

Mark 10:32-34

³² **Now they were on the road, going up to Jerusalem, and Jesus was going before them; and they were amazed. And as they followed they were afraid. Then He took the twelve aside again and began to tell them the things that would happen to Him:** ³³ **"Behold, we are going up to Jerusalem, and the Son of Man will be betrayed to the chief priests and to the scribes; and they will condemn Him to death and deliver Him to the Gentiles;** ³⁴ **and they will mock Him, and scourge Him, and spit on Him, and kill Him. And the third day He will rise again."**

Jesus had just discussed the difficulty of rich people entering the kingdom of God. They tended to be self-reliant and proud, the exact opposite of the mindset of a child dependent upon their parents.

Then Jesus talked about the rewards in **following Him**.

Now the disciples and a crowd are following Christ. Some are probably just going with Christ to Jerusalem to celebrate the Passover.

We learn about the mindset of this crowd from our text.

³² **Now they were on the road, going up to Jerusalem, and Jesus was going before them; and they were amazed. And as they followed they were afraid.**

This trip was a long climb up about a 2500 foot elevation change. I think of a backpacking trip a few of us took many years ago. We started at the bottom of the Dolly Sods basin and walked into its highlands. Brad teased Diane that she was expressing an attitude that said, **"just leave me here to die"** because the walk was so strenuous. Well this is **that** kind of walk. Except that it is probably hot and dusty.

Now this crowd was amazed and afraid. That means they were astounded and exceedingly afraid. What would create this mix of emotions?

I think, given what we keep being told by Mark, that the disciples, and probably the following crowd, just couldn't figure out what Jesus was doing. Here He is, the one who is to be the Jew's Messiah, and it would appear **to them** like He was just **flirting with death**. Jesus fully knew the hatred the religious leadership felt toward Him. And He had done nothing to lessen it. In fact, his dealings with them continued to further infuriate the leadership. He made them look bad at every turn. Mostly because they **were bad** at every turn.

How could these followers make sense of this? If you were in their shoes, wouldn't your natural reaction be **fear** of what the religious leaders were going to do to them and **befuddlement** that Jesus would put himself so close to their grasp? It looks to me like a very natural response, based on how they thought. Now, in your walk with Christ, how many times has this been **your response**? We don't naturally understand the mind of Christ. We don't understand his plan. All

we can think about is **how it is going to affect us**. And when we guess where it leads, don't we often respond with fear and surprise?

Nothing has really changed. The disciples are truly just like us. We often "don't get it". But it isn't God's fault. His plan is perfect. It is **our** problem. We have not learned to trust that He **truly does** know what He is doing. He **truly does** know how to keep a Universe running. He really does **not need** our advice. And our **lack of confidence in Him** is no reflection **on Him**. It is only a reflection **upon us**. If you had been with Christ, how would you have responded? The best indication is how you respond now when **God's path for your life** appears to be risky and costly.

Then He took the twelve aside again and began to tell them the things that would happen to Him:

We can clearly see here that the group was larger than the 12 disciples to begin with. Then, when Jesus wants to be blatantly open, he removes the outsiders and he focuses on His inside team.

We can understand from this that not everything we have to instruct should always be addressed to everyone. Those who know us best, we can be most candid with without risking their harm. Other's we must evaluate what is most beneficial for them.

Now, before we go to what Jesus tells his disciples will happen, let's take a look at what the disciples had been taught by their environment what would happen.

The following is a quote from John MacArthur's commentary:

The nineteenth-century historian Emil Schürer summarized the Jewish people's expectations regarding the coming of Messiah and the establishing of His kingdom as follows: First, the coming of Messiah would be preceded by a time of tribulation. Second, in the midst of the turmoil an Elijah-like prophet would appear heralding Messiah's coming. Third, Messiah would establish His glorious kingdom and vindicate His people. Fourth, the nations would ally themselves together to fight Messiah. Fifth, Messiah would destroy all those opposing nations. Sixth, Jerusalem would be restored and made new and glorious. Seventh, the dispersed Jews scattered all over the world would return to Israel. Eighth, Israel would become the center of the world and all the nations would be subjugated to the Messiah. Finally, the Messiah would establish His kingdom, which would be a time of eternal peace, righteous, and glory (*A History of the Jewish People in the Time of Jesus Christ* [New York: Scribners, 1896], 2:154-78). Such a perspective on Messiah's coming left no room for a dead, or even a risen Messiah.

MacArthur New Testament Commentary, The - MacArthur New Testament Commentary – Mark 9-16.

We can see that these people who spoke for God didn't know what they were talking about. They thought they did. They probably even tried to. But they just didn't. That is true of so many who speak for God today. They speak of things they don't know of. They think they have it figured out. But there are too many things they don't know.

So the disciples had a mindset, an expectation, an assumed understanding. And they were expecting Christ to conform to it. So every time He said something contrary, it caused them a great deal of trouble.

Up to this point Jesus had given the disciples this information twice before in Mark.

Mark 8:31 (NKJV)

³¹ And He began to teach them that the Son of Man must suffer many things, and be rejected by the elders and chief priests and scribes, and be killed, and after three days rise again.

Mark 9:31 (NKJV)

³¹ For He taught His disciples and said to them, "The Son of Man is being betrayed into the hands of men, and they will kill Him. And after He is killed, He will rise the third day."

So up until now Christ had said that He would suffer many things, be rejected by the religious leadership, be betrayed into the hands of men, be killed. And would raise again.

This morning we see that Christ will give even more detail.

³³ **"Behold, we are going up to Jerusalem, and the Son of Man will be betrayed to the chief priests and to the scribes; and they will condemn Him to death and deliver Him to the Gentiles; ³⁴ and they will mock Him, and scourge Him, and spit on Him, and kill Him. And the third day He will rise again."**

Part of the new information is **where and when** all this is going to happen.

Christ is headed to Jerusalem. It will be on **this trip** that these things are going to happen. In other words, it is going to happen very soon.

Jerusalem will be the location. It is going to happen at the very religious center of the Jew's world. Think about that. It is happening at the headquarters that God had set up for Himself on this planet. That really is amazing. This is the last place you would think the Son of God would be harmed, in God's center for worship.

But that is exactly what will happen. Why? **Because there is nothing more dangerous than people who think they represent God who have lost touch with God.** No one will do a Christian more harm. The first persecutors of Christians were the Jews. Then there were others, but the church at Rome did Christians great harm. The church in England also did great harm. And the Muslims now are doing great harm. What do they have in common? They think they represent God, but they have lost touch with God.

They don't know God's heart or God's word. They have formulas that make scripture easy for them to box up, but they are not open to being shaped by God's word.

Now Christ gives more detail.

and the Son of Man will be betrayed to the chief priests and to the scribes; and they will condemn Him to death and deliver Him to the Gentiles;³⁴ and they will mock Him, and scourge Him, and spit on Him, and kill Him. And the third day He will rise again."

First, the Son of Man will be betrayed. That is prophesied in

Psalm 41:9 (NKJV)

⁹ Even my own familiar friend in whom I trusted, Who ate my bread, Has lifted up *his* heel against me.

Then the Lord will be rejected by the leaders, by the Jews, his own people.

Isaiah 53:3 (NKJV)

³ He is despised and rejected by men, A Man of sorrows and acquainted with grief. And we hid, as it were, *our* faces from Him; He was despised, and we did not esteem Him.

Even worse than this was something that Jesus didn't mention. He would be temporarily rejected by His Father.

Psalm 22:1 (NKJV)

¹ My God, My God, why have You forsaken Me? *Why are You so far from helping Me, And from the words of My groaning?*

You see, these are all things spoken of in the Old Testament. They are all clues that the experts looked over. These scriptures put a hole in all the experts' theories. So they ignored them.

Then Christ would be **condemned to death**. That has to be one of the most **evil** and **absurd** things that the human race has ever done. It condemned its maker. Something like that seems absolutely amazing...until you read the pages of scripture that tell us about **ourselves apart from God**. What we learn there is that it is perfectly predictable that we would want to, in our pride and arrogance, shake the yoke of our maker.

What Jesus predicts is nothing other than what human potential will produce if given free reign. If any of us were given absolute power to do what we want, we would soon find ourselves attempting to rid ourselves of God. It is our bent. It is how we are. That is the sin nature's wish and deepest desire. We want to say, I am and there is none besides me. We want to build the tower of Babel so we can accomplish anything we set our minds to.

and deliver Him to the Gentiles;³⁴ and they will mock Him, and scourge Him, and spit on Him, and kill Him. And the third day He will rise again."

Look at this. These Jewish leaders, who perceived themselves as so powerful, so full of God's authority, had to submit to the Gentiles in order to accomplish this dastardly deed. Christ had to be delivered over to the Gentiles. The heathen were given the power to say yes or no to these mighty Jews.

So how did the heathen treat the Son of God? They treated Him the same way the chosen people did.

They mocked Christ. Can you imagine judgment day for these guys? Can you imagine showing up before Christ, the righteous judge, dressed in glowing white, with full authority to cast a person into hell right now at a whim.

And a person shows up who took such pleasure in belittling Christ on the cross. Can you imagine the utter horror that person will feel? Because he will know exactly what he did. He will realize at that moment just how evil and mindless his action was. He will see that, without a doubt, he deserves the judgment of this man to whom he had been so cruel when he had the chance. That is just frightening.

Then they **scourged** Christ

They hit Christ with a whip that had strands of leather that had tips of glass or metal or stone. It would tear the flesh right off of a man. If it was used too harshly it would produce death.

Again, imagine the people who gladly did this, facing Christ on judgment day. What dread they will feel. Because they will know what they did on that day revealed the state of their souls. They will know that **they did what they did** because of **who they were**.

Then **they spit upon Christ**. It is possible those who scourged Christ were simply doing their jobs. Maybe they had to do this. But those who mocked Christ and those spit upon him were not getting paid to do that. They were doing it because of who they were. They were cruel and evil people doing what comes natural to them.

and kill Him

Then they killed Him.

The following is a quote about death by crucifixion.

For indeed a death by crucifixion seems to include all that pain and death can have of horrible and ghastly—dizziness, cramp, thirst, starvation, sleeplessness, traumatic fever, tetanus, publicity of shame, long continuance of torment, horror of anticipation, mortification of untended wounds—all intensified just up to the point at which they can be endured at all, but all stopping just short of the point which would give to the sufferer the relief of unconsciousness. The unnatural position made every movement painful; the lacerated veins and crushed tendons throbbed with incessant anguish; the wounds, inflamed by

exposure, gradually gangrened; the arteries—especially of the head and stomach—became swollen and oppressed with surcharged blood; and while each variety of misery went on gradually increasing, there was added to them the intolerable pang of a burning and raging thirst; and all these physical complications caused an internal excitement and anxiety which made the prospect of death itself—of death, the awful unknown enemy, at whose approach man usually shudders most—bear the aspect of a delicious and exquisite release. (“The Crucifixion a.d. 30,” in Rossiter Johnson, Charles F. Horne, and John Rudd, eds. *The Great Events by Famous Historians* [Project Gutenberg EBook, 2008], 3:47-48

MacArthur New Testament Commentary, The - MacArthur New Testament Commentary – Mark 9-16.

Now all of this is what Christ knew was coming. As He walked his way up the mountain to Jerusalem, He knew this was in store. And He chose it. How do we know that Christ knew all of this was coming before it even happened to Him? He knew because He knew the word and He knew the future. Let’s look at Isaiah 53.

Isaiah 53:1-12 (NKJV)

¹ Who has believed our report? And to whom has the arm of the LORD been revealed? ² For He shall grow up before Him as a tender plant, And as a root out of dry ground. He has no form or comeliness; And when we see Him, *There is no beauty that we should desire Him.* ³ He is despised and rejected by men, A Man of sorrows and acquainted with grief. And we hid, as it were, *our faces from Him; He was despised, and we did not esteem Him.* ⁴ Surely He has borne our griefs And carried our sorrows; Yet we esteemed Him stricken, **Smitten by God, and afflicted.**

Really, isn’t that how it would have looked? If God was for Him, wouldn’t God have protected him from his persecutors? Wouldn’t He have changed public opinion? Wouldn’t He have sent someone to rescue Him? Wouldn’t God have protected Him from suffering? Wouldn’t someone have protected His good name? Wouldn’t a group of people rise up in his defense? Would Christ not have been given back his comfortable life of teaching and preaching?

Nope, Christ looked like someone God didn’t like much. He looked like He was God’s enemy.

Was He? No. He was God’s greatest minister. We need to learn from this. We have got to drop all the stupid equations that say that if God **could do something for me**, God **should do** something for me. We frankly, don’t have any idea of **what God should do**. We have never created a universe. We have never kept one running. So we sure don’t know what God **should do** day by day.

All we know for sure here is that, for a much greater good, God allowed His son some of most tortured hours of existence a man has ever gone through.

And why? Because He had a good plan for the rest of us. He provided a way for us to be right with Him. That is what all that pain was for.

Keep that in mind when you suffer greatly. God always has a **good in mind** at the end. We cannot always know in this life what it is. But we will know someday.

None of it will be senseless and worthless.

⁵ But He *was* wounded for our transgressions, *He was* bruised for our iniquities; The chastisement for our peace *was* upon Him, And by His stripes we are healed. ⁶ All we like sheep have gone astray; We have turned, every one, to his own way; And the LORD has laid on Him the iniquity of us all. ⁷ He was oppressed and He was afflicted, Yet He opened not His mouth; He was led as a lamb to the slaughter, And as a sheep before its shearers is silent, So He opened not His mouth. ⁸ He was taken from prison and from judgment, And who will declare His generation? For He was cut off from the land of the living; For the transgressions of My people He was stricken. ⁹ And they made His grave with the wicked-- But with the rich at His death, Because He had done no violence, Nor *was any* deceit in His mouth. ¹⁰ Yet it pleased the LORD to bruise Him; He has put *Him* to grief. When You make His soul an offering for sin, He shall see *His* seed, He shall prolong *His* days, And the pleasure of the LORD shall prosper in His hand. ¹¹ He shall see the labor of His soul, *and* be satisfied. By His knowledge My righteous Servant shall justify many, For He shall bear their iniquities. ¹² Therefore I will divide Him a portion with the great, And He shall divide the spoil with the strong, Because He poured out His soul unto death, And He was numbered with the transgressors, And He bore the sin of many, And made intercession for the transgressors.

Some people say that Jesus failed to underestimate what the Jewish leadership would do to Him. They say He had a mission but He failed at His mission because of this misunderstanding. And those people are full of absolute nonsense. Christ knew exactly what was coming. And He knew that it would please God to bruise Him. Not that God took pleasure in Christ's suffering. But God took pleasure in His perfect redemptive plan being carried out for all those who that He would choose to save.

That same Sovereign will is at work in your life and mine this morning. Our future on this earth isn't foretold in scripture, but our life after that is. We don't know the immediate purpose of the events that happen in our lives. But we know there is one. **God's love would preclude suffering that does not have a useful purpose.**

We do well to follow Christ's example this morning. He received God's will, and set Himself to do it, no matter how much it would cost Him. You and I have that

opportunity every day. What we face every day is God's will for us. And we have the chance to obey Him willingly and gladly, trusting that He knows completely what He is doing. The question is, will we?

Will we stop using pain and loss and risk and danger as reasons to doubt God's love? Can you imagine what would have happened if Christ used **our thinking** in **His situation**? He would have concluded in seconds that His Father didn't love Him so what is the use?

No, let's take our lead from Him. Christ knew better **than we ever will** what His Father was doing. Christ paid more than **we ever will** to obey His Father. What will we conclude from that? Is it not absolute wisdom to follow His lead?