast.
- This was an “informal trial” because it was in the middle of the night, and it that required a “formal” ratification at dawn because Jews were not allowed to conduct trials at night
- Now according to John Grassmick in *The Bible Knowledge Commentary*, he says “ This hasty night meeting was deemed necessary because: (1) In Jewish criminal law it was customary to hold a trial immediately after arrest. (2) Roman legal trials were usually held shortly after sunrise...so the Sanhedrin needed a binding verdict by daybreak in order to get the case to Pilate early.
- In our text today, Mark is using his usual sandwich style of presenting information to highlight the contrast between the inner and outer story.
- This is why Mark does not go into detail of the various trials Jesus encountered, but he writes only enough to highlight the contrast between the failure of Peter and the steadfastness of the Son of Man.
- Mark was writing to encourage his readers what it took to succeed in an inhospitable world.
- Before we talk about Jesus’ trial, let’s look at how Peter is woven into the story.

1. Peter’s Situation

53 They took Jesus to the high priest; and all the chief priests, the elders, and the scribes were assembled. 54 Peter had followed him at a distance, right into the courtyard of the high priest; and he was sitting with the guards, warming himself at the fire.

- Even though the text earlier in v. 50 said, “All of them deserted him and fled,” out of curiosity, Peter had followed Jesus and the authorities at a distance.
- Remember earlier in Mark, *Mark 14:30-31* Jesus said to him, “Truly I tell you, this day, this very night, before the cock crows twice, you will deny me three times.” But he [Peter] said vehemently, “Even though I must die with you, I will not deny you.” And all of them said the same.
- Peter is saying, I will die for you, and I will not deny you.
- When the authorities came to arrest Jesus, Peter does not stand by Jesus’ side to “die with you,” but follows at a “safe” distance to protect himself.
- When you give your life in support of someone, the last thing one should be thinking about is their own safety.
- Here in this text, Mark was setting the stage for Peter’s BIG denial of Jesus.
- Peter is in the inner courtyard of the high priest, sitting with the palace guards, and warming himself by the fire.

2. Trial of Jesus

55 Now the chief priests and the whole council were looking for testimony against Jesus to put him to death; but they found none. 56 For many gave false testimony against him, and their testimony did not agree.

- The key word here is **testimony**.
- But according to the OT law in *Numbers 35:30* *If anyone kills another, the murderer shall be put to death on the evidence of witnesses; but no one shall be put to death on the testimony of a single witness.*
- Now, remember it is in the middle of the night, yet there were plenty of people giving “false testimony.”

- The religious authorities had no problem finding false witnesses because these witnesses were probably the best money could buy.
- You see two witnesses had to agree on the testimony before a criminal could be condemned to death.
- The testimony of these false witnesses was inconsistent, so it was disqualified
57 Some stood up and gave false testimony against him, saying, 58 "We heard him say, 'I will destroy this temple that is made with hands, and in three days I will build another, not made with hands.'" 59 But even on this point their testimony did not agree.
- "Some stood up" implying two witnesses came forward to give another false testimony saying they heard what Jesus said about the temple being destroyed — *'I will destroy this temple that is made with hands, and in three days I will build another, not made with hands.'*
- Now, destruction of a place of worship was a capital offense in the ancient world.
- The Jews who had first heard Jesus say this had misinterpreted it.
- Not only did they misinterpret Jesus they also misquoted him.
- Therefore it is no surprise that they presented a garbled account of this saying of Jesus where they could not agree on the details.
- Mark shows the inconsistency in the testimony and labels it false.
- But we know Jesus was prophesying the destruction of the temple, which was going to happen, and at the same time he was metaphorically speaking about the destruction of the sanctuary of his own body.

60 Then the high priest stood up before them and asked Jesus, "Have you no answer? What is it that they testify against you?" 61 But he was silent and did not answer.

- When the trial seemed like it was a complete failure, Caiaphas stood up as if to say, "This is a serious charge. It certainly requires an answer!"
- Of course Jesus could have shown that it was both a misinterpretation and a distortion of what he had said.
- But Jesus knows that the purpose of this trial was not to prove that he was right, but humbly allow **wrong** to triumph.
- Jesus remained silent which was exactly according to prophecy.
- *Is. 53:7 He was oppressed, and he was afflicted, yet he did not open his mouth; like a lamb that is led to the slaughter, and like a sheep that before its shearers is silent, so he did not open his mouth.*
- The silence of Jesus only irritates Caiaphas
- The high priest changes his tactics and asked Jesus a pointed question.
- He needed a charge of blasphemy because it was a crime punishable by death.
Again the high priest asked him, "Are you the Messiah, the Son of the Blessed One?" 62 Jesus said, "I am; and 'you will see the Son of Man seated at the right hand of the Power,' and 'coming with the clouds of heaven.'"
- "Are you the Messiah, the Son of the Blessed One?"
- When Caiaphas uses the term Son of the "Blessed One," blessed one was used in place of saying God.
- The name of God was so revered that people would often use other terms like blessed one to refer to God.
- This is unusual for a presiding officer who has taken it upon himself to go way beyond presiding over a meeting.

- Instead, he is clearly using this middle of the night session of the Sanhedrin as a tool for his own intent to destroy Jesus.
- So Jesus' response is open and honest, "I am!"
- When Jesus says, "I am," this is title God gave himself as he was speaking to Moses in the burning bush.
- All throughout Mark, Jesus has hidden his identity as the "Messiah" or the "Son of God" because he did not want to be identified with expectations of an earthly Messiah that existed among the Jews
- Only now before Caiaphas the high priest, Jesus fully and openly accepts the title.
- Jesus continues to say in v. 62, "' you will see the Son of Man seated at the right hand of the Power,' and 'coming with the clouds of heaven.'"
- Jesus describes himself as the one who will be enthroned at the right hand of God and will be the one to come in the clouds at the end of the age.
- BUT, it was as if Jesus were saying, "You are judging me, but because of who I AM, I will ultimately judge you!"
- But the Sanhedrin did not have the ears to hear.

63 Then the high priest tore his clothes and said, "Why do we still need witnesses? 64 You have heard his blasphemy! What is your decision?" All of them condemned him as deserving death. 65 Some began to spit on him, to blindfold him, and to strike him, saying to him, "Prophecy!" The guards also took him over and beat him.

- When the high priest tore his clothes, he probably tore his inner garments rather than his priestly robes.
- When the high priest did this which was rare, he was publicly demonstrating that Jesus' declaration was blasphemy.
- To him, Jesus' words dishonored God by claiming rights and powers belonging exclusively to God
- No more witnesses were needed.
- Caiaphas had all he needed.
- He turns to the Sanhedrin, and asks for their verdict.
- Everyone in the room condemned Jesus to deserve death.
- Here we see Jesus in his full glory of his complete identity boldly, courageously, standing up before the high priest while everyone in the room refuses to believe who Jesus was.
- Other members of the Sanhedrin showed their contempt through mockery and physical abuse.
- Spitting and hitting were traditional means of expressing rejection and renunciation.
- So here we see the reality of the identity of Jesus as the Messiah, the Son of God.
- Mark presents him as a role model of the kind of courageous and faithful behavior the readers were to emulate in their lives when they undergo a similar trials and legal challenges to their faith.

3. Peter's Failure

66 While Peter was below in the courtyard, one of the servant-girls of the high priest came by. 67 When she saw Peter warming himself, she stared at him and said, "You also were with Jesus, the man from Nazareth." 68 But he denied it,

saying, "I do not know or understand what you are talking about." And he went out into the forecourt. Then the cock crowed.

- While Jesus trial was progressing, Mark comes back to the story of Peter warming himself in the courtyard by a fire.
- Notice what happens next.
- A servant girl recognized Peter as being with Jesus.
- Peter strongly denies it.
- Notice the contrasts: Jesus standing firm before the highest religious authorities in Ancient Judaism, Peter crumbling in the face of a mere servant girl
- Mark weaves these two stories together to teach his readers how to stand up to adversity.
- It is almost as if Mark was saying, don't do what Peter did.
- Stand up before the authorities and do not back down upon your faith.
- Winston Churchill: "Courage is what it takes to stand up and speak; courage is also what it takes to sit down and listen."
- In this remarkable story, the writer is making us listen to the contrast, and have courage to stand up for our faith.

69 And the servant-girl, on seeing him, began again to say to the bystanders, "This man is one of them." 70 But again he denied it. Then after a little while the bystanders again said to Peter, "Certainly you are one of them; for you are a Galilean." 71 But he began to curse, and he swore an oath, "I do not know this man you are talking about." 72 At that moment the cock crowed for the second time. Then Peter remembered that Jesus had said to him, "Before the cock crows twice, you will deny me three times." And he broke down and wept.

- A total of three times, just as Jesus prophesied, Peter denied association with Jesus.
- The three times emphasizes the fact of Peter's complete failure.
- In this passage, Peter, the representative of the Twelve, falls to the lowest point of failure in discipleship, providing a negative example almost as bad as the betrayal of Jesus by Judas.
- What is interesting here is that fact that Peter's denial is in full description in all four gospels.
- For a person who was such a prominent leader in early Christianity, you think some of the writers or copists would downplay this very fact.
- This shows how much the Gospel accounts were not to promote the reputation of the early Christian leaders (like some of the other false writings at that time: by the way the pseudepigrapha are ancient writings that attempt to create Scripture under false names) but **this brutal honesty was to emphasize the absolute significance of Jesus.**
- Jesus retains his integrity at the cost of his life whereas Peter loses his integrity to save his skin.
- Q: Do you stand up for your faith or do you cave under fear of what other will think of you?

***Hymn** PH 403 "What a Friend We Have in Jesus"

1 What a Friend we have in Jesus,
All our sins and griefs to bear!
What a privilege to carry
Everything to God in prayer!

O what peace we often forfeit,
O what needless pain we bear,
All because we do not carry
Everything to God in prayer!

2 Have we trials and temptations?
Is there trouble anywhere?
We should never be discouraged,
Take it to the Lord in prayer.
Can we find a friend so faithful
Who will all our sorrows share?
Jesus knows our every weakness,
Take it to the Lord in prayer.

3 Are we weak and heavy-laden,
Cumbered with a load of care?
Precious Savior, still our refuge—
Take it to the Lord in prayer;
Do thy friends despise, forsake thee?
Take it to the Lord in prayer;
In His arms He'll take and shield thee,
Thou wilt find a solace there.

Offering

Consider what God has given to us in Jesus Christ; remember that, even now, the Holy Spirit dwells in us; rejoice that we are part of God's plan for all time. Let us present our offerings of thanksgiving.

***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**

Glorious God, we bring an offering taken from the gifts you have given us. As we return them to you with our thanksgiving, bless them with the power of your love so that they may touch the lives of others and inspire them to join us in giving you thanks and praise in the name of Jesus Christ, the King of glory. 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

Holy Abba of our Lord Jesus Christ, who sends the Holy Spirit to help us in our praying, open our senses to your creation and our hearts to the needs of others. Grant us faith, hope, and imagination to see your vision of the fullness of time when weapons will be crushed by peace, stomachs will be filled by abundant harvests generously shared, and thirsts quenched by pure rain falling from clean skies; diseases will be healed, minds made clear, and bodies made new, so that all things reveal oneness in Christ. Even now, Abba, empower us by the Spirit to serve Christ in love by sharing your vision and working in the world for which Christ died and rose and prays and is coming to complete in resurrection. We pray these things in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, 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 306 "Fairest Lord Jesus"

1 Fairest Lord Jesus,
Ruler of all nature,
O Thou of God to earth come down,
Thee will I cherish,
Thee will I honor,
Thou, my soul's glory, joy and crown.

2 Fair are the meadows,
Fairer still the woodlands,
Robed in the blooming garb of spring:
Jesus is fairer,
Jesus is purer,
Who makes the woeful heart to sing.

3 Fair is the sunshine,
Fairer still the moonlight,
And all the twinkling starry host;
Jesus shines brighter,
Jesus shines purer
Than all the angels heaven can boast.

***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)