



The Gospel of Mark

A Living Word Independent Bible Study



The Gospel of Mark
Part 19
Mark 8:31-33

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Introduction to Mark 8:31-33

For the first time, in this lesson we will see one of Jesus' "passion predictions."

This is from the Latin "patior", meaning "to suffer".

But each occurrence ALSO predicts the resurrection!

There will be three of these in Mark's Gospel, and each contains details the others omit.

They are not repetitive, but progressively reveal more about what will happen in Jerusalem.

Mark 8:31 (NIV)

He then began to teach them that the Son of Man must suffer many things and be rejected by the elders, chief priests and teachers of the law, and that he must be killed and after three days rise again.

“Son of Man”

This is how Jesus has referred to himself previously, in 2:10 and 2:28.

But, is he here teaching the disciples a more “preferred” identification than the one Peter has declared (Messiah)?

“Messiah” meant many different things to many different people.

“Son of Man” language from Daniel seems to be how Jesus understood himself – but Daniel 7 was NOT commonly held as a “Messianic text” in Jesus’ day.

Daniel 7:13-14: “In my vision at night I looked, and there before me was one like a son of man, coming with the clouds of heaven. He approached the Ancient of Days and was led into his presence. He was given authority, glory and sovereign power; all peoples, nations and men of every language worshiped him. His dominion is an everlasting dominion that will not pass away, and his kingdom is one that will never be destroyed.”

Mark 8:31 (NIV)

He then began to teach them that the Son of Man must suffer many things and be rejected by the elders, chief priests and teachers of the law, and that he must be killed and after three days rise again.

“must suffer”

“Must” implies this is consistent with both the divine will and the fulfillment of Scripture.

“and be rejected”

Psalm 118:22 is in view here:

Psalm 118:22 – “The stone the builders rejected has become the capstone”

The leadership of Israel are “the builders”, and Jesus is the “rejected stone” that becomes the “capstone”.

“by the elders, chief priests and teachers of the law”

See the language used ahead in Mark 11:27-33 as the fulfillment of Jesus’ words here.

Mark 8:31 (NIV)

He then began to teach them that the Son of Man must suffer many things and be rejected by the elders, chief priests and teachers of the law, and that he must be killed and after three days rise again.

“killed and after three days rise again”

See this text from Hosea:

Hosea 6:1-2 – “Come, let us return to the LORD. He has torn us to pieces but he will heal us; he has injured us but he will bind up our wounds. After two days he will revive us; on the third day he will restore us, that we may live in his presence.”

Jesus knows ahead of time that God will raise him from the dead.

He went to the cross in full confidence that God would raise him.

Suffering, then, is not the end or ultimate goal – God does not leave us in the pit of death!

The call for Christians to suffer for the gospel is not a call to self-annihilation or self-destruction!

We will look at this more deeply in the next session.

Mark 8:32 (NIV)

He spoke plainly about this, and Peter took him aside and began to rebuke him.

“spoke plainly”

In other words, not in parables or in metaphor.

“began to rebuke him”

Peter’s language is harsh, and certainly borders on disrespect.

Mark has a few other examples of “rebuking”

Mark 1:24-25 – “What do you want with us, Jesus of Nazareth? Have you come to destroy us? I know who you are – the Holy One of God!’ ‘Be quiet!’ said Jesus sternly. ‘Come out of him!’”

Mark 4:39 – “He got up, rebuked the wind and said to the waves, ‘Quiet! Be still!’ Then the wind died down and it was completely calm.”

Mark 9:25 (ahead) – “When Jesus saw that a crowd was running to the scene, he rebuked the evil spirit. ‘You deaf and mute spirit,’ he said, ‘I command you, come out of him and never enter again.’”

“Rebuke” is a strong word – but to Peter, Jesus’ prediction seems totally wrong-headed.

He still does not see clearly – although he sees the Messiah, he does not see a suffering, dying, and rising Messiah.

Mark 8:33 (NIV)

But when Jesus turned and looked at his disciples, he rebuked Peter. “Get behind me, Satan!” he said. “You do not have in mind the things of God, but the things of men.”

“he rebuked Peter”

Jesus now returns the same severe reprimand.

But note that he does this while looking at his disciples. It is as much for them as it is for Peter.

“Get behind me”

This COULD be interpreted as shaming or rejecting Peter.

But interestingly, it is the same Greek word used to call the disciples to FOLLOW Jesus (to “get behind” Jesus), to fall in line with Jesus as a leader.

He is urging Peter to “get back in line”, following Jesus, where he belongs.

“Satan”

This of course makes the rebuke particularly sharp.

Satan is the opposite of all God is and stands for.

God wants life for all, Satan wants death for all.

Jesus MIGHT not have been specifically identifying Peter with the Evil One here, though.

Rather, since “Satan” means literally “adversary” or “opponent”, it COULD have been more along the lines of “get behind me, you who oppose me”

This makes sense, especially in light of the next sentence.

Mark 8:33 (NIV)

But when Jesus turned and looked at his disciples, he rebuked Peter. “Get behind me, Satan!” he said. “You do not have in mind the things of God, but the things of men.”

“the things of God ... the things of men”

Peter is thinking like a human – about conquest and power – and not as God – about the necessity of Christ’s suffering and death.

That is, the “opposite” of God.

Isaiah 55:8-9 – “For my thoughts are not your thoughts, neither are your ways my ways,” declares the LORD. ‘As the heavens are higher than the earth, so are my ways higher than your ways and my thoughts than your thoughts.’”

We see this contrast of how humans typically think versus how God thinks frequently in Scripture.

The birth of Jesus

The birth of Isaac to Abraham and Sarah

The selection of the little shepherd David as king

The point is – God loves to bring life out of death, and to choose the inert or the unlikely to accomplish his will.

Mark 8:31-33

(NIV)

REVIEW AND SUMMARY

We see in this passage that God's salvation strategy is NOT:

Go after Rome in armed conflict

Keep fighting and attacking evils like illness, ignorance, demonic possession and poverty

Rather, God goes after the core enemy: DEATH.

Jesus will die to defeat death from the inside out.

Humans resist this approach of dying to win, surrender as the path to victory.

But thinking this way could likely be hindering the work of God!

Even the disciples do not embrace this way of thinking until AFTER the Resurrection!



Bibliography

The following materials have been used as sources for this Bible study:

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