

Mark 14:27-52

“The Crushing Of Christ”

I can't help but feel like we're at a place in the scriptures whereby we should be removing our proverbial shoes because the place upon which we're treading is holy ground. I cannot pretend to understand, or have a grip on what was going on *in* Christ, or what was taking place *around* Christ in the spiritual realm on the night of His betrayal, hours before the cross as He instituted the new covenant, directly upon the heels of which He was crushed for you and for me. And there's a part of me that's intimidated to even handle this section of scripture because I know that there's no way that I can bring out with any form of justice the depths *of* it and the heart that's found *in* it.

I'm certain that the spiritual weight that was in the air on this night was like none other in the course of human history. Satan seeking to destroy the Son of God, Jesus resolving to submit Himself *to* God once and for all as the Sacrificial Lamb *of* God sent to die for the sin of the world. The treachery of the betrayal, the sadness of the scattering; Jesus would face this moment absolutely alone, yet there was no other way because He alone could be made sin for us that we might be made the righteousness of God in Him.

As we step back into the scene of Mark Ch 14 you recall that at this point Judas has left the upper room at the “nod” of Jesus so as to seal the deal regarding the betrayal. Jesus instituted what we refer to as “The Lord’s Supper” as He reinterpreted the elements of the meal in Him. The bread was to represent *His* body broken for us, the cup was to speak of *His* blood shed for us; the deliverance that was to be remembered was no longer that of being set free from the slavery of Egypt, but now we're to understand that He's the fulfillment of what that foreshadowed. We're to remember *Him*, that He is our deliverer, He's the Lamb slain from before the foundations of the earth, that He's the One who's set us free (again by the breaking of His body, the shedding of His blood) from the chains and the bondage of sin and death. It's by His stripes that we are healed and made whole. Then they worshiped together, sang a hymn and went out to the Mt of Olives. Vs 27-31 Reflects the kind of conversation that took place while they were in transit from the upper room, walking through Jerusalem down into the Kidron valley up to the base of the Mt of olives until they came to the garden of Gethsemane.

Vs27-31

Now it would seem according to Luke's gospel that Jesus warned Peter once while they were still in the upper room. He said, *“Simon, Simon! Indeed, Satan has asked for you, that he may sift you as wheat. But I have prayed for you, that your faith should not fail; and when you have returned to Me, strengthen your brethren.”* Luke 22:31-32 Now I don't know about you, but to me those words would be radically sobering. If Jesus were to look at me and say, “Jeff, Satan has asked for you by name, he wants to sift you like wheat, but I've prayed for you that your faith should not fail; and when you've returned to Me, strengthen your brethren.” I'd be like, “Blow the whistle, throw a flag on the field, time out, what!?! Satan has asked for who? For me?” and I would immediately seek the fetal defense position coiled up close to the heart of the Lord, “Lord You've got to protect me, help me, don't let go *of* me!” But Peter was all, “Lord, I'm ready, I'll go to prison, or to death with You.”

But note that even in that statement that Jesus made to him there's the warning that he's going to fall. He says, "I've prayed for you that your faith should not fail; and *when you have returned to Me,*" what does that mean? Your faith won't fail *ultimately*, but you *will fall* briefly nonetheless...Peter doesn't agree.

Here in Vs 27 Jesus broadens the scope. He says, "*All of you* will be made to stumble because of Me *this night.*" He then underscores His position with scripture by quoting Zech 13:7 "Strike the Shepherd and the sheep will be scattered." However we note that Jesus placed an addendum on that Vs by adding the 1st 2 words, "I will" who will? The implication is that *God will*. What's my point? My point is that Jesus doesn't perceive Himself as the helpless victim of satanic tyranny, but rather as the voluntary Suffering Servant of God. He will fulfill that which was foretold by the prophets, "*Surely He has borne our griefs And carried our sorrows; Yet we esteemed Him stricken, Smitten by God, and afflicted. 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. 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.*" Isa 53:4-6

However here's something that we should see and take note of, because even though this is a warning regarding what's coming; it would seem that we would do the Lord a disservice if we didn't see His intent to encourage them in the midst of it. In Vs 28 He says, "But after I've been raised, I will go before you to Galilee." What am I saying? Listen, the Lord knew that each and everyone of them would fail Him, yet He still promised to go before them and to *reunite* with them.

What do we see here? 2 Things; 1st of all we see Jesus draw attention again to the promise of His resurrection, something that once again they all seemed to miss. He tells them that He will be raised and that He will go before them to Galilee. Jesus is contemplating His confrontation with the cross (we'll see that shortly) yet simultaneously He's already looking beyond the cross to the reality of the resurrection and the joy (Heb 12:2) that's set before Him.

The 2nd thing that we see is the love of Jesus for His disciples in that He already knows that each and everyone of them will fail Him yet He will remain faithful to them, restore and reunite them to Himself once again. Remember when Paul told Timothy that if we are *faithless* He remains *faithful*; He cannot deny Himself? That's what we're seeing right here, that wasn't a "cart blanche" statement meaning do what you want when you want, Jesus is a softy who'll chase you around and you don't need to worry. He's saying that there are going to be times that despite our honorable intentions we will fail, our faithfulness will falter, however *His* never will. He will be there for you, He will be faithful to restore you after you fall. Jesus knows your fickle nature, your frailty, the fact that you will fail from time to time. Yet He has said, "*I go to prepare a place for you. And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again and receive you to Myself; that where I am, there you may be also.*" John 14:2-3 You may falter, you might fail Him from time to time but mark my words He will remain *faithful* to you.

Vs29

It's funny how fast we can flip from one extreme to the other isn't it? Earlier that day the Lord had given them His word on something (instructions on how to find where they would partake of the Passover) and you recall that they found it *just as He had said to them*. At that point we took the time to draw attention to the fact that we will *always* find things *just as Jesus*

has said to us, yet for all of that we still struggle being obedient to His instructions. This is just such an incident, there will be no exception, they *will find it* just as He has said to them. Yet for some reason they just can't see it going down that way, even though the Lord has *never* been wrong, He's the sinless Son of God of whom it's impossible to lie. Yet Peter defies God's word, "Hey it may apply to those guys, but not to me." How many times we feel like we're in the same boat? "I know what You've said about sin, I know Your word instructs me to take the exact opposite path than the one I'm pursuing here, and I know the penalty applies to everyone else but I'm an exception."

Listen, none of us are exceptions when it comes to what's written in the word of God. Heaven and earth will pass away but God's word will by no means pass away. No matter what's going on, even if we have the best of intentions we will *never* find ourselves an exception to the predetermined position of the word of God.

Now I would say this, don't forget that earlier that evening Jesus had told Peter that He had prayed for him and that he *would* return to Him, the point being that prayer is beyond the reach of the enemies power. I'm not saying that the warfare isn't radical, and difficult to say the least, but what I am saying is that Satan and God are not equal opposites, God is the Creator, Satan is a created being, an angel. and When through prayer God's power is invoked the enemy cannot stand, prayer is beyond the power of the enemy, Peter *will* return.

Right now Peter is in denial of his denial. Jesus underscores it again telling him that before the rooster crows twice he'll not only *desert* Jesus, He will *disown* Him 3x.

But in Vs 31 Peter puffs up all the more, "Quit talking this way Lord, it's never going to happen; even if I have to *die* with You I'll *never deny* You." Again why do we argue with the Lord? What are we seeing in Peter here? Pride; he didn't realize that the area that he considered himself to be the strongest in was actually the place of his greatest weakness, how so? Because when it comes to the kingdom of God we cannot stand in our own strength, we cannot accomplish by the efforts of the flesh what can only take place by the power of the Spirit. If you, if I seek to stand for God in my own strength I will fail every time. Of course we can't leave this particular portion of scripture with out referencing 1 Cor 10:12 can we? "*Therefore let him who thinks he stands take heed lest he fall.*" and Again, "*Pride goes before destruction, And a haughty spirit before a fall.*" Prov 16:18 The bible tells us that a man's pride will bring him low, and that before destruction the heart of a man is haughty (or arrogant, overconfident). Peter had the same problem many of us have, we don't recognize our own weakness, we'll seek to stand in our own strength, we get puffed up with pride and inevitably we're brought low. Oh, he was sincere; he loved the Lord with all that was within him. Yet he would not be an exception to the word of God and He would not stand in the strength of His own will (so to with you, so to with me).

Vs32-34

You're following the flow; at this point there's 11 of them (12 including Jesus), as they come to the entrance of the garden Jesus stations 8 of them there, He tells them just to hang out and wait on Him while He prays. The other 3 (Peter, James, and John), the 1 who was most vocal about his ability to stand *up* and stand *with* the Lord, the other 2 who said that they were able to drink His cup and be baptized with His baptism He brought in a little farther. As they entered deeper into the garden the countenance of Christ began to change but not for the better,

He became increasingly, evidently/obviously disturbed. We read that He began to be *troubled* and *deeply distressed*. The word “troubled” means more literally *to be thrown into terror or to be alarmed thoroughly*. The word translated “deeply distressed” is accurate, it speaks of great anguish and even depression. Of the 3 Greek words the NT translates as “depression” this is the strongest one. What I’m trying to communicate is that they’re beginning to seeing a side of Jesus that they’ve never seen before; He looks worried, and not only worried but obviously unsettled and troubled in a way that had to be beyond sobering...something’s not right, something is *weighing* on Him and it’s obvious. Then Jesus turns to them and says, “My soul is exceedingly sorrowful, even to death. Stay here and watch.” He told the 8 to wait; He tells the 3 to watch. Don’t miss where He’s at when these things are coming down on Him. He’s in the Garden of *Gethsemane*.

The word “Gethsemane” means literally, “an oil press.” It was a place where olives were literally crushed so as to extract that which man needed from them; the oil. Olive oil was essential in the ancient world, used for cooking, used for service in the temple, used for oil in their lamps. Even so it was in the Garden of Gethsemane that Jesus Christ would be *crushed* as the weight, the reality of what was taking place would bear down upon Him with such a ferocity, such an intensity that the bible declares that He was literally sweating great drops of blood. When He said that His soul was so sorrowful that death itself was overshadowing Him He was not speaking in hyperbole, He was literally that overwhelmed, He was being crushed inwardly.

We might even dare to say here that the rending and travail of His soul in the garden was every bit as great if not greater than the suffering of His body upon the cross; I’m just telling you that what took place here is beyond our ability to grasp, and most definitely beyond *my ability* to explain or articulate. It’s like the full impact and personal consequences of His obedience hit Him with such force that it staggered Him and He reeled under its weight, and we read in Vs 35...

Vs35-36

We read this and we think, “What’s going on Jesus? What is it that’s so *deeply* disturbed You?” We would be prone to think of the obvious answer wouldn’t we? He’s going to be beaten beyond human recognition, have chunks of His beard ripped from His face, whipped with a cat of 9 tails 39 times, have a crown of thorns beat down on His head and nailed to a cross in a matter of hours and He knows all of this. Of course He’s reeling, who wouldn’t be reeling in the face of such things?

But I suggest to you that it wasn’t the thought of the cross that brought these unrelenting waves of distress upon the Lord. It’s not the martyrdom that’s got Him in a state of uncertainty, it’s not the thought of death that’s crushing Him in this moment. What we’re seeing here is the Holy Son of God, who has never once throughout time and/or eternity had so much as a single moment whereby He’s been separated from His Father. It’s sin that separates us from God, and as Jesus was confronted with the reality of being made sin for you and me He, He knew that He would be forced into that place of being completely alone with out the fellowship of His Father and if there was anything that struck terror into the heart of Christ it wasn’t Satan and/or his cohorts it was being completely isolated in separation from His Father. The thought of separation from God the Father brought indescribable anguish to His soul.

The writer of the book of Hebrews expounded further on the agony of Jesus in Gethsemane when He said, “...*who, in the days of His flesh, when He had offered up prayers and supplications, with vehement cries and tears to Him who was able to save Him from death, and was heard because of His godly fear, though He was a Son, yet He learned obedience by the things which He suffered.*” Heb 5:7-8 This was not a quiet prayer time between Him and God, Jesus was weeping and crying out to God. “with vehement cries and tears...”

Praying that if it were possible, the hour might pass from Him, saying “Abba, Father, all things are possible for You. Take this cup away from Me; nevertheless, now what I will, but what You will.” Jesus wasn’t separated yet, the Father was very close to Him here “Abba” is a term of endearment “Daddy” Father, it demonstrates intimacy.

What is He talking about when He says, “This cup away from Me.”? Don’t think of a literal chalice that was in His hand there in the garden, the “cup” that’s being referenced here is that proverbial cup that is in the hand of God that we might refer to as the wine cup of the wrath of God. Throughout the OT you can read of it (I don’t have time to delve out references right now Isa 51:17, Jer 25:15, 49:12)

When a person or nation through sin/rebellion and refusal to repent fills up the wine cup of the wrath of God to the brim God will press it to the lips of that person or people and they will drink it full strength to the dregs.

Jesus is saying, “Father, take this cup, the cup that contains the sin of all of mankind throughout all time, the wine cup of Your wrath from Me.” Think of it like this, you know all of the sin, all of the perversion, and pollution that’s filtered through your life, when Jesus looked into that cup He had to drink it down full strength. But not only your sin, the sin, the perversion, the pollution, every “white lie” and every wicked deed done or that ever would be done by all of mankind throughout world history was in that cup mingled with the full fury of the wrath of God against it. And as Jesus looks into that cup and considers the cost of drinking it down to the dregs He calls out to the Father that if there’s *any* other way, *any other means* by which sinful man can be forgiven and come into a relationship with God, if there’s an alternative route, if any other road can lead to God, then I’m asking that we take that route. It was so disturbing, so distressing that we read in Luke’s gospel that God sent an angel to Him to strengthen Him and understandably so.

God didn’t deliver Him *from* that hour, He strengthened Him to *endure* the hour to which He’d been called. We can glean at least 2 things from that can’t we? #1 That often times God will work the same way in our lives, He won’t always deliver us *from* our hour of trial, often times He will strengthen us to *endure* the hour of trial for a purpose that’s beyond us personally but will serve to benefit others ultimately. 2^{ndly} we learn from this moment that there *was no* other way, it *wasn’t* possible. If it *were* possible for man to be forgiven and come into a relationship with God by another means outside of the cross of Christ then all of this was for nothing and Christ died in vain. But the Father didn’t deliver Jesus from this which tells us that Christ is the way, the truth and the life and no one comes to the Father except *through* Him. He’s the only way, the only reason we can receive the cup of salvation is because Jesus drank the cup of the full force of God’s indignation on our behalf.

Now before we move we should note that Jesus in no way wanted to dodge the Father’s will. He would be submitted to the will of the Father to the point of death *even* the death of the

cross. He was resolved to do the will of God *regardless* of what it cost Him personally. There are those who will say that when we pray “Father, Your will be done” in a given situation is a cop out and a lack of faith. Jesus evidently disagreed, to me it seems to take more faith to have a resolute resolve to submit to God regardless of what it costs you rather than to press for personal wants.

Vs37-38

Over 3 yrs have gone by, Jesus has been ministering *with* these guys, ministering *to* these guys, He’s never really asked a single thing for Himself personally *from* these guys and the one time He asks for companionship, for a little encouragement, some waiting and some watching, His friends sack out on Him. Those of you who make it out on Wednesday evenings will remember this Vs from a couple of weeks ago, “*Reproach has broken my heart, And I am full of heaviness; I looked for someone to take pity, but there was none; And for comforters, but I found none.*” Ps 69:20 He tells them to watch and pray lest they enter into temptation. But here’s the deal, notice the progression, Peter has gone from *pride* to *prayerlessness*, he’s got it figured out, doesn’t need to pray he won’t fall, won’t fail. Pride leads to prayerlessness. Conversely vigilance and prayer will keep us from falling into temptation. If you find yourself consistently falling pray to temptation I would venture to say that your prayer life in that area isn’t real strong. There’s a part of your flesh that likes being stroked and quite frankly you don’t feel like fighting it, not really.

If you and I are to fight the good fight, prayer is an essential aspect of it, because your spirit may be willing, but your flesh is weak, we’re not able to walk in the Spirit in the strength of our own will, in the efforts of our flesh, we will fail.

Vs39-40

It was an awkward moment of embarrassment and shame, He asked them to watch once, then He came back and exhorted them again but they fell asleep again...now they don’t know what to say, “We’re sorry Lord, we’ll really try this time...” By the way there are those who say that it demonstrates a lack of faith to pray the same thing more than once, evidently Jesus would disagree. He went away and prayed, and spoke the *same words*.

Listen, when we know someone has a need, we do well to not “go to sleep” on them (though we’re often guilty of it) we need to learn to stand by them in prayer and companionship.

Vs41-42

I want you to realize something here (and I don’t really like the way the NKJV makes Vs 42 sound like a rebuke here), it seems more that at this point He’d resolved to let them rest. He’d come to His resolve, the Father had strengthened Him, now He was encouraging them to get the rest they needed because they were facing a long day. How much time transpired between the statement of sleep and when He aroused them we don’t know, minutes, maybe a couple hours. But then He said, “Time to get up, My betrayer is at hand.” Here’s what I want you to realize; that night Jesus *watched* and He *prayed* and He followed through with God’s will. The disciples *didn’t watch*, they *didn’t* pray and they *failed* the Lord. Often times the point of crisis isn’t where the battle is won or lost (when the occasion is upon you), the battle is often times won or lost in the time of prayer, preparing ourselves before the battle ever takes place.

Think of this; 3Xs Jesus warned Peter that he would fall, 3 Xs he denied it, 3 Xs he was told to watch and/or to pray, 3 Xs he didn't, and 3Xs he would fall into temptation deserting and disowning Jesus. Do you think there's anything in there for you and me? Later on Peter would write, *"Be sober, be vigilant; because your adversary the devil walks about like a roaring lion, seeking whom he may devour."* 1 Peter 5:8

Vs43-46

When it says that a great multitude with swords and clubs from the chief priests came followed by Judas we understand from John's gospel that it was a Roman cohort (which was 600 soldiers with swords) along with however many security guards of the temple sent from the chief priests and scribes who were carrying clubs, torches, lanterns etc. So somewhere between 600-1000 people were sent to apprehend Jesus. and To make the treachery of the betrayal even worse the word "Kiss" used here describing Judas' act is the word for affectionate, passionate kiss. Judas kissed Him again and again in a manner that appeared affectionate, yet in his heart was poison. The bible says, *"Faithful are the wounds of a friend, But the kisses of an enemy are deceitful."* Prov 27:6

We also realize from this that Jesus was as ordinary looking as they came. Judas didn't say, "Get the One with the extraordinary glow about Him." "The tall One that's ripped, you can't miss Him." He had to point Him out to these roman soldiers specifically because He looked so ordinary. Even with this we read in another gospel that Jesus reached out to Judas right here calling him, "friend" there was still an opportunity to repent. There are not a whole lot of people who don't know the feeling of betrayal, it hurts. Especially when it happens by someone who was close to you, and they turn on you. Jesus didn't only teach us to love our enemies and pray for those who hate us and spitefully use us, He demonstrated it. How do you respond to betrayal?

Jesus responds in love, reaching out, granting opportunity for repentance.

Vs47-49

Jesus rebukes them for all the drama, yet consents to the fact that He needs to be led as a Lamb to the slaughter in fulfillment of the scripture. The fact is that He's in control of this whole situation (we'll highlight that a little more next time as well as comment on Vs 47).

Vs50

Just as Jesus said they would, they never saw it coming, Jesus saw it coming. He knows us better than we know ourselves, our heart can deceive us, we might feel a certain way at a certain time and be sincere in our desire. Has nothing to do with the fact that we can't operate outside the parameters of the word of God. If God's word says it, that's the way it will be, don't resist it or think you're an exception to it, best simply to lead you life in a manner that honors it.

Vs51-52

Most scholars mutually agree that more than likely this is a reference to young Mark himself. We don't have time to exploit all the reasons but most scholars believe that the house of the upper room was probably Mark's parents. The thought here being that when Jesus dismissed Judas from the house and he went and gathered the soldiers that he probably returned to the house 1st. Mark seeing all the disturbance, the soldiers, they're looking for Jesus wrapped himself in the sheet that was covering his bed and took off to either follow them, or perhaps

warn Jesus they were coming for Him but by the time he got to the garden the soldiers were already there and this was going down.

One of the soldiers spotted him, sought to grab him and he went running off into the night either in his underwear or *au natural*.

Here's the point, Jesus was *totally forsaken*, *no one* stood with Him, He was completely *alone*. Jesus willingly went to the cross, forsaken by all so that you would never be left, never be forsaken. He drank the cup of God's indignation that we might drink of the cup of God's salvation, He *gave* His life for you, that you might *lead* your life for Him...

Prayer Points:

Lord may we do just that; teach us Lord to be watchful, prayerful; that we might lead lives of consecration rather than lives falling into temptation. and Lord we're so thankful for Your resolve to *always* do those thing that please the Father regardless of what it cost You personally. and We recognize that it cost You *tremendously*, more than we'll ever know or comprehend, help us to follow Your example in leading lives that please You. That we'd count the cost and not be persuaded by personal inconvenience, or what it may mean for us, but to be concerned for *Your name, and Your glory*...Lord we give You praise.

If you're in a place whereby you've never received Christ then today I want to give that opportunity. Because right now you're in a place (though you may've never considered it this way) that by its nature says, "Jesus it wasn't really necessary for You to do what You did as far as I'm concerned because I'm not interested, Your death for *me* was irrelevant." It doesn't have to be that way, He died so that you could live, became sin for you that you might be made the righteousness of God in Him. Forgiveness is there, but it's only found in the person of Jesus Christ He's the way, the truth, and the life...no one comes to the Father except through Him.