

Mark 10:32-34

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[0 : 00] Again, if you are physically able and desire to do so, would you stand with me as we stand together. And we read the word of God found in Mark 10, starting in verse 32 and reading through verse 34.

Not very many verses, but a powerful text. And they were on the road going up to Jerusalem. And Jesus was walking on ahead of them. And they were amazed.

And those who followed were fearful. And again, he took the 12 aside and began to tell them what was going to happen to him. Saying, behold, we are going up to Jerusalem.

And the Son of Man will be delivered to the chief priests and the scribes. And they will condemn him to death and will hand him over to the Gentiles. They will mock him and spit on him and scourge him and kill him.

And three days later, he will rise again. Let's pray again. Father, we thank you for your word. We pray that your word would speak to our hearts and minds. And it would bring glory and honor to you as it changes and transforms us to be more like you.

[1 : 05] And we ask it in Christ's name. Amen. You may be seated. The text before us is immediately on the heels of the rich young ruler.

And if you remember in that account as Christ is speaking to this one, it says that he was on his way getting ready to go on a journey. And someone with such a desperate need ran up to meet him and fell at his feet and asked him, What must I do to inherit eternal life?

Christ used that opportunity to not only describe to us the longing of every heart of man, but also the impossibility of man being able to do anything to earn such a matter.

And he began to speak of those who must leave all and follow him. At the conclusion of that, when this young man leaves him distraught because he was a man of many possessions, and he walked away sad because of what was asked of him, Peter says, Lord, look, we have left everything.

We have left all and followed you. And that is a true statement. Jesus tells Peter, as he says, No one who has left homes or fathers or mothers or farms for my sake will suffer loss, but they will be rewarded a hundred times over in this life and in the life to come.

[2 : 25] But we have seen that in the midst of that promise of blessing, Jesus also said that they will be enriched with these blessings and persecutions. That the persecutions were a certain reality in the life of those who chose to follow Jesus.

And in the text before us, we find them following him one final time on the way to Jerusalem. We mark the public ministry of Christ by his departures to and from the Galilean region into the city of Jerusalem for the observance of the Passover feast.

We know that the public ministry of Christ lasts about three and a half years. And we know that because there are three years that he goes to Jerusalem to observe the Passover festivals.

And the one before us is his last journey. It is the last time that he will go to the city of David to observe this Passover celebration, which we find in the Old Testament that unashamedly points to Jesus himself.

It is at this time that he will fulfill the prophetic words that have been declared by Zechariah and by so many others. We know that when he gets there, there will be the triumphal entry.

[3 : 45] There will be the seven days of presentation. Because when you had the lamb picked for slaughter, you had to observe it and to watch it and to make sure that it was spotless, blameless, without defect.

And there would be the presentation of the Savior as daily he went in and out of the city. We know that there will be the discourse, the great final discourse of Christ in which we find in the Gospel of John, starting in John 13, 14, 15, 16, and even until the high priestly prayer found in John 17.

We read what happens at the conclusion of all of this. But yet before any of those matters could happen, he had to be there. For a prophet is not without honor in his own hometown, but also these things had to happen in Jerusalem.

As we have been studying on Sunday nights and Wednesday nights through the book of Nehemiah, we have seen that Nehemiah was God's political leader used to move the people of God to reconstruct the walls of Jerusalem.

But the ministry of Nehemiah was not a wall-building campaign, if you will. 52 days they labored on the walls. We will be tonight in Nehemiah chapter 8, which, by the way, Nehemiah will not be a central figure of.

[5 : 03] As a matter of fact, he's not even mentioned there. It will be Ezra and all of the Levites and the priests that are with him. He will stand before the people as the people stand, much like you did just a moment ago, men and women and children as they hear the Word of God read.

And then someone will give the sense. We'll call that preaching. And we'll see that. But what we know that Nehemiah is being used of God to rebuild the people of God, and Jerusalem was important for it had already been declared that someone one day would ride a coat of a donkey through the gates of Jerusalem.

And if Nehemiah had not been used to hang the gates, then someone else would have. For the gates had to be in place so that when Jesus got there, the prophecy could be fulfilled.

What the world had tried to destroy, Nebuchadnezzar, Nebuchadnezzar, Nebuchadnezzar, and all of his military might, as they had knocked the walls over and burned the temple with fire and taken the gold out of Solomon's temple.

What they had left in rubble, God would rebuild. And he would use it to fulfill his word. But he had to be there. He had to be in Jerusalem.

[6 : 12] And here we find him on his final journey, that direction. But as you look at it, my friend, I want you to notice the determined focus of the Savior.

Look at the determined focus. It says, and they were on the road going up to Jerusalem. We've said this before. More than likely, Christ is leaving the region of Galilee.

If you were to look at the maps in the back of your Bible, which are pretty important, and you need to look at them every now and then, you will notice that if you look at your map, the Galilean region of the nation of Israel is to the north of the city of Jerusalem.

And so for one to go to Jerusalem, they actually had to go down, geographically speaking, because they would need to travel south. Now, Jerusalem was indeed built upon a plateau, lifted up and raised up, still is, because, you know, they haven't changed the topography of the land, so to say. It is elevated just a little bit above that region. But everywhere in Scripture, when you are on your way to Jerusalem, whether if you're traveling south or traveling north or east or west, you are always going up to Jerusalem.

[7 : 24] And why is it that someone says we go up? Well, because Jerusalem was the place of the manifestation of the presence of God. So this is just a good biblical side note for you.

When you go into the presence of God, you're always going up. It doesn't matter which direction you go. Brother Ivan spoke of Paul's prayer that, For this reason I bow my knees.

And I cry out, Friend, listen to me. In prayer, when you bow your knees or you lay on your face prostrate to the ground, you are ascending up into the presence of the Father, though positionally your body may go down to get there.

But you are always ascending into the presence of God. And now Jesus is on the road going up to Jerusalem. He is intense because look at what it says.

And Jesus was walking ahead of them. Now, immediately before this, Peter has declared, We have left all to follow you. And Jesus says, Yes, you're following me.

[8 : 29] And now they are literally, physically following him. For he is on his way to Jerusalem. And he is going ahead of them. And he's going ahead of them with such determined focus.

Notice what the text. By the way, Mark is the only one. Matthew, Mark, and Luke record these few verses for us. But Mark is the only one that gives us this wording. And they were amazed.

And they were amazed. I want to ask you something. We have sadly cheapened the English language in our day.

But if I was to ask you, what amazes you? How would you answer that? What do you look at and you say, That is amazing. What is the first thing that comes to your mind?

Is it some feat of physical ability accomplished by some other human being that is really just a matter of practice and work ethic and putting their best abilities forward and maybe a little bit of God-given talent?

[9 : 32] Is that amazing to you? The limited abilities of mankind? What amazes you? Because see, the word amazed means to be confounded or astonished to the point of fear and unknowing certainty.

What amazes you? These people were amazed at the way Jesus went to Jerusalem.

Why? Because two times prior to this, he has already declared to them that he would go to Jerusalem and in Jerusalem he would die.

Twice. He has already told them, When I go to Jerusalem, I will die. And yet he's going before them. No one is dragging him. No one is pushing him. No one is begging him. He is going in such a manner that says that those who followed him were amazed.

[10 : 35] It's the same word, by the way, used in Mark chapter 1, verse 27. And when they saw this, they were amazed. Do you know what they were amazed at then?

Jesus had just cast a demonic spirit out of a man for the first time in his public ministry. This man had come before them with this demonic spirit and Jesus, by the word of his mouth, had cast them out.

And they were amazed at this man who taught not only with knowledge but with authority. He had the authority to cast out demons. And the same word that is used there is the same word that they see when they watch him and they behold him moving towards Jerusalem.

The manner in which his face was set and the determination in which he was moving forward simply amazed them. They were astonished. And it says, and those who walked after him were fearful.

Why? Because he's going to his own death and you're following him. Twice he has said, I go to Jerusalem to die. And yet, he's determined to be there.

[11 : 42] All right, friend, make no mistake about it. Jesus knows that when he gets to that city, there are a number of things that will happen to him. First, he will be betrayed by one of those closest to him that he entrusts with money, Judas Iscariot.

Then, he will be abandoned by all those who are walking along beside him now. For when the Roman guards show up, they all flee him in the Garden of Gethsemane. Then, he will be mocked, spit upon, slapped across the face by the quote, unquote, religious leaders of that city.

He will be handed over to the Romans for a mockery of a trial as he goes through none the less than six different trials in a matter of just a number of hours.

There will be the mockery of his trials that were there. Then, there will be the beatings and the scourging of the Roman soldiers as they take him mercilessly to the point of death.

There will be the bearing of his cross up Golgotha's hill. He will be nailed in pain to the Roman cross, the most unspeakable form of torture in which you die not because of the pain that is inflicted but because of the suffocation when your breathing is constricted because of the nature of that death, a slow and agonizing death.

[13 : 03] He will be laughed at and scorned at the foot of the cross and on either side of him. He will extend pardon to one who hangs beside him. He will carry the weight of our sin and he will suffer something that no one in this life has ever suffered, the turning of the face of the Father from him as the Father leaves him to bear our weight and our agony alone and then he will die and he will be laid in a borrowed tomb.

All of this awaits him in Jerusalem but yet the manner in which he moves forward amazes them. What's the most amazing thing about Jesus that you know? It is not so amazing that he casts out the demons for he is the head of the demons. He created them by the way.

All things were created by him, for him and through him. He was there when Satan fell out of the heavens and he watched him fall it says. That's not amazing that he can control the demons for they are fallen angels who exist to do his bidding and when he says go they must go.

Does it amaze you that he can turn water into wine? Well he's the creator and sustainer of the universe. Does it amaze you that he can walk across the waves of a tossing sea? No, he is the one who holds the oceans in the palm of his hands.

[14 : 37] Does it amaze you that he can tell Lazarus to come forth? Well it shouldn't because in the beginning God created and he created everything ex nilo that is out of nothing. From the dust of the

ground he created man and then he fashioned him in his own likeness and breathed life into him. So it should be nothing when the bones are already there for him to work with, right? That's not amazing. He's already done that in the past. What's so amazing about Christ. What's so amazing is the one day who could do all of this set his face to go to Jerusalem for you and I to face all of that. Look at the determined focus of Christ. Notice the declared future and it says and he took the twelve aside again and for the third time he told them what was going to happen. For the third time it says that he began to reveal to them and again he took the twelve aside and began to tell them what was going to happen to him. Now that should be comforting for they are afraid for their own sake but he's going to tell them what's going to happen to him. He says behold we are going up to Jerusalem. The son of man notice all the will statements here. will be delivered to the chief priests and the scribes and they will condemn him to death and they will hand him over to the Gentiles.

[16:02] By the way this being the third time that Christ reveals these truths each time comes with a further revelation by the way. He had declared the first time that he would die in Jerusalem. He had declared the second time that not only would he die in Jerusalem but he would die at the hands of the religious elite and now the third time he brings into the fold the Gentiles.

He begins to speak of the Romans and he is really clarifying to them kind of unfolding and unrolling the scroll if you will so that they would have an opportunity to grasp it.

I'm going to die in Jerusalem. When I get to Jerusalem it's going to be the religious leaders and when I get to Jerusalem and the religious leaders hand me over to the Gentiles then they will kill me. And he's very clear about this.

They will hand him over to the Gentiles and they will mock him and spit on him and scourge him all these things he's declaring and kill him. Notice this first of all as they followed Christ and they were afraid for they knew what was awaiting him he had already told them and rather than try to comfort them with some false sense of security Christ told them the truth.

Rather than Jesus looking at them going hey it's going to be okay don't worry about it when we get there I've got all this under control Jesus tells them when I get there it's going to be worse than you think. Rather than sugar coat it or to ease it just a little bit Christ declares to them the absolute truth of what's going to happen.

[17:32] Friend there are times in following Christ that we wish he did not include these persecutions and trials and tribulations and we would say oh Lord would you just tell me what's going to happen and he tells us the truth over and over and over again.

it's not always going to be pleasant but I'm going to be there and I'm going before you on the way there. And then he says and he will rise again.

Jesus never declares the coming suffering without declaring the coming glory. It is a declared future.

But third and finally friend I want you to notice this. Notice the disciples failure. Notice the disciples failure. We have to read a little bit ahead in our text in our mind to see this but this is the third time Christ has told them he was going to die and each time he gives them a greater revelation.

At each time as he has displayed his abilities and his powers and his control over his circumstances at each instance he unfolds the story just a little bit more.

[18:54] At each instance he tells them that matters that will take place concerning him but also promises them that he will rise again. But you know just like I do they don't get it.

If we were to read the very next verse we'll find those sons of thunder James and John asking to have a prominent position in the courtroom of heaven.

And they're not concerned about what's awaiting them they're concerned about what's personally concerning them. If we were to go on farther and we were to find that night in which he is betrayed we will find them scattering and fleeing.

We'll find Peter cutting off Malchus' ear. We'll find Peter denying him three times as he warms himself at the campfire of the enemy. Over and over again we'll find them confused not understanding what's going on and we find them that matter until Christ appears to them after the resurrection.

Even as they're gathered in the upper room afraid and terrified because they don't know what's going to happen. We should be amazed at this reality because Christ had declared to them in the flesh this is what is going to take place and yet they fail to comprehend.

[20 : 14] Why? Because having eyes they would see not and having ears they would hear not and having minds they would understand not. Spiritual truths are not mentally grasped.

They do not understand nor comprehend these matters until they are given the gift of the Holy Spirit. That's a good way of saying friends you can't open up your Bible and expect to understand it without the presence of the Spirit in your life.

See the Father has a great plan the Son fulfills that plan but it is the Spirit that brings it to mind. It is the fullness of the Trinity. The gift of the Spirit is given to those who have surrendered their life to Christ.

They are sealed until the day of redemption it says but they are also given a mind to understand. They are given the ability to know what God is teaching them.

It is not studious effort that is put into it by the work of man. Quote unquote biblical scholars have existed for years who are non-believers who can criticize Scripture and break it apart and tell you things which no one else may be able to but they don't get it.

[21 : 31] I mean they don't get it. They don't understand the comfort and the hope and the assurance that comes from what Christ is going to accomplish. Oh we can hear it over and over again we can hear it.

We can sit in Sunday school classes or go through vacation Bible schools and we can hear the same stories over and over and over again but friend those stories don't matter until the ears are open and the eyes can see because of the presence of the Spirit when the life is said here I am oh Lord take me and then we say wow I never knew it.

The disciples failure is not because of their weakness but rather simply a result of their humanity. We fail to understand everything Christ tells us had he not been so gracious and merciful to reveal it to us.

Oh there are a number of things we open up scripture and you say what in the world is going on here? Let me encourage you. Let me challenge you. You can go search all the quote unquote scholars but why not just go to the author himself and say Lord what are you saying to me? Help me to understand it that you may be glorified and honored. Lord because he his determined focus would dictate the rest of their life and may we follow him realizing that sometimes as we do he leads us right into the most difficult of seasons and we may not understand it at the moment but praise God he goes before us and on the other side he reveals it to us that we may praise and glorify him for the remainder of our lives.

[23 : 23] Let's pray. Father we thank you for this day. We thank you for the testimony of scripture. We cannot praise you enough that there was a day Lord Jesus which you set your face to go to Jerusalem for we know the history has changed from that day forward.

For those of us who know you as our Lord and Savior our history has changed and we give you the glory and the honor and praise that you so deserve for the work you have accomplished. We ask it all in Christ's name. Thank you.