**The Gospel of Mark: A Disciple’s Mirror**

***Reflections on Following Jesus*** -- From A Handbook on Cross-Bearing . . . Mark 14:1-52

***The Mind of the Savior in the Midst of His Suffering . . .*** Approaching the Cross, Seeing the Crown

**What’s (happening in) the story?** Jesus wills His destiny.

Few passages in the gospels give us such a clear picture of God’s sovereignty, on the one hand, and His meekness, on the other. Mark shows Jesus willingly, purposefully, laying down His life for sinners, not as a hapless victim of evil men and circumstances.

**What’s the challenge in the story?** To see God’s glory in Jesus’ Passion

Jesus is in total control of the timing of His death (to coincide with Passover), against the will of those who murder Him. Still, He feels the weight of His sad, but necessary, mission, along with its loneliness and betrayal. Jesus, alone, redeems mankind.

**What are the key elements in the story?** A Study in Contrasts

* ***Honor vs. Deceit*** vv. 1-11

 Jesus restates His mission while defending His anointing. The Gospel will be proclaimed in spite of and because of Jesus’ enemies: God’s good pur-poses are accomplished even through evil human choices. Gen. 50:15-21

* ***Fellowship vs. Betrayal*** vv. 12-21

 Jesus begins the solemn, but joyful, meal with the bombshell of betrayal by an intimate: human choice in divine decree. Acts 2:22, 23

* ***Restoration vs. Failure*** vv. 22-31

 It’s hard to imagine a clearer example of grace than Jesus’ prophecy of the disciples’ defection and their post-resurrection reunion. Ps. 103:14

* ***Watchfulness vs. Drowsiness*** vv. 32-42

 All Jesus asked them to do was stay awake while He envisions bearing the sins of the world. Mark means for us to be appalled. John 12:27

* ***Determination vs. Desperation*** vv. 43-52

 Jesus boldly points out the hypocrisy of this illegal arrest while the disciples’ temporary bravado turns into fearful retreat. John 10:14-18

**What’s the big idea (main point) of the story?** Hebrews 12:1, 2

Despite abandonment and betrayal by those closest to Him, Jesus looks beyond His Passion

to the prophesied redemption of sinners accomplished and proclaimed to the nations.

***So let’s take a look at ourselves in Mark’s mirror. . .***

1. Am I trusting in God’s grace for my salvation? Mark shows the vanity of our good intentions, and why we need a Savior. Isaiah 53:1-6

2. Am I delighted with God’s sovereignty in salvation? Mark shows how nothing stops God’s purposes from being fulfilled. Isaiah 53:7-12

3. Am I looking beyond my present circumstances? God eventually turns tragedies into triumphs in His righteousness. Romans 8:18-23