

## Mark 10:32-52

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Date: 31 August 2014

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[ 0 : 00 ] I'll tell you that this week, Thursday night, I was hit by a truck driven by a big burly guy who goes by the radio handle ragweed.

! And I've suffered for it. You guys really, I'm sorry, you really thought I was hit by a truck. I wasn't really hit by a truck. It kind of flattened me just the same. On Friday, I'm still suffering from that now. A couple of weeks ago, I was reminded of a quote by Dr. Martin Lloyd-Jones who said, Preaching is theology coming through a man who is on fire. And this morning, I feel like I'm just smoldering. But we'll get through it together. We do believe in the primacy of preaching in our corporate meetings. The preached Word of God is incredibly important to the people of God, and we live in a day where that seems to be on the decline.

And as it is, it also seems that the church is on the decline. And so even amidst suffering, rough voices, the preaching of the Word is of great, great importance.

Now today will probably be a briefer sermon than we've had in the past. I think you all are due that. I think over the past, if I'm remembering correctly, over the past three weeks, I've preached for two hours and 48 minutes, I think.

[ 1 : 27 ] So I'm going to try to bring it in for you tonight. Although ironically, we're going to cover more text the Sunday than we have in the past Sunday. So join me at the beginning of verse 32 of Mark chapter 10 as I read through the end of the chapter.

Woe is right. And they were on the road going up to Jerusalem, and Jesus was walking ahead of them. And they were amazed, and those who followed were afraid. And taking the twelve again, He began to tell them what was to happen to Him, saying, See, we are going up to Jerusalem, and the Son of Man will be delivered over to the chief priests and the scribes, and they will condemn Him to death and deliver Him over to the Gentiles.

And they will mock Him and spit on Him and flog Him and kill Him. And after three days, He will rise. And James and John, the sons of Zebedee, came up to Him and said to Him, Teacher, we want you to do for us whatever we ask of you.

And He said to them, What do you want Me to do for you? And they said to Him, Grant us to sit, one at your right hand and one at your left, in your glory. Jesus said to them, You do not know what you are asking.

Are you able to drink the cup that I drink, or to be baptized with the baptism with which I am baptized? And they said to Him, We are able. And Jesus said to them, The cup that I drink you will drink.

[ 2 : 53 ] And with the baptism with which I am baptized, you will be baptized. But to sit at My right hand or at My left is not Mine to grant, for it is for those for whom it has been prepared.

And when the ten heard it, they began to be indignant at James and John. And Jesus called them to Him and said to them, You know that those who are considered rulers of the Gentiles lord it over them, and their great ones exercise authority over them.

But it shall not be so among you. But whoever will be great among you must be your servant. And whoever will be first among you must be slave of all. For even the Son of Man came not to be served, but to serve, and to give up His life as a ransom for many.

And they came to Jericho. And as He was leaving Jericho with His disciples, a great crowd, Bartimaeus, a blind beggar, the son of Timaeus, was sitting by the roadside. And when He heard that it was Jesus of Nazareth, He began to cry out and said, Jesus, Son of David, have mercy on Me.

And many rebuked Him, telling Him to be silent. But He cried out all the more, Son of David, have mercy on Me. And Jesus stopped and said, Call Him. And they called the blind man, saying to Him,

Take heart, get up, He is calling you.

[ 4 : 10 ] And throwing off His cloak, He sprang up and came to Jesus. And Jesus said to him, What do you want Me to do for you? And the blind man said to him, Rabbi, let me recover My sight.

And Jesus said to him, Go your way, your faith has made you well. And immediately He recovered His sight and followed Him on the way. This is God's Word to us, written for His glory and our good.

We would all do well to listen to it in order to believe its promises and obey its commands. Let's pray together. Father God, we are in all ways and at all times beholden to Your strength.

We are completely weak apart from You. But there are certainly moments in our lives that we feel that more readily. And Father, this is probably the best place for us to be wholly dependent, recognizing that we need You and we need You this morning to preach through me, to apply the preaching of Your Word to our hearts, to change us from one degree of glory to another.

We throw ourselves on Your promises. We know that You love Your people. And You want to see Your people come into perfection. We know that You love Your glory, that You're zealous for it.

[ 5 : 32 ] And You want a people that will honor You with their lives and with their lips. And so have Your way with us this morning as we open Your Word. And we pray this in Christ's name.

Amen. Amen. So, as we've discussed previously, Mark's Gospel is written in a sort of three-act way. Now, I don't think he laid it out specifically in this way, but you can kind of see some divisions.

And we've worked our way through Act 1 up through chapter 8, verse 21, which largely accounts for Jesus' public ministry. We certainly pick up some teaching in there. We see lots of miracles. All these miracles, they gave affirmation to the words that He was saying.

But since chapter 8, verse 22, we've come into what we've kind of seen to be the second act, where Jesus' public ministry is minimized and His attention to disciples is emphasized.

We can see this in chapter 9, verse 30 and 31. They went on from there and passed through Galilee. And He did not want anyone to know, for He was teaching His disciples.

[ 6 : 37 ] This was the major thrust of His ministry at this time. And in this act that goes through the end of chapter 10, we see it punctuated by Jesus' passion predictions.

That is, His predictions of His suffering, His death, and His resurrection. We saw that in chapter 8, verse 31. And in 9, verse 31. And then before us this morning in verses 33 and 34 of chapter 10.

So it seems to be marked out by these passion predictions. And in each case of Mark's account, these passion predictions are followed by a record of the misunderstanding of the disciples.

And I find it very easy to wag my head at the disciples and not be able to comprehend how it is that they were so misled and so confused. But as we've noted, the culture was informing them about who the Messiah would be.

They thought the Messiah was going to come and reign militarily. They thought He was going to sit on a throne on this earth in that time. And He was going to lead a great army and overthrow Rome. That He was going to set the Jews free from their earthly oppression.

[ 7 : 50 ] But because God's Word is written for us, we ought not merely just muse at the response of the disciples. Look at the poor, pitiful disciples and their muted understanding.

But we also ought to apply Jesus' teaching to our own hearts. To ask the question, do we rightly understand what it means to be a disciple of Jesus Christ?

We have been called from our nets on the seashore. We are now following Him. But do we follow Him rightly? And so we see their journey continuing in verse 32.

And for the first time, we see the name of the place that they are headed to. I have been saying to you all along that this last six months, as He's putting His major focus on the disciples, that He's moving towards Jerusalem.

This is how we know that to be the case in verse 32. They're moving from the east, headed towards Jerusalem. If you're looking at a map, it would look as if they're heading southwest.

[ 8 : 53 ] But you see it says they're going up to Jerusalem. But everything was up to Jerusalem in this day. Jerusalem was the great pinnacle of civilization. And furthermore, since they're coming from the east, there actually was a climb.

They had quite a steep road on their journey to Jerusalem. So they're traveling up to Jerusalem. And we see in verse 32 a difference in the way in which they're walking.

Mark records that Jesus was walking ahead of them. It doesn't seem to be a stroll amongst the disciples any longer, where He's teaching them as they talk along the way.

But now He's walking out ahead of them. He's now determined where He's going and what He's going to go and do. You will note, for the original language, we see that this fear and amazement is the fear of the disciples and is the amazement of the crowd.

And these things should be read in light of the following words that Jesus is going to speak to them. Saying to them, See, we're going up to Jerusalem. And He makes this prediction once again, a more expanded version of the predictions that He's made earlier in chapter 8, verse 31, and chapter 9, verse 31.

[10:08] And we know from our hindsight, from our position in redemptive history, that all of these things came to pass.

Turn with me to Mark 15. We'll look in a short text here and see all of the realizations of all of these things. Mark 15, beginning in verse 15, So Pilate, wishing to satisfy the crowd, released for them Barabbas.

And having scourged Jesus, they flogged Him. He delivered Him to be crucified. And the soldiers led Him away inside the palace, that is the governor's headquarters.

And they called together the whole battalion. And they clothed Him in a purple cloak and twisted together a crown of thorns. They put it on Him. And they began to salute Him. Hail, King of the Jews!

They mocked Him. And they were striking His head with a reed and spitting on Him. They spit on Him and kneeling down in homage to Him. And when they had mocked Him, they stripped Him of the purple cloak and put His own clothes on Him.

[11:39] And they led Him out to crucify Him. We know what follows. They did in fact kill Him. So this tragic prediction that Jesus makes for us in chapter 10 certainly comes true.

And the disciples are having a hard time understanding why. Why would the King of the Jews, why would the Messiah, the One who has come to deliver us, die?

It seems that the fear of the disciples is rooted in their temporal mindsets of what this death march Jerusalem was going to mean for them.

They had yet to fully comprehend and understand the eternal purposes of God and Jesus Christ. They had yet to understand that Jesus came to inaugurate a spiritual kingdom that would be consummated someday in the future.

They seemed to miss that Jesus had always finished His passion predictions with His resurrection. He never fails. Never fails to say it. After three days, He will rise.

[12:43] He never leaves them hopeless. After three days, I will rise. This is the exclamation mark on the end of these predictions of suffering. Death will have no dominion over me.

And therefore, death has no dominion over us. Peter put it this way in 1 Peter 1.3, Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ.

According to His great mercy, He has caused us to be born again to a living hope through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead. In Jesus' resurrection, we ourselves have been resurrected.

We were put to death and we have been raised again to live with Him. This is the beautiful promise of the Gospel when Jesus is giving it to them right here and He's laying it out before them and they have just yet to fully understand.

And we see it again. This is the third time now. Look at the response of James and John. These brothers, the sons of Zebedee, they make a request of Him.

[13:46] They want to sit, one at the right, one at the left hand, in glory. They want to reign with Him in glory. Perhaps because they're familiar with 1 Samuel 2.8. Which says, He raises up the poor from the dust.

He lifts the needy from the ash heap to make them sit with princes and inherit a seat of honor. They were rightly asking in some sense, Lord, we want to reign with You.

We want the promise of 1 Samuel 2.8 to come true for us. But look at how Jesus responds to them in verse 38. You do not know what you are asking.

If you are to receive the blessing of reigning with Me in glory, do you understand what that means? And He asks them a question, a rhetorical question, which He answers that they will in fact be able to do.

Are you able to drink the cup that I drink or to be baptized with the baptism with which I am baptized? And this question is saturated with Old Testament imagery of suffering.

[14:50] They would have understood what He meant when He talked about drinking of a cup and being baptized with this baptism. Drink the cup that I drink means the cup of God's wrath.

This is what He's specifically referring to in this case. At the hands of men, Jesus Christ on the cross was going to experience the full cup of God's wrath. Psalm 75.8 reads, For in the hand of the Lord there is a cup with foaming wine well mixed and He pours out from it and all the wicked of the earth shall drain it down to the dregs.

This is why Jesus prays in the Garden of Gethsemane. Good record of this is Luke 22.42. Father, if You are willing, remove this cup from Me.

Nevertheless, not My will, but Yours. Let us be done. Jesus knew that it was the very wrath of God that was going to be poured out on Him for our sins that He was going to drink of.

And in His human nature asked that if God's will could be accomplished in another way that He wouldn't have to do this thing. But yet, this being the will of God, the preordained will of God, Jesus drank it to the very last drop.

[16:10] How about the baptism that He refers to here? That's a clear allusion to God's judgment in the flood. That Jesus was going to be overwhelmed by God's judgment. Again, poured out on Him because of the sinfulness of mankind.

And James and John respond to Him, we are able. We are able. And I don't think that they fully comprehended what Jesus was talking about in His suffering.

None of us can suffer the way that Jesus suffered. I don't know how many of you saw the passion of the Christ such a brutal depiction, a fairly accurate depiction of what crucifixion looked like.

The thing that was heartbreaking to me about that is everybody said, oh, look at this man and what they did for me and the things he did in his flesh, others would do.

I think James and John understand that. I would do that for you. I would receive that kind of physical suffering for you, but the thing that I could never do for you is to be punished in my spirit the way that Jesus was.

[17:21] To drink of the full wrath of God for the sins of the church. To have His judgment wash over Him. One who had been in perfect union with the Godhead for all eternity.

Suddenly had God turn His back on Him. This is something that none of us could have ever bore except for Jesus Christ. So they say we are able and if we're getting to this point in the text and we've yet to read the rest of it, we should say, no you can't.

Impossible. How could you possibly? But what does Jesus respond to them? The cup that I drink, you will drink. With the baptism with which I am baptized, you will be baptized.

Now is He talking about the exact same suffering that He would go through? No. He's not. But He is talking about the physical suffering. The persecution that He'll receive at the hands of the Gentiles. They will receive as well. Surely you will. James and John were not lacking in willingness. But they didn't fully get what they were saying.

[18:30] They wanted a reward for their part in the suffering. It's if they're coming to Him to say, we want to guarantee that if we're going to continue to follow you to Jerusalem and this is what's going to happen to you, that something really good and positive is going to happen for us.

We are willing, we are able to suffer if only we can have the promise of glory. You see, they wanted to serve Jesus for their sake and not for the sake of others.

And they certainly did. James, you can read about in Acts 12.2, was killed by King Herod with a sword. John was exiled to the island of Patmos.

Tradition holds that he's the only apostle that was not martyred. However, he was tortured. He suffered greatly. It's believed that he died of natural causes, but he took on all kinds of torment. He had even been dipped in hot oil and the skin on his body was removed by that process. They certainly suffered for the sake of the name of Jesus Christ, but Jesus presses to them that this suffering does not guarantee some special status, a future glory to be sure, but not some special status.

[19:49] However, humility does lead to exaltation. It turns me to Luke 14 while I take a water break from my throat.

He says to them, it's not for me to decide who will sit at the right hand or the left hand of me in glory. This place has been prepared beforehand. But what does humiliation award us?

How can we persevere through persecution? And there is a future promise for us. He tells a parable beginning in verse 7, Luke 14.

Now he told a parable to those who were invited when he noticed how they chose the places of honor, saying to them, when you are invited by someone to a wedding feast, do not sit down in a place of honor, lest someone more distinguished than you be invited by him.

People in this day who were more distinguished sat closer to the head of the table. Verse 9, And he who invited you both will come and say to you, give your place to this person, and then you will begin with shame to take the lowest place.

[ 21 : 12 ] But when you are invited, go and sit in the lowest place so that when the host comes, he may say to you, friend, move up higher. Then you will be honored in the presence of all who sit at table with you.

For everyone who exalts himself will be humbled, and he who humbles himself will be exalted. So the very thing that they're asking for is the self-exaltation.

And the point is further made by the response of the other ten. This activity amongst James and John and the other disciples leads Jesus to the teaching of verse 42, 43, 44, and 45.

It says when the ten heard it, verse 41, they began to be indignant at James and John. They became angry with them because James and John were asking for seats of honor.

It was the same problem we saw back in chapter 9 where they're arguing about who is the greatest among them. They're feuding in between of their little band. Who's going to be generals and who's going to be colonels in Jesus' army?

[ 22 : 20 ] And Jesus calls to them together and says, You know those who are considered rulers of the Gentiles, lord it over them. They deal with them unjustly. And their great ones exercise authority over them.

You know it to be true of this world that people who are in positions of power rain down on people who are lowly. But God's kingdom looks different.

Verse 43, But it shall not be so among you. But whoever will be great among you must be your servant. And whoever will be first among you must be slave of all.

It seems to be a little backwards in God's economy that if we want to be first, we must be last. That we must empty ourselves and serve others.

And then Jesus gives for this the great example of His own life. For even the Son of Man came not to serve, not to be served, but to serve, and to give His life as a ransom for many.

[ 23 : 31 ] The Son of Man, Jesus, the Christ, the Messiah came not to rule militarily, not to be set up on a throne and worshipped in the temporal, but to serve in the eternal.

To give up His life that we may have life in Him. He secured an eternal redemption for the church in this great climax of redemptive history.

He's just driving the same point. It's the theme of this second act of Mark's that He's made previously to us. Remember Mark chapter 8, 34 and 35. This is in response to the improper understanding of the disciples.

If anyone would come after Me, let him deny himself and take up his cross and follow Me. That is, empty him of himself, all of his self-determination, all of his self-worship and follow Jesus.

Verse 35, For whoever would save his life will lose it. But whoever loses his life for My sake and the Gospels will save it. Again, Mark chapter 9, after the inappropriate, the misunderstanding of the disciples, their argument about who would be first and who would be the greatest.

[ 24 : 46 ] In verse 35 of chapter 9, if anyone would be first, he must be last of all and servant of all. And Jesus again drives all of this with the great example of His life and the way in which He came to serve.

Why do we think, why do we misunderstand understand that we would be any greater than this? Jesus came into this world and was hated.

You see, the thousands that are following Him through the first part of Mark are following Him because of the things that they do, not because of who He is. For the things that can be granted to them, not because they want Him.

He's rejected in His own town. People will follow Him for a while and then when He says something difficult, they will leave. He's got a very small group of people that are devoted to Him.

We see in the beginning of Acts probably about 120. 120! Our normal Sunday morning congregation is larger than that. This is Jesus, the Christ.

[ 26 : 01 ] Why do we think we would be any better? He was delivered to the authorities. He was spit on. He was flogged. He was mocked.

And He was finally killed. Why do we think anything different would come to us? In case you do, Matthew chapter 10. Turn there please.

Jesus is not unaware of what will happen to us as we devote our lives to us, as we die to ourselves, take our crosses, as we follow Him. Beginning of verse 16, Matthew 10, Behold, I am sending you out as sheep in the midst of wolves.

So be wise as serpents and innocent as doves. Do you know what happens to sheep in the midst of wolves? Beware of men, for they will deliver you over to courts and flog you in their synagogues.

And you will be dragged before governors and kings for my sake, to bear witness before them and the Gentiles. When they deliver you over, do not be anxious how you are to speak or what you are to say, for what you are to say will be given to you in that hour.

[ 27 : 20 ] For it is not you who speak, but the spirit of your father speaking through you. Brother will deliver brother over to death and the father his child, and children will rise against parents and have them put to death, and you will be hated by all for my name's sake.

But the one who endures to the end will be saved. When they persecute you in one town, flee to the next. For truly I say to you, you will not have gone through all the towns of Israel before the Son of Man comes.

A disciple is not above his teacher, nor a servant above his master. It is enough for the disciple to be like his teacher, and the servant like his master.

If they have called the master of the house Beelzebul, how much more will they malign those of his household? He says again, John 15 18-20, If the world hates you, you know that it has hated me before it hated you.

If you were of the world, the world would love you as its own. But because you are not of the world, but I chose you out of the world, therefore the world hates you. Remember the word that I said to you, a servant is not greater than his master.

[ 28 : 31 ] If they persecuted me, they will also persecute you. So if we belong to the Lord, if we are following Jesus in his way, we will suffer.

There's no wiggle room in this. There's no way around it. And so what does it mean for us if we don't suffer? v. 19 of John 15, if you were of the world, the world would love you as its own.

It is possible to be a disciple of Jesus Christ, to have made a profession of faith in him, to be truly saved, and to have stopped following him altogether. That possibility exists that you become so ensnared by the traps of this world that he has gone on ahead of you, and you're just sitting in the luxury of the things around you.

If the world doesn't hate you, it's because you look like the world. If you're following Christ and you look like him, you will be persecuted.

Now, what does this look like for us as American Christians? We have laws that prevent by and large physical persecution.

[ 29 : 58 ] It's not likely that any of us would be beheaded, drug out of our homes, thrown into prison, certainly not crucified. There are laws that prevent such things, but yet persecution should exist in other forms by us being thought strange, being made fun of, people thinking that their intellect is so much larger than ours, because we do things like skip watching the Super Bowl to be with God's people on a Sunday evening, because we don't let sports get in the way of our child's spiritual growth, because we don't go out late on Saturdays, because we care about our activity on Sunday morning, because we don't go along with every narrative taught to us in the classroom, we don't make the best grades sometimes, because we don't put down the answer the professor wants to hear, because we work extra hard, even at menial tasks, even when no one is watching, because ladies, you don't fit in on the beach, because you care about modesty, because you would rather serve others than be served, because you warn people of their certain destruction unless they repent and believe in

Jesus Christ. Beloved, there are so many things, these are examples that popped into my head, ways in which we should be living that sets us apart from this world, following in the ways of God, being disciples of Jesus Christ, is going to make us strange.

We should suffer in the world. We ask this question, do you feel more comfortable in your other spheres, the other circles that you run in, than you do when you come and you're with the church? So many times, I've heard the accusation, people will come here and not come back because they don't make them feel good about themselves. It's not my job to make you feel good about yourself.

It's make you feel good about Jesus, to love Him, to see your own failing. But shouldn't we walk in here together and feel comfortable in our failing? Shouldn't we walk in here together and want to be together?

[ 32 : 23 ] Because this place is a refuge where we all come together and say we fail in the way, but we know the way. And we know the way isn't crazy. Encourage me, spur me on in the way.

I want to follow Jesus. I want to be like Him. Shouldn't this be where we're most comfortable? Isn't this why we come together as the church? We might encourage each other in this way, we might press each other on to go back out and to keep fighting?

To go to a place that's hostile towards us? A place that doesn't want to hear the things we have to say because it's not of the world? The answer to all these rhetorical questions is a resounding yes. This should be true of us. This should be so true of us. James 1, 2-4. James says, Count it all joy, my brothers, when you meet trials of various kinds.

For you know that the testing of your faith produces steadfastness and let steadfastness have its full effect that you may be perfect and complete, lacking in nothing.

[ 33 : 32 ] Do we want to be driven on in our faith? Then welcome the suffering. I'm not suggesting that you go and seek the suffering, but begin to arrange your life so that it looks like the life of Jesus and I promise it will come and count it a joy when it comes because you will be purified by it.

Your faith will be increased by it. Beloved, we are so far ahead of so many others in the Christian faith. We have much to rejoice in.

God has done good things with us, but we are also a long way from where He would have us be. We have so much changing to do in our lives.

Casting off our American Christian culture and truly being devoted to the One who has called us. We see in the summation of chapter 10 a beautiful picture of calling.

As their journey brings them to Jericho, northeast of Jerusalem, north of the Dead Sea, a man named Bartimaeus hears that He's coming and he cries out to Him and he cries out to Him with a very specific name, Jesus, Son of David.

[ 34 : 56 ] That means that he recognized that Jesus was the Son of God, that He was the Messiah. He knew who Jesus was. And Jesus says in verse 49, call Him.

He hears the call of the blind man Bartimaeus and He says to him, call Him, and you see in verse 52 that His sight is restored. It's immediately recovered because of His faith.

I've said to you as we've worked through the second act that it's bookended by two accounts of Jesus healing blind men. We see the man at Bethsaida, 8, 22-26.

He's a man who's healed in degrees and he's brought to Jesus by others. Brought to Him. Not given a name here. And Jesus takes him away and He does two miracles.

He partly restores the sight and then He fully restores His sight. And then He sends him off and says, don't go into the village. Then we see Bartimaeus who's healed immediately.

[ 36 : 00 ] And these things seem to be, by Mark's inspired account, put it either in, bookmarked it either in, to drive the point that Jesus is not only the miracle worker over physical blindness but over spiritual as well.

That He is the Lord of spiritual blindness. And I just love the picture of Bartimaeus calling out to Him. He calls him to Himself. He restores His sight. And as He says to him, verse 52, go your way. Your faith has made you well. And Mark's record says, and immediately He recovered a sight and followed Him on the way. Bartimaeus' way became Jesus' way when Jesus restored His sight. When He made Him whole once again. And so we can take some confidence in the fact that Jesus is Lord over spiritual blindness.

If we will simply call out to Him, put ourselves at His mercy. Paul said this in Philippians 1.6, and I am sure of this, that He who began a good work in you will bring it to completion at the day of Jesus Christ.

[ 37 : 18 ] And so as we feel bad about ourselves, as we recognize that we don't suffer for the sake of Jesus Christ and the gospel the way we should, we can take confidence in the fact that He is completing in us the work that He set out to begin, that we are still on a road of sanctification, that He has not given up on us.

Let's pray together.