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

***Reflections on Following Jesus. . .*** From A Handbook on Cross-Bearing

Mark 14:53–15:47

***Unveiling the Heart of God:*** God is Love.

**What’s (happening in) the story?** Jesus dies unjustly and alone.

While we tend to emphasize the physical suffering of Jesus, the Gospels stress the words and actions of others in His death. He is fully prepared for this moment, going to His death willingly.

**What’s the challenge in the story?** To understand taking up our cross.

We tend to sanitize what it means to take up our cross, but when you compare Jesus’ command with what Jesus experienced, we should expect some of the same. The exception: God’s abandon-ment of Jesus ensures that we will NEVER suffer our cross alone.

**What are the key elements in the story?** Key People, Key Events

* ***The High Priest orchestrates a mock trial.*** 14:53-65

Jesus is persecuted unjustly, as we will be. See how Peter himself came to understand Jesus’ suffering as an example: 1 Peter 2:18-24; 4:12-19

* ***Peter gets into hot water by a warm fire.*** 14:66-72

Through Peter we discover the power of temptation, the weakness of the flesh, and our need for watchfulness, all in one painful lesson.

* ***Barabbas, the murderer, is freed instead of innocent Jesus.*** 15:1-15

A sinner set free at Jesus’ death becomes a pattern of redeemed sinners, and a picture of our suffering at others’ expense.

* ***Simon, not the disciples, takes up the cross.*** 15:21-32

A new Simon bears the cross since the other Simon is nowhere to be found. Probably a Roman cruelty rather than the Savior’s weakness.

* ***The Gentile Centurion receives insight through Jesus’ death.*** 15:33-39

The torn veil shows that the way to God is now open, and God is revealed in Jesus. Even this “enemy” knows, “This is the Son of God.”

* ***Godly women and Joseph provide for Jesus’ burial.*** 15:40-47

Jesus death was voluntary, these arrangements, temporary.

**What’s the big idea (main point) of the story?** 1 John 3:16

Jesus’ loving sacrifice for sinners reveals Him as God’s Son,

modeling for us how to lay down our lives for others.

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

1. Like Jesus, my death to sin is a painful struggle. Romans 6:1-11

2. Like Jesus, my death for others may not be appreciated. 1 Pet. 3:16, 17

3. Like Jesus, my death must be given fully into God’s hands. Gal. 2:20

4. Like Peter, I must admit that temptation can rule me. 1 Peter 5:9, 10

5. Like the Centurion, I can see God in the death of Jesus. Is. 53:7-12