

The Gospel of Mark

Walking with the Servant Savior

Lesson 19 Mark 14:43–72

The disciples had learned to trust Jesus, but their trust rose and fell based upon their changing circumstances. Their trust was high when Jesus assumed the lead and things were going well, but when the situation worsened, their faith weakened accordingly. Usually we are not in control of a crisis situation, all we can do is prepare ourselves; but when it comes along, the crisis reveals our true character—what's really inside.

Read Mark 14:43–50, and John 18:1–11

1. While Jesus was still speaking to the disciples in the garden, who appeared on the scene? v. 43 (See also John 18:3.)

- a. What sign had Judas prearranged with the religious leaders to identify Jesus? v. 44

Jesus was not being arrested by officials of the Roman government, but rather by the Jewish religious leaders. Judas gave an affectionate greeting to the man to be arrested and led away under guard.

- b. How did Judas refer to Jesus? v. 45

- c. How did Jesus refer to His betrayer? Matthew 26:50

2. As they seized Jesus, who offered the only sign of resistance? John 18:10

- a. In order to avoid further bloodshed, what did Jesus do? Luke 22:51

- b. What did Jesus immediately tell Peter to do—why? John 18:11

Jesus did not resist arrest, He voluntarily surrendered; but He did voice a protest about *how* the arrest was conducted.

3. When He answered them, what reasoning did He use? vv. 48–49

The religious leaders were afraid of inciting a riot among the crowds that followed Jesus by day, so they came in the darkness of night to seize Him. Jesus drew attention to this fact to point out the real motives of these men. His response to this evil turn of events was simply, *“the Scriptures must be fulfilled.”*

4. Though all the disciples had vowed never to desert Jesus (14:31), what happened once He was arrested? v. 50
5. How did Isaiah’s prophecy foretell of the Lord’s arrest? Isaiah 53:7
6. What words in Zechariah 13:7 (and repeated in Mark 14:27) were fulfilled there in the garden?

Everything was happening according to God’s plan. From this moment on though, every man’s life would be very different. It’s difficult for us to fully appreciate the terror and sudden panic that overcame Jesus faithful followers, causing them all to flee. We’ll take a closer look at this further on in our study.

Heartbeat . . . “And being found in appearance as a man, He humbled Himself and became obedient to the point of death, even the death of the cross.” Philippians 2:8

Day Two: A Young Man Flees

Read Mark 14:51–52

Only Mark records the story of a young man wrapped in a linen sheet who lost his covering as he fled in haste. Tradition has it that this man may have been John Mark (the writer of this Gospel). Because the believers in the early church were accustomed to meeting in his home, it is entirely possible that the Last Supper took place in the upper room of Mark’s home. If that is true and tradition is correct, then Mark may have become awakened on that fateful night and, realizing something was very wrong, grabbed a linen sheet or garment to wrap around himself and rushed out into the night. Seeking Jesus and the disciples in the Garden of Gethsemane, Mark would have come upon the scene where Jesus was being arrested and the disciples were fleeing in all directions. Onlookers would have recognized and seized him as one of Jesus’ followers, so he too fled in fear, leaving his garment behind.

Some commentators feel that if Mark was indeed writing about himself in this instance, he was taking a humble approach, and perhaps attempting to add his own (perhaps humorous) signature to his involvement. He identified with the fear of the disciples and he fled just as they had fled, but leaving behind a little something in the process.

What can be learned from this very brief, but interesting story? We should note that if those closest to Jesus all failed Him and fled, then any one of us are capable of the same. It takes the power of God to enable us to stand up for Him!

Look closer . . . (Put yourself into this scene.)

- If you were an observer in the Garden of Gethsemane that night, what do you think you would have done?

- Can you think of a time when you faced a situation that called for you to take a stand for Christ, but you didn't summon the courage and fled instead? What happened and how did you feel afterward?

- Has there been a time recently when you have stood your ground and trusted the Holy Spirit to empower you on the Lord's behalf? Please explain.

Review this week's memory verse.

Day Three:

Jesus Faces His Accusers

What to look for . . .

Arrested and bound, Jesus is led away to be questioned first by Annas (the former high priest and father-in-law of Caiaphas) and then by Caiaphas, the ruling high priest. The interrogations were a formality; the religious leaders had already agreed that Jesus had to die. They even fabricated the testimony of witnesses to ensure a guilty verdict.

Read Mark 14:53–65 and John 18:12–14, and 19–24.

1. Briefly summarize what took place at the home of Annas. John 18:19–24

After the preliminary hearing, Jesus was taken to the home of Caiaphas for further questioning.

2. Who else were assembled for the hearing? Mark 14:53

Those present were members of the Sanhedrin—the Jewish council. They met in the pre-dawn hours of Friday morning to expedite matters before the Sabbath and the Passover celebration. The official verdict would not come until daylight (see Mark 15:1).

3. What was Peter doing at this time? v. 54
4. What were the members of the council looking for at this hearing? vv. 55–59

- a. What did the witnesses provide?
- b. Did these witnesses agree on their testimony?

According to the law of Moses, a death sentence could only be carried out on the testimony of two or three witnesses who agreed (see Numbers 35:30 and Deuteronomy 19:15).

- c. By law, what were the religious leaders—the keepers of the law—actually doing? Exodus 20:16

Unable to find witnesses who could agree on the testimony, the high priest intervened.

5. What did Caiaphas want from Jesus? vv. 60–62
- a. How did Jesus first respond to him?
- b. What did Caiaphas ask Jesus the second time?
- c. How did Jesus respond this time to his interrogator?

Jesus used the opportunity to proclaim that one day the roles would be reversed and He would be the one asking the questions, sitting in power at the right hand of God! Judgment was coming and they would be held accountable.

6. How did the high priest respond to Jesus' declaration? vv. 63–64
- a. After the attempts to prove Jesus guilty and force Him to incriminate himself failed, what did the council members do? v. 65
 - b. How did the guard follow suit?
 - c. This brutal scene had also been prophesied in Scripture; what does Isaiah 52:14 say?

Selah...

Jesus didn't deserve to be treated in such a way—He was completely sinless; but because He encountered cruel hostility, He promised we would also. When we do, our heart attitude should be to face our accusers as He did—humbly, patiently, and confidently, knowing that God is in control! What does Peter say about the example Jesus left for us in 1 Peter 2:23?

Review this week's memory verse.

Day Four: Peter Denies Jesus

As Jesus was being interrogated upstairs by Caiaphas, Peter meanwhile was still warming himself by the fire in the courtyard below. He was about to learn the most painful lesson of his life—that he could not depend on self to get him through.

Read Mark 14:66–72

1. Who approached Peter and what did she remark to him? vv. 66–67

The word *looked* (v. 67) here means *to look intently, to look fixedly, to inspect closely*.

- a. Instantly, what was Peter's reply? v. 68

Notice the contrast of the moment: Jesus was inside facing down evil by speaking the truth, while Peter was outside lying to protect himself.

- b. What happened when Peter moved to the porch? v. 68
- 2. As the servant girl returned, she drew everyone's attention to Peter. Again, what did he quickly do? vv. 69–70

Peter's accent had given him away, and the third time the reader senses the growing hostility in the bystanders: *"Surely you are one of them, for you are a Galilean, and your speech shows it."*

- 3. What did Peter finally do to silence their accusations? v. 71

Initially Peter denied by pleading ignorance; then he denied being one of the disciples; and lastly, he denied with a strong oath so no one would doubt him. His response the third time would convince them that no genuine follower of Jesus would ever speak in such a fashion!

- 4. As the rooster crowed a second time, what did Peter remember? v. 72
 - a. Who was looking down on Peter at that moment? Luke 22:61
 - b. When Peter remembered those words, what did he do? v. 72

Fortunately for Peter and for us, the story does not end here. His tears resulted in a true repentance and restoration by Jesus (see Mark 16:7 and John 21:15–19). Did Peter have to experience complete failure in his greatest hour of testing? No and neither do we! The lesson here is that God gives His grace liberally to those who *depend* on Him for it. In Mark 14 Jesus drove home the point that we must *watch* and *pray*, because prayer is our safeguard against temptation—*the spirit is willing but the flesh is weak*. We do not fall into sin while we are engaged in prayer!

Selah...

What do you glean from the following passages in Scripture that address your need to remain dependent upon God?

- 2 Corinthians 12:9–10
- 2 Corinthians 4:7

Day Five:

Praying God's Purpose

It's time to do some *prayer walking*—not in the literal, but the *spiritual* sense. The Holy Spirit will lead you today as you consider three points from your lesson, write them in the form of a prayer, and lift them to the Lord. If practicing the presence of God is new to you—be patient—it will come, and you will be blessed!

"... We do not know what we ought to pray for, but the Spirit himself intercedes for us with groans that words cannot express. And he who searches our hearts knows the mind of the Spirit, because the Spirit intercedes for the saints in accordance with God's will." Romans 8:26-27 NLT

A prayer for standing firm ...

Are you in a situation right now that calls for courage under fire? Ask the Lord today for the Holy Spirit to empower you on His behalf.

A prayer for Jesus' heart attitude ...

Do you have a hard time remaining humble and patient when people are hurling accusations your way? Remember, Jesus did not return accusation for accusation; rather He committed Himself to Him who judges righteously (1 Peter 2:23). Ask God to help you do the same.

A prayer for staying close to Jesus ...

Peter learned the hard way that it is dangerous to follow Jesus at a distance and warm himself at the enemy's fire. The closer to get to Jesus the more secure you remain! Ask Him to keep you in a place where you will be dependent upon Him.

Write out this week's verse from memory:

Notes