

READ THIS FIRST

The Gospel of Mark: The King and His Kingdom

Note from Pastor Luke Simmons

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Because the Tomb is Empty,

Luke Simmons
Lead Pastor

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Week 12

KINGDOM AGONY

Mark 14:22-50

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"Abba, Father, all things are possible for you. Remove this cup from me. Yet not what I will, but what you will."

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(Mark 14:36, ESV)
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Introduction

Have you ever been wrongfully accused of something? Maybe you got in trouble for a mess you didn't make, or for something you didn't actually do. At that moment, everything in you boils up and you get absolutely furious. You want to stomp your feet and shout at the top of your lungs, "I don't deserve this!" Consider how Jesus must have felt as he was about to be accused, mocked, beaten, and punished even though he was totally innocent and never sinned. Not only did Jesus face the horror of physical torture, but he also faced the reality that he would soon be abandoned by his Father and left to suffer alone for the sins of his people.

Jesus was overwhelmed at the thought of what he was about to experience. The anguish was so intense that Jesus told his closest friends, "My soul is very sorrowful, even to death" (14:34). We sometimes forget the full humanity of Jesus and the crushing weight he was feeling. We might think to ourselves, "It must not have been that hard for him. After all, he was the Son of God, right? How hard could it be?"

Think for a minute of how you would feel if you were placed in Jesus' sandals at that moment. Suppose you knew that in less than 24 hours you were about to experience the full wrath of God against the sin of all his people. This means that you would experience God's hatred for sin. The full punishment for every twisted motivation, every prideful attitude, every nasty word, every lustful thought, every moment of abuse, every cruel action against children, every adulterous relationship, and every injustice that God's people have ever committed would fall on your head. How would you feel? What might you be thinking?

If you can grasp what that might be like, then you can begin to appreciate what the Savior did for you. Despite the agony he was about to endure, Jesus says to his Father, "Yet not what I will, but what you will." Only love could make him do this.

May the love of Jesus fill our hearts as we study his amazing grace to us.

Investigation

Read Mark 14:22-50.

1. How was Jesus feeling as his betrayal and death approached? How did the disciples feel? What were they thinking?
2. What was the "cup" that Jesus was hoping would be removed from him? (Hint: see Psalm 11:6, 75:8; Isaiah 51:17; Jeremiah 25:15-16)
3. Jesus tells Peter to pray because "the spirit indeed is willing, but the flesh is weak." Why would prayer help Peter?
4. Notice in verses 27 and 49 how Jesus continually refers to biblical prophecy throughout his trial. What does this tell us about Jesus' death?

Implication

5. Many people reject the very idea of hell or the wrath of God. What impact does such a rejection have on one's appreciation of the love of Christ?

6. How does it make you feel to know that Jesus took the cup of God's furious wrath against sin and drank it dry? What does that do to your heart?

7. In what ways is Jesus' obedience here important to us as his followers?

8. How does this passage give you comfort in the midst of the trials, pain, difficulties, and suffering that you face?

Other Issues

Do Jesus' statements in Mark 14:22-24 mean that Jesus actual body is physically present during the communion celebration?

According to the teaching of the Roman Catholic Church, the bread and wine *actually become* the body and blood of Christ. This happens at the moment the priest says, "This is my body" during the celebration of the mass. At the same time as the priest says this, the bread is raised up (elevated) and adored. When this happens, according to Roman Catholic teaching, grace is imparted to those present in proportion to the subjective disposition of the recipient of grace. Moreover, every time the mass is celebrated, the sacrifice of Christ is repeated (in some sense), and the Catholic church is careful to affirm that this is a real sacrifice, even though it is not the same as the sacrifice that Christ paid on the cross.

In response to the Roman Catholic teaching on the Lord's Supper, it must be said that it first fails to recognize the symbolic character of Jesus' statements when he declared, "This is my body," or, "This is my blood." Jesus spoke in symbolic ways many times when speaking of himself. He said, for example, "*I am the true vine*" (John 15:1), or "*I am the door*; if any one enters by me, he will be saved" (John 10:9), or "I am the bread which came down from heaven" (John 6:41). In a similar way, when Jesus says, "This is my body," he means it in a symbolic way, not in an actual, literal, physical way. In fact, as he was sitting with his disciples holding the bread, the bread was in his hand but it was distinct from his body, and that was, of course, evident to the disciples. None of the disciples present would have thought that the loaf of bread that Jesus held in his hand was actually his physical body, for they could see his body before their eyes. They would have naturally understood Jesus' statement in a symbolic way. Similarly, when Jesus said, "*This cup which is poured out for you is the new covenant in my blood*" (Luke 22:20), he certainly did not mean that the cup was actually the new covenant, but that the cup *represented* the new covenant.

Moreover, the Roman Catholic view fails to recognize the clear New Testament teaching on the *finality* and *completeness* of Christ's sacrifice once for all time for our sins: the book of Hebrews emphasizes this many times, as when it says, "*Nor was it to offer himself repeatedly* as the high priest enters the Holy Place yearly with blood not his own; for then he would have had to suffer repeatedly since the foundation of the world. But as it is, he has appeared *once* for all at the end of the age to put away sin by the sacrifice of himself...Christ, having been offered *once* to bear the sins of many" (Heb. 9:25-28). To say that Christ's sacrifice continues or is repeated in the mass has been, since the Reformation, one of the most objectionable Roman Catholic doctrines from the standpoint of Protestants. When we realize that Christ's sacrifice for our sins is finished and completed ("*It is finished*," John 19:30; Heb. 1:3), it gives great assurance to us that our sins are all paid for, and there remains no sacrifice yet to be paid. But the idea of a continuation of Christ's sacrifice destroys our

assurance that the payment has been made by Christ and accepted by God the Father, and that there is “no condemnation” (Rom. 8:1) now remaining for us.

For Protestants the idea that the mass is in any sense a repetition of the death of Christ seems to mark a return to the repeated sacrifices of the old covenant, which were “a reminder of sin year after year” (Heb. 10:3). Instead of the assurance of complete forgiveness of sins through the once for all sacrifice of Christ (Heb. 10:12), the idea that the mass is a repeated sacrifice gives a constant reminder of sins and remaining guilt to be atoned for week after week.²⁶

How can God be full of love and full of wrath at the same time?

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The same is true of other descriptions of God’s character, such as that in Exodus 34:6–7:

The LORD passed before him and proclaimed, “The LORD, the LORD, a God merciful and gracious, slow to anger, and abounding in steadfast love and faithfulness, keeping steadfast love for thousands, forgiving iniquity and transgression and sin, but who will by no means clear the guilty, visiting the iniquity of the fathers upon the children and the children’s children, to the third and the fourth generation.”

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In terms of practical application, this means that we should never think, for example, that God is a loving God at one point in history and a just or wrathful God at

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In response to the Roman Catholic teaching on the Lord's Supper, it must be said that it first fails to recognize the symbolic character of Jesus' statements when he declared, "This is my body," or, "This is my blood." Jesus spoke in symbolic ways many times when speaking of himself. He said, for example, "*I am the true vine*" (John 15:1), or "*I am the door*; if any one enters by me, he will be saved" (John 10:9), or "I am the bread which came down from heaven" (John 6:41). In a similar way, when Jesus says, "This is my body," he means it in a symbolic way, not in an actual, literal, physical way. In fact, as he was sitting with his disciples holding the bread, the bread was in his hand but it was distinct from his body, and that was, of course, evident to the disciples. None of the disciples present would have thought that the loaf of bread that Jesus held in his hand was actually his physical body, for they could see his body before their eyes. They would have naturally understood Jesus' statement in a symbolic way. Similarly, when Jesus said, "*This cup which is poured out for you is the new covenant in my blood*" (Luke 22:20), he certainly did not mean that the cup was actually the new covenant, but that the cup *represented* the new covenant.

Moreover, the Roman Catholic view fails to recognize the clear New Testament teaching on the *finality* and *completeness* of Christ's sacrifice once for all time for our sins: the book of Hebrews emphasizes this many times, as when it says, "*Nor was it to offer himself repeatedly* as the high priest enters the Holy Place yearly with blood not his own; for then he would have had to suffer repeatedly since the foundation of the world. But as it is, he has appeared *once* for all at the end of the age to put away sin by the sacrifice of himself...Christ, having been offered *once* to bear the sins of many" (Heb. 9:25-28). To say that Christ's sacrifice continues or is repeated in the mass has been, since the Reformation, one of the most objectionable Roman Catholic doctrines from the standpoint of Protestants. When we realize that Christ's sacrifice for our sins is finished and completed ("*It is finished*," John 19:30; Heb. 1:3), it gives great assurance to us that our sins are all paid for, and there remains no sacrifice yet to be paid. But the idea of a continuation of Christ's sacrifice destroys our

assurance that the payment has been made by Christ and accepted by God the Father, and that there is “no condemnation” (Rom. 8:1) now remaining for us.

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How can God be full of love and full of wrath at the same time?

When Scripture speaks about God’s attributes it never singles out one attribute of God as more important than all the rest. There is an assumption that every attribute is completely true of God and is true of all of God’s character. For example, John can say that “God is light” (1 John 1:5) and then a little later say also that “God is love” (1 John 4:8). There is no suggestion that part of God is light and part of God is love, or that God is partly light and partly love. Nor should we think that God is more light than love or more love than light. Rather it is *God himself* who is light, and it is *God himself* who is also love.

The same is true of other descriptions of God’s character, such as that in Exodus 34:6–7:

The LORD passed before him and proclaimed, “The LORD, the LORD, a God merciful and gracious, slow to anger, and abounding in steadfast love and faithfulness, keeping steadfast love for thousands, forgiving iniquity and transgression and sin, but who will by no means clear the guilty, visiting the iniquity of the fathers upon the children and the children’s children, to the third and the fourth generation.”

We would not want to say that these attributes are only characteristic of some part of God, but rather that they are characteristic of God himself and therefore characteristic of all of God.

But it should be clear that each attribute is simply a way of describing one aspect of God’s total character or being. God himself is a *unity* a unified and completely integrated whole person who is infinitely perfect in *all* of these attributes.

Why then does Scripture speak of these different attributes of God? It is probably because we are unable to grasp all of God’s character at one time, and we need to learn of it from different perspectives over a period of time. Yet these perspectives should never be set in opposition to one another, for they are just different ways of looking at the totality of God’s character.

In terms of practical application, this means that we should never think, for example, that God is a loving God at one point in history and a just or wrathful God at

another point in history. He is the same God always, and everything he says or does is fully consistent with all his attributes. It is not accurate to say, as some have said, that God is a God of justice in the Old Testament and a God of love in the New Testament. God is and always has been infinitely just and infinitely loving as well, and everything he does in the Old Testament as well as the New Testament is completely consistent with both of those attributes.²⁷

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READ THIS FIRST

The Gospel of Mark: The King and His Kingdom

Note from Pastor Luke Simmons

The mission of Second Mile Church is to “embody Jesus’ mission and message in every place that God sends us.” The Bible refers to the followers of Jesus as his “ambassadors” (2 Cor 5:20) and expects us to faithfully represent him to the world. In order to faithfully live out this mission we must grow intimately familiar with who Jesus is and what he has done. Thus, it makes sense to have our first weekly study focus on the life, ministry, death and resurrection of Jesus, as described in the Gospel of Mark.

Though this series, “The King and His Kingdom,” will not be an exhaustive study of the person of Jesus, we will become thoroughly acquainted with his message, mission, attitude and actions. Not only will we see Jesus in action, but we’ll also get a glimpse of what life looks like in Jesus’ Kingdom. Mark is a fast-paced, hard-hitting, action-packed book and we will spend fourteen weeks examining the highlights of his account.

This study guide, designed for individual study or for use in Community Groups, is intended to help us dive deeper into the Scripture and apply the things we learn. The Bible calls us to “be doers of the word, and not hearers only” (James 1:22). These study guides are designed to help us not just hear the word on Sunday, but put it into practice Monday through Saturday.

My prayer for this series is that God will use it to deepen your love for Jesus. Whether you are just beginning to explore what it would be like to follow Christ or you’ve trusted him for a long time, my hope is that your heart would be delighted by his majesty, power, humility, trustworthiness, sacrifice and victory. Only as we grow satisfied in Jesus will we be able to bring his love and grace to our hurting world.

Because the Tomb is Empty,

Luke Simmons
Lead Pastor

The Format

Each study begins with a **key verse** that summarizes the truth found in the entire section. These key verses, if memorized, would allow you to learn the big ideas found in Mark’s Gospel. Then there is an **introduction** to the passage that you can use for review or, if you miss a Sunday, you can track with us wherever we are. Next are some questions for **investigation** (getting into the text) and **implication** (applying these truths to daily life). Each study concludes with a section on **other issues**, which expand on any other issues or questions raised by the passage that we may not take time to cover during the sermon.

Suggestions for Individuals

- Before you begin, pray that God would open your eyes to see what he is saying in the Bible and give you the spiritual strength to do something about it.
- Work through the study and write out answers to the questions.
- Resist any temptation to skip over the **implication** section. It is important to ponder how the truths apply to your life. Though these questions are sometimes penetrating and difficult, they are designed to help you think seriously about your life.
- Take what opportunities you can to share with others about what you’ve learned and how you’d like your life to change as a result.

Suggestions for Community Groups

- It is recommended that you study the passage *after* it has been preached. This way you can discuss the issues raised by the sermon as well as the study itself.
- In your time together as a community, focus on the **implications** for your lives individually and as a group. Share with one another how you sense God calling you to change, pray for one another about these things, and invite one another to encourage you and hold you accountable to apply the truth.
- In your time together as a community, use this guide as a launching point for discussion and care for one another. Resist the urge to try to discuss every question or “get through the material.”

Questions or Comments?

If you have feedback or questions about the series or studies, please feel free to email them to info@secondmilechurch.com.

Week 12

KINGDOM AGONY

Mark 14:22-50

.....
"Abba, Father, all things are possible for you. Remove this cup from me. Yet not what I will, but what you will."

(Mark 14:36, ESV)
.....

Introduction

Have you ever been wrongfully accused of something? Maybe you got in trouble for a mess you didn't make, or for something you didn't actually do. At that moment, everything in you boils up and you get absolutely furious. You want to stomp your feet and shout at the top of your lungs, "I don't deserve this!" Consider how Jesus must have felt as he was about to be accused, mocked, beaten, and punished even though he was totally innocent and never sinned. Not only did Jesus face the horror of physical torture, but he also faced the reality that he would soon be abandoned by his Father and left to suffer alone for the sins of his people.

Jesus was overwhelmed at the thought of what he was about to experience. The anguish was so intense that Jesus told his closest friends, "My soul is very sorrowful, even to death" (14:34). We sometimes forget the full humanity of Jesus and the crushing weight he was feeling. We might think to ourselves, "It must not have been that hard for him. After all, he was the Son of God, right? How hard could it be?"

Think for a minute of how you would feel if you were placed in Jesus' sandals at that moment. Suppose you knew that in less than 24 hours you were about to experience the full wrath of God against the sin of all his people. This means that you would experience God's hatred for sin. The full punishment for every twisted motivation, every prideful attitude, every nasty word, every lustful thought, every moment of abuse, every cruel action against children, every adulterous relationship, and every injustice that God's people have ever committed would fall on your head. How would you feel? What might you be thinking?

If you can grasp what that might be like, then you can begin to appreciate what the Savior did for you. Despite the agony he was about to endure, Jesus says to his Father, "Yet not what I will, but what you will." Only love could make him do this.

May the love of Jesus fill our hearts as we study his amazing grace to us.

Investigation

Read Mark 14:22-50.

1. How was Jesus feeling as his betrayal and death approached? How did the disciples feel? What were they thinking?
2. What was the "cup" that Jesus was hoping would be removed from him? (Hint: see Psalm 11:6, 75:8; Isaiah 51:17; Jeremiah 25:15-16)
3. Jesus tells Peter to pray because "the spirit indeed is willing, but the flesh is weak." Why would prayer help Peter?
4. Notice in verses 27 and 49 how Jesus continually refers to biblical prophecy throughout his trial. What does this tell us about Jesus' death?

Implication

5. Many people reject the very idea of hell or the wrath of God. What impact does such a rejection have on one's appreciation of the love of Christ?

6. How does it make you feel to know that Jesus took the cup of God's furious wrath against sin and drank it dry? What does that do to your heart?

7. In what ways is Jesus' obedience here important to us as his followers?

8. How does this passage give you comfort in the midst of the trials, pain, difficulties, and suffering that you face?

Other Issues

Do Jesus' statements in Mark 14:22-24 mean that Jesus actual body is physically present during the communion celebration?

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