

# Jesus Forges on to Jerusalem

Mark 10:32-34

*Halifax: 24 May 2020 AM*

## **Introduction:**

Today we will continue our sermon series in the Gospel of Mark.

- A. Ever since the twelve confessed that Jesus was the Christ in Mark 8:29, Jesus has been telling His disciples that He is going to be rejected by the elders and chief priests and scribes at Jerusalem, be killed, and after three days rise again,
- but still, His disciples have not been able to accept His plain words about this, even as they make their way to Jerusalem with Him for the last time.
- B. And now (in Mark 10:32-34), as they are on the last road to Jerusalem with Him, on the twenty-five kilometer trek from Jericho to Jerusalem, we see how Jesus forges ahead and reiterates the fact that He is going to Jerusalem to die.

Listen as I read our text to you beginning in Mark 10:32.

- C. This is the holy word of God, so pay careful attention.

**Mark 10:32-34: 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:**

<sup>33</sup> **“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; <sup>34</sup> and they will mock Him, and scourge Him, and spit on Him, and kill Him. And the third day He will rise again.”**

May the Lord add His blessing to the reading of His infallible Word.

I had thought about taking a larger text today since we have already seen Jesus speak of His coming death three times,

- D. but I remembered what I told you when we came to 9:30-32 where Jesus mentioned His coming death at Jerusalem for the third time...
- That we err greatly if we dash over these pronouncements with the attitude that, “Oh yes, another prediction of His suffering, death and resurrection—I know all about that...” so that we just move on.
- E. If this subject becomes old hat to us, there is something bad wrong in our devotion to our Lord and Saviour.
- It is a topic that ought to stir us deeply each time we hear about it.
  - We should always be eager to learn more about our Lord.
    - Sadly, I find that in preaching, congregations are often less interested and less responsive to sermons that focus on the person and work of Jesus Christ.

- There is more interest in sermons about how to handle depression or anxiety (not that these are unimportant) than sermons focused on Christ.
- Perhaps the reason there are so many in the modern church who struggle with depression and anxiety is because we know so little about our Lord.

So let's come apart this morning and focus on the great person of our Lord as He is revealed to us in this wonderful text.

**I. See here His majestic, inflexible, determination to go to Jerusalem.**

- Mark masterfully portrays His intensity in showing us the response of Jesus' followers.
    - They are like a mirror that reflects Him to us on this final ascent to Jerusalem... a trip that was often filled with joyful singing at this time of year as worshippers drew near to the holy city to celebrate the Passover.
- A. We are told how Jesus went ahead of His disciples in a way that unnerved them.
- Look again at verse 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.**
1. What is going on here?
    - These men had spent almost three years with Jesus, going everywhere with Him.
      - They had been up to Jerusalem with Him many times.
      - Why are they amazed and afraid?
        - *Amazed* is the same word we saw in verse 24 (there translated *astonished*) when Jesus told His disciples how hard it is even for a man like the rich young ruler to enter the kingdom of God.
          - It is a word that suggests terror and awe.
          - This is reinforced by the additional statement that they were afraid.
  2. There are a couple of things that might have contributed to this:
    - a. First, we gain some insight from John's gospel that the disciples were uneasy about going to Jerusalem this time because of the opposition they had faced on previous visits.
      - When Jesus received the report that Lazarus was sick and announced that He was going to head on up to Judea early, His disciples objected saying in John 11:8: **"Rabbi, lately the Jews sought to stone You, and are You going there again?"**
        - In previous visits to feasts at Jerusalem, Jesus had delayed his travels in order to avoid those who wanted to kill Him before the appointed time. This time, He was going on anyway.
        - Jesus insisted that they must do the will of God that He might raise up Lazarus for the glory of God.

- Thomas replied with obvious foreboding in John 11:16, “**Let us also go, that we may die with Him.**”
  - They were uneasy about this trip and now, as they drew near to Jerusalem, their fears, perhaps, began to increase.
- b. In addition to this, we also know that Jesus has already told them several times what will befall Him at Jerusalem—rejection, suffering, death, and resurrection.
- Although we are told several times and see evidence that they did not accept or understand what Jesus meant when He said this,
    - these announcements of suffering and rejection must have added to their disquietude as they drew near to the great city on a hill.
- But Mark points to something else that was the chief cause of their uneasiness.
3. It was the demeanour of the Lord Himself that put terror in them on the road to Jerusalem.
- a. Mark ties their amazement and fear to the way in which He *went before them*.
- In an uncharacteristic way with Him, He went ahead of them.
  - There was something solemn and ominous about His whole demeanour.
- b. We learn from prophecy and from Luke what it was.
- In Isaiah 50:5-7, it was prophesied that when the time came for Him to die, our Lord would set His face like a flint to go and give Himself to His enemies, that there would be a rigid determination that showed on His face.
    - Listen to the prophet: Isaiah 50:5-7: **The Lord God has opened My ear; and I was not rebellious, nor did I turn away. <sup>6</sup> I gave My back to those who struck Me, and My cheeks to those who plucked out the beard; I did not hide My face from shame and spitting. <sup>7</sup> For the Lord God will help Me; therefore I will not be disgraced; therefore I have set My face like a flint, and I know that I will not be ashamed.**
  - Luke picks up on this in Luke 9:51 when he says: **Now it came to pass, when the time had come for Him to be received up, that He steadfastly set His face to go to Jerusalem...**
- c. We know that it was not easy for our Lord to go to the cross.
- His heart was more tender than any other heart ever—
    - His love for His heavenly Father who was to visit Him for our sins on the cross and reject Him there was deeper and richer than any other love has ever been.
    - Yet, on He went to this ordeal, His face set like flint.
  - As Psalm 131 describes, He had to still and quiet His soul.
    - This was, as we will see all the more at Gethsemane, no easy task.
  - The disciples could see His determination—His foreboding...

- It must have made a deep impression on them to see this in one so full of poise and majesty as He always was, so fearless, with this hard expression, forging ahead as one fixated on carrying out His dreadful mandate.
- d. William Lane speaks of “the vivid picture” here “of Jesus walking before His frightened disciples, inflexible in His determination to do the will of God.”
  - This shows Jesus as “the powerful Saviour who leads His people with purpose and direction.”
  - “What awakens the amazement and terror in the disciples who follow is not the recognition that the road leads to Jerusalem nor an awareness of what will be accomplished there, but Jesus Himself.
  - The power of the Lord, who holds in His hands His own destiny as well as that of the people of God, is manifested in Mark and his readers in the awe and dread which characterise those around Him.”

TRANS> What a Saviour He is!

F. But there is more here about our remarkable Saviour.

B. See how even in this frame, He takes notice of His frightened disciples.

- Verse 32 goes on to tell us how He responded to them when He saw their fears:
  - **Then He took the twelve aside again and began to tell them the things that would happen to Him.**

1. What compassion!

- Anyone else would have been wholly absorbed—He had no sympathisers; none of them understood His mission at this time.
- Yet, He notices their fears and He calls them aside to speak to them and to minister to them.
  - He is the bishop of our souls—He always notices and He always comes to us at the right time—even when we think He should have come sooner.
  - He knows just what we need and He cares—of that we can always be sure.
    - He is touched with the feeling of our infirmities.
    - As the chief sufferer, His sufferings have always been much deeper than yours, yet He comes as a wise physician to your side and never misses a diagnosis and never gives the wrong medicine and support.

2. And you see that here He calls the twelve aside to tell them what is going to happen to Him at Jerusalem.

- By doing this, He assures them that He is not going into something uncertain—as it is with us.
  - We have a diagnosis, we hear some concerning news, and we do not know what will come of it—what the outcome will be.
  - We may fear the worst or we may try to deny the danger.
- But Jesus lets them know that He knows exactly what is coming to Him.
  - He is not afraid of being caught—He knows that He will be arrested.

- He is going into this thing intentionally and deliberately.
  - He knows what He is doing.
  - This would have brought some comfort to the disciples.
    - Their master was in complete control of the situation.
    - He knew what He was doing.
    - Nothing was out of control for Him—it was all deliberate.
3. Does this not bring great comfort to you, my dear brothers and sisters?
- What uncertainty are you facing?
    - Yes, you do not know the future, but your Saviour does and He will do nothing that will harm you or those you love.
    - It may cause you and them great pain, but it will not harm you or them if you are His and they are His.
      - You can go into the future with the assurance that He knows what will be and that He knows the good that will be accomplished.
      - It may be very hard, but it will be good.

## **II. And now let us turn to see what Jesus knew that He was going to experience at Jerusalem as He forged ahead.**

A. The word that best describes His coming ordeal is, perhaps, *rejection*—a thing most intolerable to the gracious Son of God, full of love and desire for relationship.

1. First, He says **we are going up to Jerusalem and the Son of Man will be betrayed to the chief priests and the scribes.**
  - Who will do this *betrayal*?—the word means *delivered over*.
    - We think of Judas—and indeed he did deliver his Master over for a wretched thirty pieces of silver. This was a hard trial.
  - But remember in 9:31 that Jesus used the same word to refer to something that was even harder than this for Him, that the Son of Man would be delivered over into the hands of men.
    - With these words, He showed that it was God who would deliver Him over—that the Father would reject Him, as we know, laying upon Him the guilt of all of our transgressions—the sins of all His people.
      - This was what weighed so heavily upon our Saviour when He later cried out that God would let this cup pass from Him if it were possible.
    - He forges on to Jerusalem knowing that He will not only be despised and rejected by men, but that Father was delivering Him over into the hands of men to be crucified.
2. Next, He says that He will be sentenced to death by the highest court of the church. He will be officially rejected by the church.
  - He says that the chief priests and scribes **will condemn Him to death and deliver Him to the Gentiles...**
  - Think of it!
    - Here is the Son of God who was sent from heaven to redeem the church.

- The Christ, the promised Messiah, the seed of the woman, the Son promised to Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, the Son of David, the messenger of the covenant... officially rejected by the church that He established... so despised that He is given the highest sentence—death on a cross.
    - I should mention the situation here—the Jews had to deliver over those they condemned to death to the Romans because the Jews were under dominion of Rome at this time.
    - They had their church courts, but the Romans were their civil rulers and only the civil rulers had authority to execute criminals.
  - Yet, think of it!
    - Christ presses on up the road to Jerusalem anyway!
    - Still He goes forward for the sake of that same church that these represent, knowing that they will condemn Him and deliver Him up to the Gentiles...to die.
  - This was so hard for Him.
    - He who had such love for Jerusalem.
    - He who had such love for the church and had established it as His people upon the earth—now showing such utter contempt for Him and His Father.
      - Yet, still He presses on, His face like a flint.
3. And what does Rome do with Him? They also reject Him.
- Pilate might have refused to condemn Him when he found Him to be innocent, but he also rejects Him.
    - He rejects his own creator who had come to bless the nations with the salvation He was bringing into the world for His church.
    - All along, the promise had been that all the nations would be blessed by the promised Son given to Israel.
  - Yet, Pilate turns Him over to the executioners, the cruel masters of torture who, Jesus says, **will mock Him, scourge Him, and spit on Him...**
    - What treatment for the Son of God to take.
      - Here is the hatred of the world for their own Maker—because they are wicked and despise Him.
      - Here is painful rejection for Him to bear... the cruel whip made even worse to Him by the hatred it represented of men for their Maker.
    - This is the hatred that sin has made native to the human heart.
      - Never could they get at Him until He humbled Himself, became flesh, and went to Jerusalem to be put into their hands.
        - This is what He majestically, firmly, resolvedly set His face to endure as He went up the road to Jerusalem... to put Himself into the cruel mocking hands of men.
        - He presses on, all the while with their redemption in His sight.
4. And they kill Him. Jesus says, **and they will kill Him.**

- All knew that execution at the hands of the Romans was by the cross.
  - Hanging was to the Jews also a sign of God’s curse and God’s rejection.
    - Moses said, “Cursed is everyone who hangs on a tree.”
  - The prophets had said that Jesus would be stricken for our iniquities.
    - He came to bear the curse for us.
    - It was from the cross that He cried, **“My God My God, why have you forsaken me?”** as foretold by David in Psalm 22.
    - It was in this way that His soul was made an offering for sin—His blood poured out, His death accomplished for the transgression of His people. The Son of God rejected by His own heavenly Father.
      - Nothing was more difficult for the Son of God whose meat and drink was to please the Father than this...
  - Yet, to do this He goes to Jerusalem.
    - He sets His face with firm resolve and forges on up the road to Jerusalem.
      - There He is, marching on to Zion with a face like stone, to die.
      - He knows that He will be rejected by all at Jerusalem—His disciples, His church (the Jews), the Gentiles, and His Father...
        - but still He presses on.

TRANS> But that is not the end of the story. By no means!

B. With simple words, He says of Himself, **“the third day He will rise again.”**

1. Rejection and death cannot be the end of the story for the prince of life.
  - The grave cannot keep Him.
  - The offering of His soul, the shedding of His blood, cannot be unavailing.
  - The Father cannot despise the affliction of the afflicted one nor ignore His cries for deliverance and for the redemption of His people.
2. When He rises, all of His elect rise with Him.
  - When the offering of His soul is accepted, it is accepted for the sake of all those that the Father has given to Him—
    - those from among the Jews, those from among the Gentiles...
    - All who are appointed to salvation repent and believe so that they become those who share in His death and resurrection for the forgiveness of their sins and acceptance of their persons.
3. By Him, sinners are accepted by God and made alive.

**III. Consider this Saviour!**

- **A Saviour that we ought to cherish.**
- **There is no other like Him.**

A. See Him on the road to Jerusalem and cherish Him!

- Such fortitude, such resolve, such nerve, such determination, such majesty.
  - On He goes, knowing what He is going to face—but going anyway.
- B. See Him on the road to Jerusalem for us—the people who trust Him together with our children.
- Such love to us who hated Him, such commitment to us who rejected Him, such mercy to us who showed no mercy to Him, such compassion to us in our need, such a high price to suffer so much because of our great guilt.
    - On He goes, in love to us that He might redeem us, despite what He knew He was going to suffer.
    - Never such love as this, that a man would lay down His life for His enemies.
  - Cherish Him, admire Him, love Him, worship Him, magnify His name who first loved you.
- C. See Him on the road to Jerusalem for His heavenly Father and cherish Him.
- Never was there such love as He has for His Father.
    - He was sent to do this because of the Father’s great love for us.
    - He knew that it pleased His Father to give us the kingdom.
  - He did this that we might know the Father and glorify Him.
    - That He might bring us to the Father that we might love Him and serve Him and bear fruit for His name as His image bearers.
    - He delights in nothing more than to see Him honoured and loved.
- D. See Him forging ahead up the road to Jerusalem, admire Him and imitate Him.
- He calls us to press on for Him on the road for Him and for others as He has done for us... not to earn our salvation,
    - but to experience and live in the salvation, the new life, the eternal life, that He has purchased for us and bestows on all who come to Him for it.
  - As we saw with the rich young ruler passage, even the most credentialed, capable, upright person among us does not have what it takes to enter the kingdom...
    - but it is by the grace of God that we come to Christ who has opened the way for us by His suffering and death and resurrection.
    - Once we come to Him for life, He makes us alive and we follow Him on the road to Jerusalem—to fulfill the call of God—to no longer live for ourselves but for Him who died for us and rose again.

TRANS> There will be more to say about that next week.

**Conclusion:**

But this week, let us consider the majesty and glory and love of our Saviour.

- B. See His pressing on to Jerusalem, knowing full well what He would endure for our sake and at our hands. What a Saviour!