

## **The PATH - September 2 - 8, 2018**

### **Monday** - Read Mark 15:42-47

We are very familiar with this part of the Gospel of Mark, Joseph of Arimathea who is a member of the religious council comes and asks for the body of Jesus, so that He can take the body and give it a proper burial. Joseph is definitely doing the right thing, but doing the right thing takes courage. In fact v. 43 tells us that he took courage. This was not easy to do. He had to go to Pilate and ask, which means that people were going to know that he was someone who at the very least admired Jesus and who most likely was one of His followers. Think about it, Jesus had just been crucified, Peter one of His closest friends denies Him, and for the most part His followers were hiding out. It is a difficult time and it is in that difficult time that Joseph goes to Pilate and basically identifies himself as a follower of Jesus. He knew the risks, he could be ostracized, he could be scorned, he could even be killed. No wonder the Bible says he took courage. It was a very courageous act. Doing the right thing took courage then and doing the right thing takes courage now. This courage is not something that we can muster up on our own, this courage has to come from the power of God. That is why Joshua 1:9 says, be strong and courageous. Do not be dismayed, for the Lord your God is with you wherever you go. God was with Joseph as he went to Pilate, and God is with us as we go wherever we go today and He will give us the courage to do the right thing, even when its hard as we rely on Him.

### **Tuesday** -Read Mark 16:1-8

The women in this part of the story of Jesus are portraits of courage. They were the ones at the cross, when most everyone else was hiding out, and now they are going to the tomb to anoint Jesus body for burial. This is an act of courage. They would be seen, they would be identified, and perhaps they would be arrested. They could have also been prohibited from getting to the body, and then to make matters worse who was going to roll the stone away. Faced with all those questions and issues they still decided to set out for the tomb, they still decided to go and anoint Jesus body, they still decided to do the right thing. What happened? When they got to the tomb, they weren't stopped, they weren't arrested, and the stone was already rolled away. In other words Joshua 1:9 came to life right before their very eyes. The Lord had went before them and the Lord was with them. God had given them the courage necessary and God had provided the answer. God was working for their good and for His own glory in the midst of this situation. We would do well to remember this, that our God goes before us, that our God is with us, and that our God is giving us the courage that is necessary to go and do the right thing and to live for His glory.

### **Wednesday** - Read Mark 16:1-8

Even though we can read this section of Scripture and applaud the courage of Joseph or the courage of the women, this passage is about much more than that. Yes we can read this passage and hopefully be inspired to do the right thing at all times, but the main point of the passage is far greater than that. The main point of the passage is the greatest news in the world. Jesus is alive. He was crucified, dead, and buried. Death and the grave had seemingly won the victory. The followers of Jesus were for the most part hiding and scared to death. It seemed that they had lost and evil had won, but how wrong they were. On this day, what a glorious day, Jesus burst forth from the grave, no longer dead but very much alive. No longer defeated, but triumphant over death, over hell, over sin, over evil, over the grave. Jesus had won the victory, that is the best news in the world. Because of that victory even that we live in a world where there is death, one day there will be life. Because of that victory hell can

be plundered and heaven populated, because of that victory evil and sin will one day be destroyed. Because of that victory one day the graves will not close in sadness, but they will open in joy. Jesus IS alive and that changes everything.

**Thursday** - Read Mark 16:9-13

The Jewish people had a custom when they were really trying to make a point, and that custom was that they would repeat what they were saying twice (sometimes more) in just a little different way to really get their point across. Mark does that here, Mary Magdalene sees Jesus and goes and tells His followers that He is alive, sadly enough they don't believe. Then Jesus appears to two of His disciples and they go back and tell the others and they still don't believe. What is Mark's point? He is pointing to the sad reality that many people will not believe in Jesus. Their eyes may be clouded by sin, by self, by fear, or by whatever, but many will not believe. So what do we do in response? We certainly don't give up, instead we press on. We keep sharing the good news, we keep telling others about Jesus, and we keep praying for those that are lost to be saved. We keep serving for the glory of God, knowing that Jesus can transform any heart and any situation. After all He took a grave, a place of sadness and loss and pain, and made it a place of rejoicing and hope.

**Friday** - Read Mark 16:14-20

The eleven disciples refused to believe, they doubted, their hearts were hard, they were consumed with self, but then they saw Jesus and everything changed. They went from doubt and unbelief to trust, they went from hiding out to sharing Jesus, they went from fear to boldness and courage. How? What was their secret? They saw Jesus, they spent time with Him and that made all the difference in the world. Many of those disciples would go on to be tortured or killed for their faith and trust in Jesus, yet they held on to their faith, even when it cost them their lives. Why? Because it was real. May the same thing be said of us that because our faith is real, that because we have spent time with Jesus, that we follow Him and trust Him no matter what.