

Presbyterian Church of Henderson

Worship Service 10:00 AM

July 18, 2021

Gospel of Mark Series

Ringing of the Bell

Welcome and Announcements

Organ Prelude Kristin Jones, Director of Music

***Call to Worship**

Come into the presence of the Most High God

with songs of praise and shouts of thanksgiving.

For our Savior frees us from slavery;

our Savior heals our diseases; our Savior is our peace.

You are a holy temple in the Lord Jesus Christ.

Come; let us worship God.

***Hymn** PH 130 "Let Every Christian Pray"

1 Let every Christian pray,
This day and every day,
Come, Holy Spirit, come!
Was not the church we love
Commissioned from above?
Come, Holy Spirit, come!

2 The Spirit brought to birth
The church of Christ on earth
To seek and save the lost:
God never has withdrawn,
Since that tremendous dawn,
The gifts at Pentecost.

3 Only the Spirit's power
Can fit us for this hour:
Come, Holy Spirit, come!
Instruct, inspire, unite,
And help us see Your light:
Come, Holy Spirit, come!

***Call to Confession**

Even our best intentions go awry when we are not at one with God's purpose. Our gracious God journeys with us and provides for us with unending mercy, patience, and kindness so that when we repent, we find ourselves forgiven. Let us confess our sins.

***Prayer of Confession** (unison)

Eternal God, your steadfast love endures forever. We confess that we act as if we are in control as if you will bless whatever we do. If we think of others at all, it is with an eye toward their usefulness to us. We have failed to show your love in obedience to you. We have no right to be called your children. Have mercy on us, God of grace. Forgive our sins, we humbly pray. Put the mind of Christ within us, O God, so that our lives take the form of a cross. Use us to break down walls of hostility within the church, among the nations, and around the world. Equip us to do your will, giving you glory, honor, and praise together with the Son and the Holy Spirit, one God forever and ever. Amen .

***Assurance of Pardon**

Our Lord Jesus gives us rest and peace. Our Master's touch heals us, and his shed blood is our salvation. In Jesus Christ, our sins are forgiven. Amen.

***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

Holy Spirit, come and dwell in us. Place Jesus Christ in us so that he is the cornerstone holding us together and making us a sacred place where steadfast love and faithfulness will meet. We pray in Jesus' name. Amen.

First Reading Psalm 22:1-18

My God, my God, why have you forsaken me? Why are you so far from helping me, from the words of my groaning? O my God, I cry by day, but you do not answer; and by night, but find no rest.

Yet you are holy, enthroned on the praises of Israel. In you our ancestors trusted; they trusted, and you delivered them. To you they cried, and were saved; in you they trusted, and were not put to shame.

But I am a worm, and not human; scorned by others, and despised by the people. All who see me mock at me; they make mouths at me, they shake their heads; "Commit your cause to the LORD; let him deliver—let him rescue the one in whom he delights!"

Yet it was you who took me from the womb; you kept me safe on my mother's breast. On you I was cast from my birth, and since my mother bore me you have been my God. Do not be far from me, for trouble is near and there is no one to help.

Many bulls encircle me, strong bulls of Bashan surround me; they open wide their mouths at me, like a ravening and roaring lion.

I am poured out like water, and all my bones are out of joint; my heart is like wax; it is melted within my breast; my mouth is dried up like a potsherd, and my tongue sticks to my jaws; you lay me in the dust of death.

For dogs are all around me; a company of evildoers encircles me. My hands and feet have shriveled; I can count all my bones. They stare and gloat over me; they divide my clothes among themselves, and for my clothing they cast lots.

Special Music Wayne Jone, soloist

Second Reading Mark 15:1-26

As soon as it was morning, the chief priests held a consultation with the elders and scribes and the whole council. They bound Jesus, led him away, and handed him over to Pilate. Pilate asked him, "Are you the King of the Jews?" He answered him, "You say so." Then the chief priests accused him of many things. Pilate asked him again, "Have you no answer? See how many charges they bring against you." But Jesus made no further reply, so that Pilate was amazed.

Now at the festival he used to release a prisoner for them, anyone for whom they asked. Now a man called Barabbas was in prison with the rebels who had committed

murder during the insurrection. So the crowd came and began to ask Pilate to do for them according to his custom. Then he answered them, "Do you want me to release for you the King of the Jews?" For he realized that it was out of jealousy that the chief priests had handed him over. But the chief priests stirred up the crowd to have him release Barabbas for them instead. Pilate spoke to them again, "Then what do you wish me to do with the man you call the King of the Jews?" They shouted back, "Crucify him!" Pilate asked them, "Why, what evil has he done?" But they shouted all the more, "Crucify him!" So Pilate, wishing to satisfy the crowd, released Barabbas for them; and after flogging Jesus, he handed him over to be crucified.

Then the soldiers led him into the courtyard of the palace (that is, the governor's headquarters); and they called together the whole cohort. And they clothed him in a purple cloak; and after twisting some thorns into a crown, they put it on him. And they began saluting him, "Hail, King of the Jews!" They struck his head with a reed, spat upon him, and knelt down in homage to him. After mocking him, they stripped him of the purple cloak and put his own clothes on him. Then they led him out to crucify him.

They compelled a passer-by, who was coming in from the country, to carry his cross; it was Simon of Cyrene, the father of Alexander and Rufus. Then they brought Jesus to the place called Golgotha (which means the place of a skull). And they offered him wine mixed with myrrh; but he did not take it. And they crucified him, and divided his clothes among them, casting lots to decide what each should take. It was nine o'clock in the morning when they crucified him. The inscription of the charge against him read, "The King of the Jews

Children's Sermon Pastor Eric

- This week we had a new baby born to Sam And Molly Galloway-her name is Molly Margaret Galloway.
- Did you know every baby comes home with a blanket?
- I have a blanket that belongs to my son, Nathaniel.
- When he got older, this blanket no longer kept him warm, but was used for other things.
- Can you guess what that was? BANKIE!
- When you are scared, where to do go?
- When you get older, people do not need one.
- Ever seen a child when they cannot find their bankie?
- Read *Psalm 22:11* *Do not be far from me, for trouble is near and there is no one to help.*
- God is like a bankie who is always near when we need him.
- *GOD IS NEAR!*
- Guess what, you can never lose Him.

SERMON "Jesus' Trial Before Pilate"

Mark 15:1-26

- When I used to work for the denomination, I had to go through media training...on how to respond on camera to a reporter who is doing an interview on me.
- It was one of the most unpleasant experiences, I had ever lived through, and I prayed that I would never had to do that beyond the mock interviews in the training.
- What drives everything is what is called talking points.
- These are the points I want to communicate to my audience.
- Basically when an interviewer asks a question that is not related to my script, I have to find a bridge to link the discussion back to my talking points.
- There is this hidden tension in the interview:
 - interview believes they can ask anything they want from you, and at the same time,
 - I, as a person being interviewed, want to communicate certain things because of the opportunity of being in front of the media.

- When I look at the last 24 hours of Jesus' life, the person being interviewed is Jesus in his trial before Pilate.
- His talking points are limited to a few items of acknowledgement.
- The message to be communicated is the faithfulness to the fulfillment of God's redemptive plan as lived out in his life.

1. His Silence (vv. 1-5)

1 As soon as it was morning, the chief priests held a consultation with the elders and scribes and the whole council.

- Because it was illegal for the Sanhedrin to meet at night, they called a special early dawn meeting to officially convict Jesus of blasphemy.
- EX: Sitting on the library board, because it is a public entity of the community, I have learned that no library business can be decided or discussed on email or in private. Every decision has to be made in a publicly called meeting.
- There must have been some reason for the rule of not allowing the Sanhedrin (Supreme Court of the Israel) to meet at night.
- But what we see here was that they officially met "as soon it was morning"
- The Jews were not allowed to carry out a death sentence by themselves.
- This Sanhedrin had to agree to hand Jesus over to the Roman governor, Pilate, so that he could hand down the death penalty.
- But in passing their decision onto Pilate, the religious offense of blasphemy does not deserve the death in the eyes of the Roman government.
- The Jewish leaders needed something more substantial than blasphemy to motive Pilate to do what they wanted.

They bound Jesus, led him away, and handed him over to Pilate. 2 Pilate asked him, "Are you the King of the Jews?" He answered him, "You say so." 3 Then the chief priests accused him of many things.

- In other gospels, there are three charges against Jesus, but Mark only focuses one of the reasons: TREASON.
- This is the crime of betraying one's own country and overthrowing the Roman government.
- This is why Pilate opens the trial with the question, "Are you the King of the Jews?"
- To Pilate such a claim is equivalent to treason against Caesar which was a crime punishable to death.
- Jesus' response "You say so" could be translated, "It is as you say."
- Notice that Jesus did not come right out and say, I am.
- Jesus implies yes, and he turns the tables saying the designation is yours.
- Notice the irony here that CFD Moule points out in his commentary:
 - Jesus, who is, indeed, the king of the Jews—in a deeply spiritual sense, has refused to lead a spiritual uprising.
 - Yet now, condemned for blasphemy by the Jews because of his spiritual claims, he is accused by them also before Pilate for being precisely what he had disappointed the crowds for failing to be—a political insurgent.
- In other words, the very thing Pilate is accusing Jesus to be, throughout his ministry he refused to take on that personification.
- Now, Jesus is hinting how that is true.
- Since Jesus' response provided no solid basis for a capital conviction under Roman law, Pilate had to turn to his accusers to gain more information.
- This is why the text says, "then the chief priests told him many things."
- What is amazing, in the midst of this, Jesus has what Barker and Kohlenberger describes as a "majestic serenity" where in the midst of the onslaught of false accusations, Jesus carried this "majestic serenity" and refused to defend himself.
- Q: How do you respond to trials?
- Do you panic and argue and fight to protect your innocence or do you have a sense of "majestic serenity" a composure and calmness that God is in control?

- When we follow Jesus' lead, we offer to the world a great witness to the sustaining power of Christ to those around us.

4 Pilate asked him again, "Have you no answer? See how many charges they bring against you." 5 But Jesus made no further reply, so that Pilate was amazed.

- This is almost the same response the high priest gave to Jesus earlier.
- Notice that this line of questioning assumes that the accused person is guilty unless he can prove himself innocent.
- BUT, Jesus continues to remain silent and does not defend himself.
- This calm demeanor of Jesus amazes Pilate because he is used to seeing boisterous, troublesome, aggressive people before him saying all kinds of things to defend themselves.
- Jesus' actions and "majestic serenity" was completely different.
- It is a demeanor that comes from doing the will of God.

2. His Substitution (vv. 6-15)

6 Now at the festival he used to release a prisoner for them, anyone for whom they asked. 7 Now a man called Barabbas was in prison with the rebels who had committed murder during the insurrection. 8 So the crowd came and began to ask Pilate to do for them according to his custom.

- Pilate had a personal Passover custom as a sign of goodwill to release a prisoner selected by the people.
- Mark then turns to describe a man named Barabbas who in other gospels had been part of a rebellion in the city against the Roman authorities.
- According to the Roman law, he was condemned to die.
- Initiated by the crowd, Pilate was asked for his tradition to release one prisoner to be fulfilled.

9 Then he answered them, "Do you want me to release for you the King of the Jews?" 10 For he realized that it was out of jealousy that the chief priests had handed him over. 11 But the chief priests stirred up the crowd to have him release Barabbas for them instead.

- Pilate puts forth his first question, "Do you want me to release for you the King of the Jews?"
- This first question shows that Pilate really did not want to condemn Jesus and tried to get Jesus released through his custom of releasing a prisoner.
- This is why he suggests, Jesus.
- In this text, Mark clearly demonstrates that Pilate was being manipulated to sentence Jesus because he recognized that the religious leaders were doing anything they could to get Jesus condemned.
- The chief priests stirred up the crowd, the crowd shouted the release of Barabbas rather than Jesus.

12 Pilate spoke to them again, "Then what do you wish me to do with the man you call the King of the Jews?" 13 They shouted back, "Crucify him!" 14 Pilate asked them, "Why, what evil has he done?" But they shouted all the more, "Crucify him!"

- Realizing that he almost had a mob scene on his hands, Pilate puts forth his second question, "Then what do you wish me to do with the man you call the King of the Jews?"
- It almost seemed like Pilate was looking for other options.
- But the crowd shouted all the more, "Crucify him!"
- This response must have puzzled Pilate when he said, "Why, what evil has he done?"
- By Pilate's question to the crowd, it showed that he did not believe Jesus was guilty of anything.
- The crowd mentality had taken over, and they wanted nothing less than see Jesus crucified.

- Looking at the big picture here, what is interesting is that Mark is not alone in this account of the connection between the sentencing of Jesus with the release of one called Barabbas.

- The substitution of Brabbas is actually found in all four gospels.
- Remember when Jesus said in *Mark 10:45* *For the Son of Man came not to be served but to serve, and to give his life a ransom for many.*"
- All the gospel writers used this incident of Jesus becoming the substitution for Barrabas' freedom and release—as theological statement of how Jesus is the substitutionary atonement for our sins.
- This exchange with Barabbas is a metaphor of how our sins were placed on the cross at Christ's death so that we can become free in Christ.

15 So Pilate, wishing to satisfy the crowd, released Barabbas for them; and after flogging Jesus, he handed him over to be crucified.

- A Roman flogging consisted of whips that had pieces of bone tied to the end of the straps.
- The fragments only purpose was to rip open the skin exposing the bone.
- Many people died from the flogging.

3. His Scars (vv. 16-20)

16 Then the soldiers led him into the courtyard of the palace (that is, the governor's headquarters); and they called together the whole cohort. 17 And they clothed him in a purple cloak; and after twisting some thorns into a crown, they put it on him. 18 And they began saluting him, "Hail, King of the Jews!" 19 They struck his head with a reed, spat upon him, and knelt down in homage to him. 20 After mocking him, they stripped him of the purple cloak and put his own clothes on him. Then they led him out to crucify him.

- This section of text only serves to emphasize the suffering of Jesus.
- Notice how Jesus is led.
- *Isaiah 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,*
- According to Mark, he is **led** to Caiaphas, **led** Pilate, and now **led** toward his pending death.
- If you trace to all the places Jesus is led throughout the gospels he is led to Annas, Caiaphas, Pilate, Herod, Pilate, and now led inside the Praetorium which is the governor's courtyard.
- The people who gathered in Pilate's courtyard was all the Roman guards on duty to mock Jesus.
- I may be reading between the lines too much, but I imagine the mockery was racial.
- Jews were pretty much law abiding citizens, for a Jew to be condemned for execution, this was pretty rare.
- So in our text, the Romans seized every opportunity to exploit and brutally unleash their personal political and social bias.
- This is why the "whole co-hort" came to mock Jesus.
- This was a rare opportunity.
- Because Pilate had ordered Jesus to be flogged, Jesus was already bleeding pretty badly.
- Jesus is thrust into the middle of this courtyard where they clothed him in a purple robe and a crown of thorns.
- These were symbols of royalty as they mocked him saying "Hail, king of the Jews"
- If you think about the irony of this scene, here the Romans are doing this to a false claim to an earthly throne.
- They have no conception that they are doing it to the rightful owner of the universe, the King of Kings and Lord of Lords.
- What is amazing here, is that Jesus does not complain.
- He did it because he knew that he was accomplishing the work which the Father had given him to do
- *2 Corinthians 8:9* *For you know the generous act of our Lord Jesus Christ, that though he was rich, yet for your sakes he became poor, so that by his poverty you might become rich.*

- Every time we realize the pain and suffering that Jesus took upon himself for us, the more we can appreciate how rich we are in Christ.

4. His Support (vv. 21-26)

21 *They compelled a passer-by, who was coming in from the country, to carry his cross; it was Simon of Cyrene, the father of Alexander and Rufus.*

- Mark goes into detail of the identity of this man Simon of Cyrene.
- He was probably a Jew going to Jerusalem for a pilgrimage.
- The detail in this text almost suggests that the Simon and his sons were well known to Mark's readers.
- The only mention in Scripture is Rufus in the Roman church. *Romans 16:13 Greet Rufus, chosen in the Lord; and greet his mother—a mother to me also.*
- No one knows for certain.

22 *Then they brought Jesus to the place called Golgotha (which means the place of a skull).*

- By Roman law, the guards had full authority to request a task from a by-stander, and Simon happened to be at convenient place.
- The Roman soldiers used their legal privilege and asked Simon to carry Jesus' cross.
- Scholars are divided as to whether Simon was carrying the whole cross, or only the cross beam because the upright post could have been already mounted at Golgotha.
- If Golgotha was the place of the skull, there may have been several posts permanently mounted for executions.
- That night Jesus was too weak to carry his own cross so someone had to carry Jesus' cross.
- At a time of severe trial and tribulation, God provided someone to carry his burdens.

23 *And they offered him wine mixed with myrrh; but he did not take it.*

- The victims of crucifixion were customarily given a narcotic drink to help deaden the pain.
- Jesus here refuses to take the drink choosing instead to stay fully conscious and experience the terrible sufferings of the crucifixion.
- WHY? This is the cup that God the Father had given to him.

24 *And they crucified him, and divided his clothes among them, casting lots to decide what each should take. 25 It was nine o'clock in the morning when they crucified him. 26 The inscription of the charge against him read, "The King of the Jews."*

- Notice Mark does not go into detail of the crucifixion.
- All of his readers knew the horrors of the execution process.
- What is interesting, this horrible scene of Jesus' death ends with more mockery.
- The process begins with mockery and ends with mockery.
- So how do we put closure to this gruesome account of Jesus?
- I like what NT Wright says in his commentary:

This is what it looks like when the son's vocation, given him by the Father, is acted out to the full. This is how the kingdom comes at last. We are perhaps meant to hear, with the ears of faith, the same voice that spoke at the baptism and transfiguration, saying with sorrow and pride the same words: This is my beloved son. I'm delighted with him.

*Hymn PH 320 "The Lone, Wild Bird"

1 The lone, wild fowl in lofty flight
Is still with Thee, nor leaves Thy sight.
And I am Thine! I rest in Thee.
Great Spirit, come, and rest in me.

2 The ends of earth are in Thy hand,
The sea's dark deep and far-off land.
And I am Thine! I rest in Thee.
Great Spirit, come, and rest in me.

Offering

Unless God builds the house, those who build labor in vain. God gives rest to the weary and sleep for his beloved. Let us present offerings of thanksgiving, without fear or anxiety about anything, for God provides for us.

***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**

Almighty God, enthroned in eternity; crucified and risen Christ, dwelling in heaven and with your people; powerful Holy Spirit, bringing life and truth; we thank you for calling us when we had no hope and for crowning us with salvation. We thank you for enriching our lives with all that is good and for providing for us in times of trial. Make us ever more mindful of the blessings you grant us each day; deepen our trust in your love and mercy. Increase our thanksgiving by guiding our offerings to help others in need. Unite us all in a community of thanksgiving, always glorifying you, O Holy Trinity, now and forever. 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

O God, merciful and just;

O God, kind and compassionate;

O God, forever faithful for your own name's sake:

we pray for the world Christ came to save;

we pray for the kingdom you are bringing through Christ.

Bless the church, the body of Christ, with the power of the Holy Spirit, so that our strength is renewed like the eagle's. Then send us out to proclaim the good news that in Jesus Christ there is newness of life.

We pray for all who are weary from hard labor, especially for those who are not fairly paid, for those who work in dangerous places, for those trapped in terrible situations. Break yokes of oppression and bonds of bitterness.

We pray for all who serve on behalf of others, especially for those who care for the sick, elderly, and dying; for those who fight fires, enforce just laws, serve in the military; for those who hold public office. Build up all people in peace and freedom.

We pray for ourselves, that we will be faithful, especially in times of temptation; that our diseases will be healed, so we have strength to serve others; that our love for one another and you grow ever deeper.

Make us into a holy temple in the Lord; build us spiritually into a dwelling place for God —into your kingdom, O Holy Trinity, 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 430 "Come Sing, O Church, in Joy"

1 Come sing, O church, in joy
Come join, O church, in song
For Christ the Lord has led us through the ages long!

Chorus: In bold accord, come and celebrate
The journey now and praise the Lord!

2 Long years have come and gone,
And still God reigns supreme,
Empowering us to catch the vision, dream the dream!

3 Let courage be our friend,
Let wisdom be our guide,
As we in mission magnify the Crucified

4 Come sing, O church in joy!
Come join, O church in song!
For Christ the Lord has triumphed o'er the ages long!

***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)