



His Suffering for Our Living

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Mark 14:53-65

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*<sup>53</sup> And they led Jesus to the high priest. And all the chief priests and the elders and the scribes came together. <sup>54</sup> And Peter had followed him at a distance, right into the courtyard of the high priest. And he was sitting with the guards and warming himself at the fire. <sup>55</sup> Now the chief priests and the whole council were seeking testimony against Jesus to put him to death, but they found none. <sup>56</sup> For many bore false witness against him, but their testimony did not agree. <sup>57</sup> And some stood up and bore false witness against him, saying, <sup>58</sup> "We heard him say, 'I will destroy this temple that is made with hands, and in three days I will build another, not made with hands.'" <sup>59</sup> Yet even about this their testimony did not agree. <sup>60</sup> And the high priest stood up in the midst and asked Jesus, "Have you no answer to make? What is it that these men testify against you?" <sup>61</sup> But he remained silent and made no answer. Again the high priest asked him, "Are you the Christ, the Son of the Blessed?" <sup>62</sup> And Jesus said, "I am, and you will see the Son of Man seated at the right hand of Power, and coming with the clouds of heaven." <sup>63</sup> And the high priest tore his garments and said, "What further witnesses do we need? <sup>64</sup> You have heard his blasphemy. What is your decision?" And they all condemned him as deserving death. <sup>65</sup> And some began to spit on him and to cover his face and to strike him, saying to him, "Prophecy!" And the guards received him with blows.*

*(Pastor Prays)*

If your phone rings at 3:00 in the morning, it's almost never good news. If you hear a noise

outside of your house, and maybe it's somebody is knocking at the door at 3:00 in the morning, chances are that will not be a good visit. If your neighbors are playing loud music at 3:00 in the morning, they are not good neighbors. It's an appropriate Amen, Amen to that. For Jesus, when the Sanhedrin comes to get you at 3:00 in the morning, it's not a Good Friday. Let's begin where we are so we're all caught up. If you've been away for some time, we've been going through Mark, and here we are at the very beginning of Good Friday. Jesus has been in the Garden of Gethsemane. He has been praying all night. It's such an agonizing prayer. Luke tells us that he sweat drops of blood. It was so bad that an Angel from heaven came to minister to him to get him through. Now that prayer is over. Judas has led this mob, maybe several 100 people. The religious leaders and maybe the Roman guards are with them. We don't know. Mark is very sparse but what we do know is that they have now come to get Jesus. And every one of the disciples, every one of them has run away. This passage right here begins the suffering of Jesus, and that's what I want to focus on because...

### **His Suffering Makes Our Living Worthwhile**

You may wonder what your purpose is. You may be thinking about your direction. You may wonder why things have not turned out like you hoped they would at this point in your life. You are now at a certain age, and you thought by now you would be doing something different. This passage, just about the suffering of Jesus, will help you see that his suffering makes our lives worthwhile. What I want to do is go back through the passage and pick up a couple of things. We'll begin in verse 53, and you follow along. I'm going to walk through and be like a tour guide. I'm just going to point out a couple of things in the passage, and then we'll come back and make some application. Join me there in verse 53. *And they led Jesus to the high priest.* Who are they? It is the mob. We don't know what happened to Judas; he's gone. We'll never see him again. Mark doesn't care to even mention him again. We can only assume it is the religious people who are leading Jesus to the high priest's house. Now, several things happened with the trial of Jesus. There are actually two trials. There is a civil trial. We'll get to Pilate here down the road. That's the civil trial. And then there is a religious trial. That's what we're in the middle of now. There are really a couple of stages in the religious trial that Mark skips, but if you read the other gospels, you find out they first went to a man named Annas. He was the original high priest, but he was so powerful that the Roman government decided they needed

to depose him. But he was a crafty old man, and even though he's not the high priest anymore, his son-in-law is the high priest, Caiaphas. That's where they are headed in verse 53; it's early Friday morning. The sun has not come up yet. Mark puts this in verse 54. It feels like it doesn't belong there, but this is where Mark has put it: just to tell us there's something bad coming about Peter. Verse 54 tells us that Peter followed at a distance. That little phrase, following Jesus at a distance, should be a sermon. Here is Peter. He loved Jesus enough to be following. Nobody else is doing it, but he loved himself enough to be doing so at a distance. John tells us that he gets into the courtyard. John happens to know the high priest, and Peter gets in on John's dime. John always takes some credit from Peter. So, Peter now is in the courtyard of the high priest, the enemy camp. Jerusalem is set 2500 feet above sea level, so in the springtime, the days will be warm, but at night, it gets very cold. There in the courtyard, a fire is going, and all the soldiers are around it. Peter is sitting with them. He's torn, and he's scared.

I just think about so many Christian young men and women who claim Christ and yet hold back. Just for a quick lesson, look at Peter and his life; what is going to happen to him after this? Peter is going to be found destitute. How badly I want you to not follow Christ at a distance but close. Come close. That's the sermon for next week, but now let's turn our attention back to what's happening with Jesus and the trial verse.

The chief priest and the whole council are seeking testimony against Jesus. They have one cause. They're not looking for justice. They want to put him to death, but they want to do it legally. But to put him to death, they need the right number of witnesses. You have to have two to three witnesses that give testimony consistently, and then you can have the trial, and the person can be put to death. The problem is that this is a rigged trial, and there are a couple of reasons we know this. One, it's illegal to have a trial at night. Also, you can't have a trial during the feasts. We're still in the middle of Passover. It's a completely illegal trial, and yet they're pushing forward. They're looking for somebody to give a good testimony so they can put him to death, but they can't get them to stack up. You'll notice in verse 56, *For many bore false witness against him, but their testimony did not agree*. If you're going to get a bunch of liars together, you need to make sure that they are telling the same lie. This is a kangaroo court here. They can't even get the liars to tell the same lie. So, in verse 57, some stood up, and now they started bearing false witness. They're breaking the 10 commandments. They're doing all

kinds of terrible things here. And this is what they said in verses 57 and 58. <sup>57</sup> *And some stood up and bore false witness against him, saying,* <sup>58</sup> *“We heard him say, ‘I will destroy this temple that is made with hands, and in three days I will build another, not made with hands.’”*

Well, that doesn't even make any sense. That is nowhere near what Jesus said. In John Chapter 2, Jesus is talking about his own body. He is talking about his own death on the cross and the resurrection that God will bring. He talked about that in John Chapter 2, and we covered it a couple of months ago in Mark 13 when the disciples were marveling at the stones of the temple, and Jesus said not one stone would be left on another. He didn't say anything close to what these guys are saying in the passage. Their lies do not match, and the trial starts to fall apart.

And so in verse 60, *And the high priest stood up in the midst and asked Jesus, “Have you no answer to make? What is it that these men testify against you?”* They've been lying about you, and yet Jesus doesn't have to say anything because the lies are falling apart. In verse 61, Jesus is fulfilling the scripture in Isaiah 53:7 when he remains silent. But the high priest (you don't get in that position without being pretty smart) asked a brilliant question. *“Are you the Christ, the Son of the Blessed?”* Here is this hypocrite who wouldn't even say God's name, and yet now he's going to be a part of killing God's son. Are you, son of the blessed? If you've been reading Mark all along, there has been a shroud over Jesus exposing who his full identity is. Oftentimes, he would perform a miracle and then say, don't tell anybody. After the transfiguration, he said, don't tell what you've seen. Now it's Good Friday, and the question has been asked, *“Are you the Christ, the Son of the Blessed?”* And Jesus said, I AM. Now, there are some commentators who would disagree with me; they would say this was just incidental. I think it's not incidental. I think this is Jesus reaching back all the way to Exodus chapter 3 when Moses asked God, who shall I say sent me and God says, tell them I AM. It's the personal name of God. Jesus reveals who he is, but he doesn't stop there. He levels a warning for everybody in the room. <sup>62</sup> *And Jesus said, “I am, and you will see the Son of Man seated at the right hand of Power, and coming with the clouds of heaven.”* Now look what the High Priest does; he tore his garments. You've probably seen that in the Old Testament. They would tear their garments as a sign of grief. It might even be a sign of anger at this point in history. It had actually become an official symbol, like dropping the gavel. <sup>63</sup> *And the high priest tore his garments and said, “What further witnesses do we need?”* <sup>64</sup> *You have heard his blasphemy. What is your decision?”* And

*they all condemned him as deserving death.* Let's take a vote. What's the decision? They all condemned him as deserving death.

Condemnation is what we deserve. Condemnation is what Jesus took. Jesus took the suffering, and he did so on our behalf. If you feel condemned by the world or by people, I want you right now to run to Jesus because he has taken all the condemnation you were due.

Verse 65 turns dark. <sup>65</sup>*And some began to spit on him and to cover his face and to strike him, saying to him, "Prophecy!" And the guards received him with blows.* I like watching World War 2 documentaries. There's one called The Rise and Fall of Hitler. And as the racism in Nazi Germany picked up pace and intensified, you see not just the government's maltreatment of Jewish people but how it turned violent, and sometimes, in that violence, you would see this hatred spit in somebody's face.

So, what's going on here? It's this rejection. And then they started to have a little game. They spit on him. Then they covered his face, blindfolded him, and they started hitting him because the Messiah was supposed to be able to tell who was hitting him. It's one thing for a scribe or a priest to have a little game like that and hit you. They're not going to hit as hard as the next group. Once they are spent with their fun, they take Jesus and hand him over to men who are trained to kill. These are Roman soldiers, and what they do for a living is hurt people. They hand Jesus over to the soldiers. So, this begins his suffering. His suffering makes our living worthwhile.

So that's the interpretation. Let's now make some application. There are a couple of ways to apply this. Here's the first one. #1

### **We need to claim His righteousness**

Claim the righteousness of Jesus. Go to verses 55-59. Even the lying hypocrites can't find anything wrong with him. They cannot make anything stick to Jesus. You just go through and see that his righteousness continues to shine through. Now, this has implications. I'll give you two implications. The first one is that we should follow his example. That is to say, as Christians, we are to live our lives above reproach. Suppose you are a follower of Jesus. That directly affects how you live your life. To live above reproach means that you not only don't include

yourself in sinful behavior, but you make sure it doesn't even look like you do so that if somebody accuses you of it, your life has been such that people will say there is no way he did that. That is living above reproach.

But don't get caught over there in legalism because living above reproach will not save you. Living a good life, following Jesus, without being converted by Jesus, will not save you. It'll mean you are a really nice guy all the way up to the point that you go to hell. Instead, we've got to claim the righteousness of Jesus. The doctrine is called imputed righteousness. The righteousness of Jesus is put on you. When Jesus Christ died on the cross, he paid the penalty for your sins. That is half of salvation: the other half is that he also gave you his perfect life. So when you stand before God, you are covered in the righteousness of his son, Jesus. That's what it means to be in Christ. We need to claim his righteousness. What does a person say when Satan tells you that you are a great sinner? You'll be thankful because Christ came to save sinners. Claim his righteousness. Let's go to #2.

### **We need to know more Bible**

We need to know more Bible. We need to know the theme of the Bible. Where does it take us? What does it mean? We need to force-feed ourselves as much Bible as possible. Let me show where I get that in verses 60 and 61. <sup>60</sup> *And the high priest stood up in the midst and asked Jesus, "Have you no answer to make? What is it that these men testify against you?"* <sup>61</sup> *But he remained silent and made no answer.* He did that on purpose. He was fulfilling scripture that was written 700 years ago by Isaiah in Isaiah 53:7. Listen to what Isaiah wrote. *He was oppressed, and he was afflicted, yet he opened not his mouth; like a lamb that is led to the slaughter, and like a sheep that before its shearers is silent, so he opened not his mouth.* You wouldn't know that if you hadn't read the Bible. When you read the Bible, you find out who God is. When you read the Bible, you find out the nature of God. When you read the Bible, you find out the cost of the wrath of God and the love of God. You will find out the will of God. The 10 Commandments have several purposes. They are given to us to show us God's will for moral living and to show us his standard of righteousness. The laws are given to us to be tutors, and to show us how to live. The law is given to show us our need for the gospel.

When you read the Bible, you get a clear picture of human sexuality. Part of the reason that so many so-called evangelical Christians fall off into affirming homosexuality or transsexuality is they don't know the Bible. When you read the Bible, it holds its standard up of what sexuality is and what it means to be a man or woman. What does biblical masculinity or biblical femininity look like? We find that in the Bible. When you read the Bible, you find out about the life of Christ. When you read the Bible, you find the gospel. You find that God is holy, and he created you in his image. But the image of God in you is disfigured by your own sin. That has separated you from God and made you liable to be judged and punished. And yet God loved you, and he gave us Jesus. Jesus lived perfectly and died on the cross, the place where punishment is given. God raised him from the dead, and if you trust that Jesus did that for you, the Bible says you'll be saved.

Look, we need more Bible. If you're not reading the Bible right now, let me give you a good plan. Carve out 30 minutes, maybe in the morning, but anytime that works for you. Read two or three chapters slowly. Ask God to help you and to speak to you. Strengthen your soul with the Bible. Start doing that tomorrow. Look, if you have children or grandchildren, I recommend you get a top-notch, high-quality Bible. A high-quality Bible would cost you a little more, but you need to read it and mark it up. Write a note on the front of that Bible to your grandchild. Let them know you have gone through every page and every day you prayed for him or her. That becomes a legacy. We need to know more Bible. Let me give you a third thing to consider: #3.

### **We need to worship Him more**

I get that it's verses 61 - 62 when Jesus makes his confession. Do you see that? He remained silent and made no answer, but when the high priest asked him, *"Are you the Christ, the Son of the Blessed?"* here comes the confession. <sup>62</sup> *And Jesus said, "I am, and you will see the Son of Man seated at the right hand of Power, and coming with the clouds of heaven."* Let's just take the I AM statement. It takes us all the way back to the beginning of Exodus. There, we have the revealed name of God. All of the I AM statements in John remind us that we've gathered together; we come and worship the fully God-man. We do so on a Sunday because God raised him from the dead on a Sunday. Let me just throw this out here and see if you can handle it. I think that means we prioritize worshiping together on Sunday. That Sunday, as the Lord's Day, is different than any other day of the week, and it is designed for you to worship God. That

means changing the way we do vacations. I think that dictates where you might live and what kind of job you'll have so that you're sending the signal to your family that it is an important priority to worship. I think it means participating and being a part of the worship service. When we gather together, one of the great things I love about our church is that we sing together. Our voices are lifted up together. It's encouraging to my own soul, and it's honoring the Lord. I think it's important for you, when you come here, to be able to look at what God's word says, and you're not dependent on me. You just keep looking at what God says in his book? I'm going to throw you another one. Some of you are not going like this. I think it means being punctual. How does that grab you? Pretty good, huh? Look, we tell the ushers not to do a count until about 20 minutes into the service because that's when everybody's finally here. I know there are so many reasons why you are late to church on Sunday, but sometimes it's just that you're late. I would say prioritize and make sure you are here and ready to worship when we start to sing. If all you do is hear a sermon, you've missed the gift that God has given us to lift our voices in congregational singing unto the Lord, to honor him. It's good for your own soul. We need to worship him more. Let's move on to the fourth one: #4.

#### **We need to claim His life**

There's a quote from Daniel 7 and Psalm 110, and what Jesus says right there in verse 62, Jesus said I am. Look, this is where those of you who like doctrine should love the doctrine of substitutionary atonement. It's a long word. Substitutionary, Jesus is in our place, atonement, and him dying on the cross. That is what saves us, the very doctrine of Jesus in our place. It's not you trying to be like Jesus. You should try to be like Jesus, but first, you must be in Jesus. Can you believe this? Do you trust that another has taken your place, and that is Jesus? We need to claim his life. Let me give you a fifth thing: #5.

#### **We need to trust His promise**

The promise that he makes right here in verse 62 is this. *"I am, and you will see the Son of Man seated at the right hand of Power, and coming with the clouds of heaven."* So, take that phrase, *seated at the right hand of Power* and break that down even further. He's seated. That means that the work of Jesus on the cross is finished. What he has done, it is done. There's no more for you to add. Jesus has paid it all. All the work is finished. We trust in the finished work

of Jesus on the cross. He is seated at the right hand. That is the place of power. That is the that is the place of authority. That is the place of honor. That is the place of lordship. Jesus, He is our Lord, seated at the right hand of power, the right hand of God the Father.

Think with me now. This is our religion right here. The ascended Lord means that there is a man in heaven interceding for me. That he is my advocate. He goes to the father on my behalf. That he is my intercessor; he takes the prayers that I offer up that are so lame and no good and misguided, he takes them and makes them right before God the Father. Jesus Christ shows God the Father the scars and the blood and says, I did this for Clint. I'm forgiven because of Jesus. Let me give you a sixth one: #6.

### **We need to hope in His glory**

Look at the warning he lays out for those in the room. It's a warning right there in verse 62, *And Jesus said, "I am, and you will see the Son of Man seated at the right hand of Power, and coming with the clouds of heaven."* This is judgment day right here. That's Daniel 7 and Psalm 110. What did John open up with in Revelation 1:7? *Behold, he is coming with the clouds, and every eye will see him, even those who pierced him, and all tribes of the earth will wail on account of him. Even so. Amen.* I mean, don't you need hope right now? We're getting close to the election, and you need some hope. I mean, honestly, when you're a Bible-believing Christian, do you ever just sometimes think, does either party just not want us? I mean, there's one that hates us and one that tolerates us, so what you end up doing is making sure you're not consumed by all of that. You put all your hope in the Lord Jesus, all of it. Let me give it one last one, and I'll be done: #7.

### **We must never forget**

Verse 65 now brings all the brutality of how Jesus was treated to the forefront. You see how it gets brutal. They start spitting on him. They start hitting him. They start mocking him. You see how serious it begins, and it's going to get worse. You see the sacrificial life and death of Jesus. You see the saving nature of Christ in our place. And it reminds us that His suffering makes our living worthwhile.

*(Pastor prays)*