

## **The Cross Shaped Life: Shaped by a Fulfilled Promise (Mark 8.31-34; 9.30-37. 10.33-34; 16.1-8)**

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Warren Brosi

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**Dominant Thought: In confusing and scary times, trust Jesus who keeps His word.**

**Objectives:**

**I want my listeners to understand how Jesus predicted His death and resurrection three times in the gospel of Mark.**

**I want my listeners to find comfort and encouragement in how Jesus fulfills His promise of suffering, dying, and rising from the dead.**

**I want my listeners to show the character of Jesus to those around us.**

“As true as the troubles of today are, Christ is still enough,” spoken by Vivek Paul Oriel. She is reflecting on how Jesus helped her grieve her parents’ deaths back in 2021. She shares her story in an article by the Gospel Coalition, “In the Valley of the Shadow of Death: Four True Stories of Grieving with Hope,” from April 14, 2022 (<https://in.thegospelcoalition.org/article/in-the-valley-of-the-shadow-of-death-four-true-stories-of-grieving-with-hope/>).

On the road of following Jesus, we encounter many challenges and scary moments. And yet Christ is still enough.

In our time together, I want to look at three times in the gospel of Mark where Jesus predicts His suffering, death, and resurrection. Through these accounts in [Mark 8.27-33](#); [9.30-32](#); and [Mark 10.32-34](#), and the fulfillment in [Mark 16](#), we will explore four actions of Jesus to encourage and challenge us to walk with Him.

The gospel of Mark begins in [Mark 1:1](#), “The beginning of the gospel of Jesus Christ, the Son of God.” Christ is another word for Messiah, Anointed One, or King. In the middle of Mark, in [Mark 8.27](#), Jesus asks His followers who do people say He is. They answer, “John the Baptist, Elijah, or one of the prophets” ([Mark 8.28](#)). Then Jesus asks them, “Who do you say I am?” Peter answered, “You are the Christ” ([Mark 8.29](#)). In other words, Peter says, “You are the King.”

Then, Jesus gives His first prediction of His suffering, death, and raising from the dead in [Mark 8.27-33](#). In this prediction, we find the first action of Jesus, our King.

**First, Jesus is a King who submits ([Mark 8.31-34](#)).** Jesus began to teach them and said, “The Son of Man must suffer many things...” ([Mark 8.31](#)). The Son of Man is a favorite title Jesus uses to describe Himself. It draws on a powerful vision from the prophet Daniel. Before he was thrown into the lions’ den, he had the following vision. [Daniel 7:13–14](#), “I saw in the night visions, and behold, with the clouds of heaven there came one like a son of man, and he came to the Ancient of Days and was presented before him. And to him was given dominion and glory and a kingdom, that all peoples, nations, and languages should serve him; his dominion is an everlasting dominion, which shall not pass away, and his kingdom one that shall not be destroyed.”

This person like a son of man, would reign with an everlasting kingdom. It is kingly language.

In [Daniel 12:2](#), we read about a promise of new life that God’s people were anticipating, “And many of those who sleep in the dust of the earth shall awake, some to everlasting life, and some to shame and everlasting contempt.”

This King **must**. He must follow the Father’s plan. On Friday evening, Benjamin Small shared with us how Jesus prayed in the garden. In the garden of Gethsemane, Jesus prayed in [Mark 14:36](#), “And he said, “Abba, Father, all things are possible for you. Remove this cup from me. Yet not what I will, but what you will.”

God had a plan to send His son on a rescue mission. Jesus submitted to His Father’s plan. Rarely do you hear of kings submitting to anyone. In Jesus, we find a King who submits.

A King who submits. Each of these passion predictions describe death and raising from the dead. Jesus promised His death and raising from the dead.

Unfortunately, all Peter heard was the suffering and the death. He started to rebuke Jesus ([Mark 8.32](#)). Jesus rebuked Peter with these words, “Get behind me, Satan! For you are not setting your mind on the things of God, but on the things of man” ([Mark 8.33](#)). Jesus may be telling Peter, “Get back in line.” You are not the Rabbi. Follow me as I follow the Father’s plan.

Jesus went on to teach them in [Mark 8:34](#), “And calling the crowd to him with his disciples, he said to them, “If anyone would come after me, let him deny himself and take up his cross and follow me.”

As we follow Jesus on the way, we must submit to His lead.

***Second, Jesus is a King who Serves ([Mark 9.30-37](#)).***

Each of these predictions has the same overall theme: The Son of Man will be killed and after three days He will rise. In these verses and in the next prediction, Jesus also states, “the Son of Man will be delivered” ([Mark 9.31](#); [10.33](#)). It is the word for betrayed or handed over.

This prediction stunned Jesus’ followers, “they did not understand the saying, and were afraid to ask him” ([Mark 9.32](#)).

On the heels of this prediction in [Mark 9](#), Jesus overhears the disciples arguing. He asked them what they were arguing about. They kept silent. Mark tells us, “for on the way they had argued with one another about who was the greatest” ([Mark 9.34](#)).

Jesus sat down with the twelve and taught them, “If anyone would be first, he must be last of all and servant of all” ([Mark 9.35](#)). Then, he illustrated by hugging a little child near them and said, “Whoever receives one such child in my name receives me, and whoever receives me, receives not me but Him who sent me” ([Mark 9.37](#)).

We follow a King who serves. As we follow our King, we follow His way of service to others.

***Third, Jesus is a King who Suffers ([Mark 10.33-34](#)).***

This third passion prediction is the longest and most detailed. He specifies Jerusalem as the place. Jesus will be betrayed over to the chief priests and scribes. They will condemn Him to death and deliver Him over to Gentiles or the Romans. To be handed over to the hands of men is not a good place to be. In the Old Testament, David recognized it’s better to fall into the hands of a merciful God than to fall into the hands of men ([2 Samuel 24.14](#)).

Then, he goes in detail, “They will mock him, and spit on him, and flog him and kill him. And after three days he will rise” ([Mark 10.34](#)).

**Mocking Jesus:** [Mark 15:20](#), “And when they had **mocked** him, they stripped him of the purple cloak and put his own clothes on him. And they led him out to crucify him.” And again, while Jesus is on the cross, we read in [Mark 15:31](#), “So also the chief priests with the scribes **mocked** him to one another, saying, “He saved others; he cannot save himself.”

**Spitting on Jesus:** [Mark 14:65](#), “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.” And again in [Mark 15:19](#), “And they were striking his head with a reed and **spitting** on him and kneeling down in homage to him.”

**Flogging Jesus:** [Mark 15:15](#), “So Pilate, wishing to satisfy the crowd, released for them Barabbas, and having **scourged** Jesus, he delivered him to be crucified.”

We follow a King who suffers. On the way with Jesus, we will encounter suffering.

Listen to the testimony of the centurion who witnessed Jesus die. [Mark 15:39](#), “And when the centurion, who stood facing him, saw that in this way he breathed his last, he said, “Truly this man was the Son of God!”

Remember, all three of these predictions do not end with “and kill him.” All three predictions conclude, “After three days he will rise.”

Let’s pick up the story at the end of [Mark 15.42-47](#). Jesus has died. Joseph, a respected member of the council who was looking for the kingdom of God “took courage” and went to Pilate to ask for the body of Jesus ([Mark 15.43](#)).

Joseph buries Jesus. Two women, Mary Magdalene and Mary the mother of Joseph saw where Jesus was buried ([Mark 15.47](#)).

***Fourth, Jesus is a King who Saves ([Mark 16.1-8](#)).***

Now, we come to the text to give us reason for our gathering today. Mary Magdalene and the other ladies buy spices after the Sabbath has concluded and go to anoint Jesus on the first day of the week. They go to the tomb with questions, “Who will roll away the stone from the entrance?” ([Mark 16.3](#)). As they look up, they see the large stone rolled back. They enter the tomb and see a young man sitting in white. They are alarmed. It’s a word for strong amazement, to be excited with fear. It seems that this young man is an angel. He says what most angels say when they greet humans, “Don’t be

alarmed. Don't be afraid." Then he says, "You seek Jesus of Nazareth, who was crucified. He has risen; He is not here. See the place where they laid him" ([Mark 16.6](#)). The angel continues, "But go, tell his disciples and Peter that He is going before you to Galilee. There you will see Him, just as He told you" ([Mark 16.7](#)).

Through His fulfilled promise, Jesus saves people. He died and rose from the dead. That is the bedrock foundation for our faith. With no resurrection, we are still dead in our sins. The Apostle Paul shares in [1 Corinthians 15:17](#), "And if Christ has not been raised, your faith is futile and you are still in your sins."

Jesus fulfilled His promise to rise from the dead. He plans to make good on His promise to meet them in their hometown area of Galilee. After Jesus predicted that the twelve would be scattered and fall away, He told them in [Mark 14:28](#), "But after I am raised up, I will go before you to Galilee."

They see the empty tomb. The angel tells them Jesus is keeping His promise to them. Go tell the disciples and Peter that He'll meet you in Galilee, about 90 miles north.

Then, we come to what I believe is the final verse in Mark. [Mark 16:8](#) "And they went out and fled from the tomb, for trembling and astonishment had seized them, and they said nothing to anyone, for they were afraid." The end. The end? Out of all the cool acts of Jesus. And all the times that Jesus said, "Don't tell anyone." Mark has chosen to end his gospel this way? It doesn't make sense.

Words such as trembling, astonishment—where we get our word "ecstatic," and afraid are some of the final words in this gospel.

Your Bibles probably have a note with some brackets that say, "[SOME OF THE EARLIEST MANUSCRIPTS DO NOT INCLUDE 16.9-20]." Some people thought Mark didn't end the story properly. They chose to add a happier and more complete ending. Almost everything that is in the extra verses is found somewhere else in the New Testament, so they really don't add anything new. Generally speaking, the shorter reading is the more accurate. Also, the reading that is earliest takes priority, too. When you look at the earliest copies of the gospel of Mark, it also concludes after [Mark 16.8](#).

So, I feel confident that we have an accurate ending. But why? Maybe it's Mark's way to say, "It's up to you, now." Follow this King who submits, serves, suffers, and saves. The King who keeps His word.

***In confusing and scary times, trust Jesus who keeps His word.***

Somehow the Jesus story has made it across continents and across generations because people chose to trust Jesus who keeps His word in scary and confusing times.

Maybe Mark wants us to realize that as followers of Jesus, there's always room for growth. Peter who rebuked Jesus when Jesus predicted the coming of the cross. He fell asleep with James and John in the garden on the night Jesus needed them most. Peter fled and denied Jesus, but then Peter met Jesus in Galilee and became a Spirit-filled follower of Jesus.

James and John, desiring seats of honor, also fell asleep in the garden, but went on to lead. One was killed as a martyr and the other lived to old age in exile for the word of God and the testimony of Jesus.

Mary Magdalene and the other women did go out and tell the disciples, "Christ is risen." But they had to work through their own fear, astonishment, and trepidation.

***In confusing and scary times, trust Jesus who keeps His word.***

Charles Spurgeon, a preacher in the 1800's in England, trusted the Lord's faithfulness. "Great is Your faithfulness" (Lamentation 3.23). So great that there has never been an exception. No item in the list of divine promises is unfulfilled. He honors each. His faintest word will stand firm. His least truth will never grow dim.

There is no saint who can out-believe God, and God has never out-promised Himself yet. Though my troubles have multiplied upon me, He has never forsaken me.

So come, nestle down under those great wings. The wings lined with feathers of the Eternal will be strong wings, through which no storm of trouble can ever beat. (Quoted by Matt Proctor, "In Good Times and Bad: The Preaching Perseverance of Charles Spurgeon, *the ambassador*, Winter 2026).