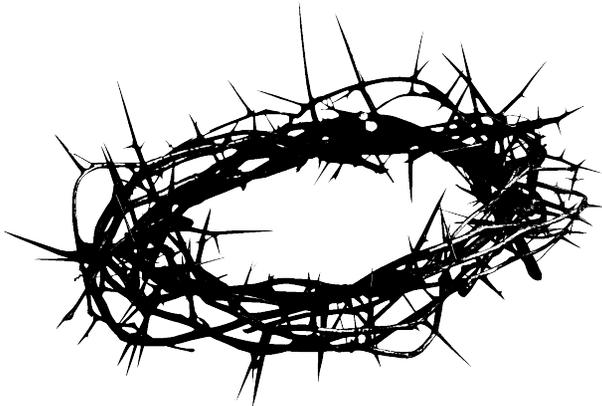


Read through the Bible



Mark Week 6



Monday, April Sixth

Over the past few weeks, as people have stayed home, some have come across the Netflix series *Tiger King*. The docuseries focuses on the world of big cats, and specifically, a larger-than-life tiger breeder and zookeeper named Joe Exotic. In addition to his big cat responsibilities, Joe has also released a series of country music songs. Turns out, though, that Joe didn't actually sing the songs. Instead, he secretly hired other people to record the songs and then claimed them as his own! In today's passage, Jesus calls out the 'pretenders' of His day.

Read: Mark 12:35-44

Reflect: Use the passage to work through these questions

- What question did Jesus address in verses 35-37?

Jesus' question was meant to challenge the thinking of the teachers of the law. Not only was He the 'son of David,' but He was also David's 'Lord.' In other words, Jesus was an earthly descendant of the line of David, but He was also David's heavenly God at the very same time. We also see this understanding at the end of Revelation: "I, Jesus, have sent my angel to give you this testimony for the churches. I am the Root and the Offspring of David..." (Revelation 22:16).

- Why did Jesus say the people should watch out for the teachers of the law? (see verses 38-40)

The word hypocrite comes from the Greek word '*hypokrites*,' which means "a stage actor or pretender." In this sense, Jesus called out the teachers of the law for being stage actors and pretenders who appeared to be righteous and holy as they secretly stole from widows' estates (v. 4).

- Why did the widow give 'more'? (see verses 43-44)

Respond: Apply what you've learned in prayer and action

As you begin this journey through Holy Week, take some time to praise the 'son' and 'Lord' of David for saving you from your sin.

Tuesday, April Seventh

While soldiers go into battle with some degree of worry, they are trained to know that their fellow soldiers will have their back should something go wrong. In today's passage, Jesus reminds His disciples that He will always have their back as they face all kinds of persecution.

Read: Mark 13:1-36

Reflect: Use the passage to work through these questions

- What event did Jesus foreshadow in verse 2?

40 years after Jesus, the Romans attacked Jerusalem and destroyed the temple. Jesus knew this would happen and had spoken about it at various points throughout His public ministry.

- How did Jesus describe the persecution His disciples would face? (see verses 9-11)

It must have been very difficult for the disciples to hear about the kinds of persecution they would face for being a follower of Jesus. While we may not face the same challenges the disciples faced 2000 years ago, there are many people in other parts of the world who do. How fortunate we are to be surrounded by a community of people who share our same Christian faith!

- How can we trust what Jesus says? (see verse 31)
- When will the "Son of Man" come? (see verses 24-37)

While people like to predict the day and year that Jesus will return, the reality is that they don't know. In fact, nobody knows; only the Father (v. 32). As Christians, Jesus calls us to not spend our time trying to figure out when that day will be, but rather, to be prepared for it when it comes (see verses 32-37).

Respond: Apply what you've learned in prayer and action

Take some time to pray for those who are persecuted all around the world for professing their Christian faith. Pray that they may be able to "stand firm" as they bear testimony about Jesus (v. 13).

Wednesday, April Eighth

In *The Empire Strikes Back*, smooth-talking Lando Calrissian strikes a deal with the Empire to turn his friends over to them. In today's passage, one of Jesus' disciples strikes a deal with the chief priests to turn Jesus over to them.

Read: Mark 14:1-11

Reflect: Use the passage to work through these questions

- Why did the chief priests and the teachers of the law not want to arrest Jesus during the festival? (see verses 1-2)

Notice that the chief priests and the teachers of the law still wanted to kill Jesus, but they didn't want to do it during the Feast of Unleavened Bread. For them, it wasn't a matter of 'if' but 'when.'

- Why were some of the people upset with how the woman had used the perfume? How did Jesus respond to their concern? (see verses 3-7)

John 12:4-6 provides us a bit more context as to who exactly was upset and why: ⁴*But one of his disciples, Judas Iscariot, who was later to betray him, objected,*⁵ *"Why wasn't this perfume sold and the money given to the poor? It was worth a year's wages."* ⁶*He did not say this because he cared about the poor but because he was a thief; as keeper of the money bag, he used to help himself to what was put into it."*

- What did Jesus say was the practical purpose of the woman pouring perfume on Him? (see verses 8-9)
- What did Judas do after the woman had poured the perfume on Jesus? (see verses 10-11)

Respond: Apply what you've learned in prayer and action

In the final days of His public ministry, Jesus spent time with His disciples (v. 3). Spend some time with Jesus today. Tell Him what's on your mind and experience His peace!

Thursday, April Ninth

Imagine, for a moment, that you had just one more meal before you died. Assuming you had time to plan for it, where would you have that meal? What would you eat? Who would you invite? What would you say to them? What would you want to make sure they knew? In today's passage, Jesus says some important things to His disciples at their very last meal together.

Read: Mark 14:12-52

Reflect: Use the passage to work through these questions

- What did Jesus predict would happen, and how did the disciples respond? (see verses 17-21)
- What did Jesus institute during the meal? (see verses 22-25)
- What did Jesus predict about His disciples, and how did they respond? (see verses 27-31)

As much as Jesus prepared them for this moment, His disciples would still run away in fear after His arrest.

- How do Jesus' interactions with His Father and with His disciples give us insight into how He was feeling right before His arrest? (see verses 34-42)
- What happened after the disciples fled? (see verses 51-52)

Who exactly was the mystery man who followed Jesus and then fled naked after being seized? It seems like such a bizarre detail, right? While biblical scholars have taken educated guesses over the centuries (John, James, even Mark himself), Mark does not provide us with an answer in the text. What is clear, though, is that not only had Jesus' 12 disciples deserted Him; everyone had (v. 50).

Respond: Apply what you've learned in prayer and action

In today's passage, Jesus invited His disciples to receive His body and blood in the bread and wine at the meal. Take some time today to thank Him for continuing to give us (His church) this same gift as a means of grace.

Friday, April Tenth

If Good Friday is a day surrounding the death of Jesus, why do we call it 'good'? The origin of the name is often debated, with some suggesting it stemmed from an older name – "God's Friday." Not all cultures, though, call it Good Friday. Some churches in Germany, for example, call it "Karfreitag," meaning "Sorrowful Friday." While Good Friday is certainly the darkest day in the life of Jesus, many Christians manage to find the 'good' by noting that Jesus' death on the cross was the climax of God's plan to save us from our sins. In today's passage, we will witness the anguish, the sorrow, the pain, and the humanity of our humble Savior, Jesus.

Read: Mark 14:53 – 15:41

Reflect: Use the passage to work through these questions

- Why did the chief priests and the Sanhedrin have trouble finding evidence to put Jesus to death? (see 14:55-59)
- What ultimately caused the religious leaders to condemn Jesus to death? (see 14:60-64)
- How did Peter react to his denial of Jesus? (see 14:60-62)

Earlier that evening, Peter proclaimed that he was ready to go with Jesus to prison and to death (see 14:31). How disheartening it must have been for Peter to deny Jesus so quickly after His arrest!

- How did the peoples' insults demonstrate that they did not understand why Jesus had to die? (see 15:16-20)

The soldiers and leaders laughed at Jesus' helplessness, but they didn't understand that this was all part of the plan. Could God the Father have rescued His Son? Sure, but in order to atone for our sins, a perfect sacrifice had to be made.

- What did Jesus say as He hung on the cross? (see 15:34)

Respond: Apply what you've learned in prayer and action

On a day like Good Friday, many emotions and thoughts can fill our hearts and minds. At your own pace, take some time to reflect on the crucifixion and death of Jesus. Consider what He did for us.

Saturday, April Eleventh

We do a lot of waiting in our daily lives: waiting at a stoplight, waiting in line at a grocery store, waiting to use the restroom, waiting for somebody to answer your phone call...this list goes on and on. The hard part about waiting isn't necessarily the amount of time that has elapsed; it's often simply the fact that we just want to keep going with our day. After all, we all have things we need to do, and if we get held up, things are thrown off balance. In today's passage, Jesus' followers are forced to wait between the tragic events of Good Friday and the amazing moments of Easter Sunday.

Read: Mark 15:42-47

Reflect: Use the passage to work through these questions

- How is Joseph of Arimathea described? (see verse 43)

After crucified individuals died, the Romans would often leave their bodies on the cross to rot or to be eaten by animals. However, if a close friend or relative requested to retrieve the body from the cross, it was occasionally granted. Joseph of Arimathea was an ideal person to make such a request: he was wealthy and likely had great influence in government affairs. What Pilate probably didn't know, though, was that Joseph was likely a recent convert (v. 43).

- Who witnessed the burial of Jesus? (see verse 47)

In preparation for tomorrow's reading, it's important to note that the women went back to the tomb on Sunday morning because Sabbath law forbid them from doing this sort of work the day before (i.e. Saturday).

Respond: Apply what you've learned in prayer and action

Take a few minutes to flip back through the pages of Mark's Gospel. Take a look at and think about the many experiences and situations Jesus' disciples had experienced with Him. How do you think they might have felt the day after His death? How might you have felt?

Sunday, April Twelfth

He is risen! He is risen, indeed! Alleluia! As we reach the final day of our journey through the Gospel of Mark, we spend today in joyous celebration of Jesus' resurrection. Let our voices resound in praise as we echo the spirit of that famous hymn, *Christ the Lord is Risen Today*:

Christ the Lord is ris'n today, Alleluia!

Sons of men and angels say, Alleluia!

Raise your joys and triumphs high, Alleluia!

Sing, ye heav'ns, and earth, reply, Alleluia!

Read: Mark 16:1-20

Reflect: Use the passage to work through these questions

- What had happened to the stone in front of the tomb? (see verses 2-4)
- What message did the angel give to the women? (see verses 6-7)
- How did the disciples initially react to the reported sightings of Jesus? (see verses 9-13)
- Why did Jesus rebuke His disciples? (see verse 14)
- What did Jesus command His disciples to do? (see verses 15-18)

Respond: Apply what you've learned in prayer and action

Amidst the Easter celebrations you experience today, take a moment to thank God for fulfilling His promises in Jesus!

Well, that's the end of the Gospel of Mark! I pray your time in God's Word has filled you with newfound perspective as you reflected upon the life and ministry of Jesus. It has truly been a pleasure reading along with you! Happy Easter, and I'll be back this summer with our next book of the Bible...Ecclesiastes! – Pastor Chris

Questions? Comments? Contact Pastor Chris at chris.futch@oursaviorfl.org or (727) 344-2684.