


The Gospel of Mark
Part 46
Jesus Prepares for the Cross

TALKINGPOINTS WALKINGPOINTS

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A publication of , the adult discipleship ministry of Triangle Community Church.

Talk together about the glory of God's kingdom. —Psalm 145:11
Love the Lord your God and **walk** in all his ways. —Joshua 22:5

Questions for Reflection or Discussion

Observation—*What do I see?*

- **None** of the four gospels record **all** of the details of Christ's life (see John 20:25), but harmonizing information from John yields a fuller picture of the flow of this important evening. Here's the sequence:
 - (1) Mark 14:16-17. What's the setting?
 - (2) John 13:1-20. Who all was present when Jesus did this? Was Judas there?
 - (3) Mark 18-21 & John 13:21-30. Now who leaves (v. 30)?
 - (4) Mark 14:22-31. With the betrayer gone, what important Christian tradition does Jesus institute?

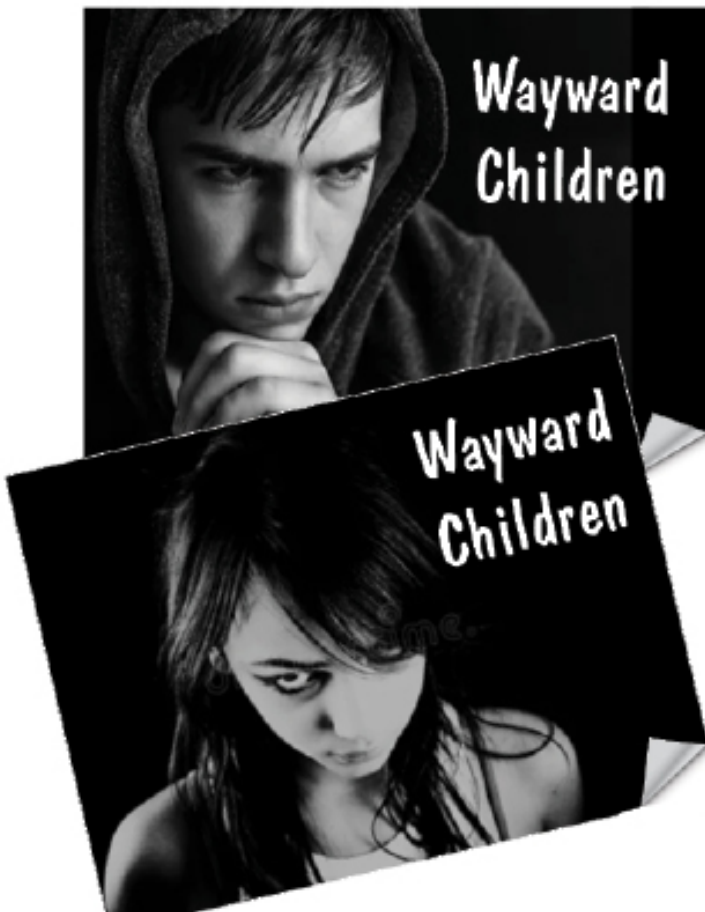
Interpretation—*What does it mean?*

- According to Mark 14:18, **how many** of the twelve disciples will "betray" Jesus?
With Judas gone, **how many** of the remaining eleven disciples will "fall away" (v. 27)?
- How enduring (to Judas) were the consequences of his betrayal (v. 21; cf. John 17:12)?
How enduring (to the eleven) were the consequences of their failure (see Luke 22:31–32)?
- How many genuine Christians fail (aka, "sin"—see 1 John 1:8-10)?
How many genuine Christians perish (aka, "go to hell"—see John 6:37; 10:26-29; 17:12)?

Application—*What do I do with this?*

- Read each of the following New Testament "benedictions", and then take some time as a group to worship and thank God for the rich, enduring New Covenantal blessings you enjoy through Christ:
 - Jude 24-25
 - Romans 8:31-39
 - Romans 11:33-36
 - Romans 16:25-27
 - Hebrews 13:20-21
- Write out 2 Corinthians 13:14. Slowly and prayerfully review it aloud ten times per day this week.

Saturday!



Featuring Dr. Stuart Scott live, in-person...

This interactive workshop will provide you with rich biblical perspectives on, and practical strategies for, loving and reaching your wayward child.

Wayward Children: Finding Peace, Keeping Hope

- **Saturday, November 23rd 9am — noon**
- **Triangle Community Church** [4216 Kildaire Farm Road, Apex]
- **Featuring: Dr. Stuart Scott**
- **Free childcare**
- **Tickets just \$15**



Author of the best-seller,
The Exemplary Husband

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Biblical Counseling at
The Master's Seminary
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Executive Director of
One-Eighty Ministries

Sermon Summary Mark 14:12-31

We continue our study of Mark's gospel as Jesus prepares for the Cross (Mark 14:12-31). The preceding two verses set an ominous tone (v. 10-11). So the reader of Mark's gospel knows that something bad is coming. Judas is actively looking for an opportunity to betray his Lord. Next, Jesus sent some of his disciples to prepare for the Passover Feast (v. 12-16). Note well, Jesus was in control of the events leading up to his death. Jesus knew that his death was imminent, and he was absolutely in control. Among other things, those preparations would involve securing and cooking the Passover lamb which symbolized Israeli deliverance from slavery in Egypt. It was a symbol of their redemption. But little did they know that an even greater Passover was unfolding as Jesus prepared Himself to be sacrificed as our Passover Lamb (1 Corinthians 5:7). Jesus is "the Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world" (John 1:29). Jesus is this promised Passover Lamb, and friends, He is in complete control of the events leading to His death. The cross didn't catch Him off guard. It was predicted in the Old Testament, Jesus himself had predicted it on numerous occasions. It was all part of God's plan to save humanity. Jesus joyfully embraced God's plan (Hebrews 12:2). He didn't look forward to the experience of the cross itself, but he joyfully embraced the redemption his death would bring the world.

Jesus even knew that one of the Twelve would be his betrayer (v. 18). How did he know? Well, he is God. That helps! But Jesus also knew the Scriptures and that informed his knowledge (Psalm 41:9). Jesus' words provoked grief and soul searching, as they should. The Twelve had often debated over which of them was the greatest; now, in shock, they were discussing which of them was the vilest! Jesus' betrayer was indeed an intimate friend, which makes the betrayal all the more scandalous. To betray a friend after eating a meal with him was, and still is, regarded as the worst kind of treachery in the Middle East. John's gospel adds the detail that Judas even was sitting in the place of honor, beside Jesus (John 13:24-27)! But even this honor didn't dissuade Judas from his treacherous plan.

At that point Jesus made an important theological statement: his death was part of God's salvation plan as revealed in the Old Testament (v. 21; cf. Daniel 7:13-14) but despite the cross being God's sovereign plan, Judas acted as a responsible moral agent, guilty for his actions. Jesus said, "Woe to my betrayer. It would have been better had he not been born" (v. 21). These are horrifying words. The seriousness of Judas' act of betrayal was in direct proportion to the innocence of the Person he betrayed. To betray the only truly innocent person who has ever lived was indefensible. I do not understand how divine sovereignty and human responsibility work together, but the Bible affirms both, and so must we.

Then, Jesus instituted what we call "The Lord's Supper" or "Communion" (v. 22-31). The Passover bread represented his body; the Passover cup, his blood (1 Corinthians 11:23-26). Jesus' words are not to be taken literally. He didn't transform either the bread or the wine into anything different. He spoke symbolically, as when he once said he was a "door" (John 10:7-9). When the disciples ate the bread, it was still bread; when they drank the wine, it was still wine. However, Jesus gave a new meaning to the bread and the wine. By his death on the cross, Jesus fulfilled the Old Covenant and established a New Covenant (Hebrews 9-10). Whereas the Old Covenant was ratified with the blood of animal sacrifices, the New Covenant was ratified by the blood of God's own Son. The New Covenant in Jesus' blood accomplished what the Old Covenant sacrifices never could do—they took away sin and cleansed the believer's heart and conscience. Furthermore, in the Old Covenant, animal blood was sprinkled on the people (Exodus 24), but in the New Covenant, we symbolically ingest Jesus' blood! Blood symbolizes life. When you place your trust in Jesus, you receive his life! As we celebrate communion, we do so in the presence of our living Lord, remembering our deliverance from our slavery to sin and that he continues to express his life through us. Then, they sang a psalm together (v. 26). Finally, Jesus said some unnerving things: all of the disciples would abandon him, he himself would be raised from the dead, and then rendezvous with them in Galilee. Jesus clearly knows the future. So how do we explain the fact that Jesus did not know the hour of his return (Mark 13:32)? The great Council of Chalcedon (451 AD) took up this issue—and came up with the best explanation of the confusing data regarding Jesus' divine and human natures. How are we to understand this union? Explore the fascinating topic of the "Hypostatic Union" in this week's "**Digging Deeper**" feature.

When Jesus informed his disciples that all of them would abandon him (v. 27), Peter and all the rest swore that they would never deny their Lord (v. 29-31). I truly believe that the disciples believed their rhetoric—remember, "the spirit is willing, but the flesh is weak". As Jesus had predicted, the disciples failed, but they recovered. That is why we are here today. Their failure was real, but it was not final. Nor are our failures final. As long as we have breath, the opportunity for forgiveness and restoration is available. Isn't that a great truth?

Jesus, the great God-man, died for the sins of the world! Let's explore the "hypostatic union" of Christ's two natures...

Monday—Read Matthew 1:18-25 and Luke 1:26-38.

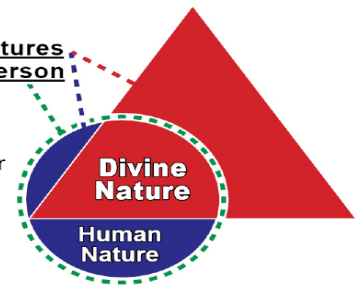
- List everything you see that shows that Jesus is God.
- List everything you see that shows that Jesus is human.
- Try to explain the diagram to the right.
- Does being truly human necessitate that Jesus also be sinful? Support your answer biblically. (Need help? See John 8:29 and 15:10; 2 Corinthians 5:21; Hebrews 4:15 and 7:26; 1 Peter 1:19, 2:22 and 3:18.)
- Read John 1:1 and 18; 20:28; Romans 9:5; Titus 2:13; and 2 Peter 1:1. What explicit claims do these verses make about Jesus' deity?

"The Christ":

• **two** distinct **natures** united in **one person**

• the natures neither mixed with each other nor ceased to maintain their own attributes.

• Jesus Christ, the perfect "God-man"!



Tuesday—Read Philippians 2:3-11.

- How do you see Jesus' full divinity in this passage?
- How do you see Jesus' full humanity in this passage?
- If Jesus has a human nature and we do too, then why are we so different? Why would we need to be commanded to be like him?
- Which aspect of Jesus' humiliation do you find most comforting? Most challenging? How can they inspire you?

Wednesday—For nearly a month during A.D. 451, church leaders convened a universal church council in the city of Chalcedon (a suburb of today's Istanbul, Turkey) to clarify the mystery of the person of Christ. The "Chalcedonian Creed" has never been improved upon! It reads: *"We, then, following the holy Fathers, all with one consent, teach men to confess one and the same Son, our Lord Jesus Christ, the same perfect in Godhood and also perfect in manhood; truly God and truly man, of a rational soul and body; co-essential with the Father according to Godhood, and co-essential with us according to the Manhood; in all things like us, except without sin; begotten before all ages of the Father according to the Godhead, and in these latter days, for us and for our salvation, born of the Virgin Mary, the Mother of God, according to the Manhood; one and the same Christ, Son, Lord, Only-begotten, to be acknowledged in two natures, without confusing them, changing them, dividing them and without separating them. The distinction of the two natures being by no means taken away by the union, but rather the property of each nature being preserved, and concurring in one Person and one Substance, not parted or divided into two persons, but one and the same Son, and only begotten, God, the Word, the Lord Jesus Christ, as the prophets from the beginning have declared concerning him, and the Lord Jesus Christ himself has taught us, and the Creed of the holy Fathers has been handed down to us."*

- What makes sense to you now, which did not before?
- What questions do you still have?
- Does the Chalcedonian Creed seem to you to "cover all the bases"?
- What present-day errors are you aware of which would be resolved if people understood and affirmed the Chalcedonian Creed?

Thursday—Let's resolve some **apparent** contradictions in Jesus' statements and actions (no true contradiction exists). Jesus was **one** Person, with **two** Natures (unfallen human nature + divine nature). During his earthly ministry, he laid aside the expression of his divine prerogatives (Philippians 2:5-8) and operated as a sinless human, in moment-by-moment dependence upon the Father for wisdom and power (which is what Adam failed to do). Referring back to the Chalcedonian Creed, note that:

- One nature does some things that the other nature does not do ("...*the property of each nature being preserved.*"), so for example: Jesus' human nature can have ascended to heaven and is no longer in the world (see John 16:28; 17:11; Acts 1:9-11), but with respect to his divine nature, Jesus can affirm that he is everywhere present (Matthew 18:20; 28:20; John 14:23). Since he has two distinct natures, both of these things can be true about the **person** of Christ—**he** returned to heaven and **he** is also present with us!
- In his human nature, Jesus was weak and tired (Matthew 4:2; 8:24; Mark 15:21; John 4:6), but in his divine nature he was omnipotent (Matthew 8:26-27; Colossians 1:17; Hebrews 1:3). The one **person** Jesus could at the same time be weary and omnipotent!
- Jesus' human nature **died** (Luke 23:46; 1 Corinthians 15:3), but his divine nature **cannot die**, and in fact, was **able to raise himself from the dead** (John 2:19; 10:17-18; Hebrews 7:16)! Yet the one **person** of Christ experienced death for us.
- In his humanity, he was tempted in every way as we are, and yet without sin (Hebrews 4:15). His divinity could not be tempted to sin (James 1:13). Yet anything that **either of his natures** did, the **one person** of Christ does. Thus, "**Christ** died for our sins" (1 Corinthians 15:3). Whatever can be said of **one** nature **or the other** can be said of the **person** of Christ. Is your head hurting yet?

Friday—Christ is now seated at God's right hand. This is the position of total honor.

- The Old Testament predicted it. Read Psalm 110:1 and the New Testament fulfillment in Christ found in Hebrews 1:3.
- Read Ephesians 1:20-21; 1 Peter 3:22; and 1 Corinthians 15:25.
- Have you ever heard anyone joke about Jesus, or use his name in vain? Reflect on that in light of what you've learned this week.
- Read Ephesians 2:4-7. **Who else currently is** "seated at the right hand of God"? How can that be?!
- See if these ten blessings are sufficient for your every need:
 1. In Christ Jesus you were chosen by God and given grace before the world was created. (Ephesians 1:4; 2 Timothy 1:9)
 2. In Christ Jesus you have eternal life. (Romans 6:23)
 3. In Christ Jesus you are loved by God with an inseparable love. (Romans 8:38-39)
 4. In Christ Jesus you were redeemed and forgiven for all your sins. (Ephesians 1:7)
 5. In Christ Jesus you are justified before God and the righteousness of God in Christ is imputed to you. (2 Corinthians 5:21)
 6. In Christ Jesus you have become a new creation and a son of God. (2 Corinthians 5:17; Galatians 3:26)
 7. In Christ Jesus you are being sanctified and made holy. (1 Corinthians 1:2)
 8. In Christ Jesus everything you really need will be supplied. (Philippians 4:19)
 9. In Christ Jesus the peace of God will guard your heart and mind. (Philippians 4:7)
 10. In Christ Jesus you will be raised from the dead at the coming of the Lord. (1 Corinthians 15:22)

Saturday—Read Colossians.

- List everything you learn about the incomparable Christ from Colossians 1:13—2:19.
- List everything you learn from Colossians 2:20—4:6 about **your appropriate response** to the incomparable Christ.
- After this week's study, can you ever think of Christ in the same way? How will you now respond to him?