

A DIRE PREDICTION

Mark 14:26-42

Intro: The part of the Bible that most people are acquainted with who have read the Bible at all, is the Gospels. But that does not mean that the Gospels are more understood than the rest of the Bible. While it is relatively easy to read and understand the facts that are recorded in the Gospels, yet it takes the Holy Spirit to guide us into the real meaning of those facts. We see this illustrated even in the lives of the Apostles. The Lord at different times during His brief public ministry had spoken to His disciples about both His death and His resurrection, and yet they either objected to any idea that He was going to die, or they silently listened, but did not understand, nor did they question the Lord about what he meant.

Millions of people have read the Gospels who do not realize that Jesus was the Son of God. And yet the evidence is there, given conclusively by Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John. People will say that our Lord was a great teacher, and that He did many mighty works, but that is about as far as most people go in their understanding. But the idea that the birth, life, and works, especially His death, have any significance for us today, other than being a great example, has never entered into their thinking. The evidence is overwhelming that people of all generations, in all nations of the earth, are incapable of understanding the message of the Gospels until the Lord opens their minds and hearts to Who Jesus Christ was, and is, and how and why He was born, and what His mission was on earth.

You and I would not understand what we do about the Lord Jesus Christ except for the fact that the Holy Spirit has given us eyes to see, and ears to hear, and hearts to understand. But, although we understand enough to know that Jesus Christ came into the world, having been with the Father throughout all eternity, and that He came for two purposes: one, as the final and complete revelation of God, and second, to save sinners from their sins, yet none of us will live long enough to understand all that we would like to know, even all that has been revealed in the Bible from Genesis to Revelation, and that is especially true as we come to the events in His life which immediately led up to His death. Those who know the truth of God the best, are the first to admit that there is much more to learn than they have learned, but that what they have learned has made them stand in awe and amazement at the glory of Christ, the Son of the living God, and at what He accomplished on their behalf, saving them eternally from the punishment that they deserved to suffer because of their

sins, and giving them eternal life.

The Bible clearly reveals the ignorance of us human beings when it comes to understanding the wisdom of God. But when the Holy Spirit begins to teach us, we marvel at the truth of God and at His amazing grace, and wonder how we could have missed the teaching of Scripture which is so clearly stated in the Bible.

However, when we come to the closing events in the life of our Lord, the events which immediately preceded His death, that is when we realize that we are on holy ground, confronted with truth which we cannot fully understand. I always feel that way when I come to the Lord's teaching about the Passover which led to His establishing of the Lord's Supper. I always feel very inadequate when I come to verses like we have in our text for today, as we read about the conversation that the Lord had with His disciples in the Upper Room, and then as they went with Him to the Garden of Gethsemane where He had been with them many times before.

Our text today in Mark 14, verses 26 to 42, is divided into two parts. First, our Lord's conversation with His disciples as they went from the Upper Room to the Mount of Olives where the Garden of Gethsemane was located. This is in verses 26 to 31. Second, that which happened in the Garden of Gethsemane. And we read about that in verses 32 to 42.

I. ON THE WAY FROM THE UPPER ROOM TO GETHSEMANE (Mark 14:26-31).

Mark's remarks on this part of the Lord's evening with His disciples, is very brief. Only Matthew and Mark spoke of the singing of the hymn. We don't really know what they sang, but several scholars believe that it was the praise sections of Psalms 115 through 118. Obviously it was a hymn of praise to God. It is interesting to think of our Lord singing a hymn. It was fitting that they would sing praise to God because He is the One Who ordained our salvation. It would have been consistent with what the Lord did when He gave thanks before He had the disciples drink from the cup—thanksgiving to God for providing salvation for sinners, unworthy though they were.

The Upper Room was in Jerusalem; the Mount of Olives and the Garden of Gethsemane were just outside of the city. So they did not have a long way to walk. But on the way our Lord made A DIRE PREDICTION.

As they walked toward Gethsemane, the Lord announced to them, “All ye shall be offended because of Me this night.” If we would bring the Greek verb over into English, this would be translated, *All of you will be scandalized this night because of Me*. He meant that they would be the cause of a scandal. They would fall into sin. They would be made to stumble in their walk with the Lord. The Lord spoke very specifically. He said it would affect all of them, and it would happen that very night. To a man they all denied it as we see at the end of verse 31. And it probably would have seemed impossible that such a thing would take place after the time of blessing that they had with the Lord, both at the Passover, and then as the Lord instituted the Supper by which He wanted them to remember Him.

But to back up His claim, the Lord quoted from Zechariah where we read in Zechariah 13:7,

7 Awake, O sword, against my shepherd, and against the man that is my fellow, saith the LORD of hosts: smite the shepherd, and the sheep shall be scattered: and I will turn mine hand upon the little ones.

So we not only have the Lord’s word that this would happen, but we have Scripture support for what He had said to them. But in verse 28 the Lord went on to imply at least, that even though He would be put to death, yet He would be raised again from the dead, and that He would be waiting for them in Galilee.

But the Apostle Peter, who seems to have been the disciples with the most self-confidence, immediately spoke out, speaking against the word of the Lord, and speaking against Scripture, declared, “Although all shall be offended, yet (will) not I.” The Greek is probably even more forceful. What Peter actually said, was, *Not I!* Peter agreed that the others might stumble into sin, but he was positively convinced that nobody could make him stumble because of the Lord.

Self-confidence at times gets all of us into trouble. We read this words of Peter, and at least say to ourselves, “How could Peter have been so stupid?” And when we think this, we are also thinking that we would not have done what He actually did, that very night!

What was it that Solomon said about pride? He said many things, but I am thinking of Proverbs 16:18: “Pride goeth before destruction, and an haughty spirit before a fall.” Pride not only blinds us to how weak we are,

but it even causes us to reject the statements of Scripture. This is what sin has done to us. We may think that we will be the exception, but there are no exceptions. Unless we deal with the pride in our hearts, and humble ourselves before God, inevitably we are going to fall. And Mark stated Peter's response and his experience which followed as a warning to us so that we will not do what he did: bring about our own fall. Pride is what has been called, the root sin, the sin which breeds other sins. We all have it. Only the Lord can deliver us from it. That is why it is such a serious thing to take a stand against the words of the Lord Jesus, or against the Word of God. We are on the way to trouble when we say about any warning of Scripture that "it was written for someone else, but it was not written for me."

But notice how the Lord responded to Peter. Look at verse 30. The Lord became more specific than before.

The words, "Verily I say unto thee," always introduce a message from the Lord that is very, very important because it is absolutely true. Notice the Lord's four statements:

- 1) "That this day" – not tomorrow, or next week, or at some indefinite time in the future, but "this day."
- 2) "Even in this night" – not even a whole twenty-four hours, but "in this night." It must have been already dark.
- 3) "Before the cock crow twice" – The first time would have been a warning, but one crowing would be followed with another, and it was usually in the third watch of the night (between 12 and 3).
- 4) "Thou shalt deny Me thrice," not just once, or twice, but three times! The first time should have convinced Peter that the Lord's words were true, but he went on to deny the Lord a second and third time. Peter had told the Lord that he wouldn't deny the Lord at all. The Lord told him that he would do it three times!

How gracious the Lord was! But how stupid Peter was. He came back at the Lord stronger than ever, and he had been very strong before. This time it was "more vehemently"! This is the only time this word is used in all of Scripture. It means that Peter came back at the Lord, stronger than ever, beyond all reason, convinced that he was right, and that the Lord was wrong.

Have you ever felt that way about yourself? We shouldn't be at all surprised as we go on reading to find out how grievously Peter denied that he

even knew the Lord. Peter was so strong in what he had to say that he convinced the others that he was right and that the Lord was wrong. If we have ever taken sides against the Lord, and haven't confessed our sin, let us confess it now before we get ourselves into trouble. Oh, there is so much for us to learn from our Bibles so that we will stay out of trouble.

After this, the Lord and his eleven disciples arrived at Gethsemane.

II. THE LORD AND THE DISCIPLES AT GETHSEMANE (Mark 14:32-42).

It is in a passage like this that we ought to realize very quickly that we are in over our heads! Here we see how affected He was by His human nature. Here it was that Luke tells us in Luke 22:44,

44 And being in an agony he prayed more earnestly: and his sweat was as it were great drops of blood falling down to the ground.

Here the Lord was contemplating what was before Him, when He Who knew no sin was to be made sin for us. Cf. 2 Cor. 5:21. He was beginning to know what it was going to mean that He would be wounded for our transgressions and bruised for our iniquities. when by His stripes we would be healed. Cf. Isa. 53:5. He was realizing what it would mean to Him that the Father would lay upon Him the iniquity of us all. Cf. Isa. 53:6. And I could add many other Scriptures.

The Lord entered the Garden of Gethsemane, left eight of the disciples near the entrance, took Peter, James, and John with Him, and then left them as He went farther into the Garden to pray. They saw that He was "sore amazed" and "very heavy" (Mark 14:33). And then He even said to them, "My soul is exceeding sorrowful unto death: tarry ye here, and watch." "Sore amazed" means that He was frightened and utterly astonished. "Very heavy" means that He was distressed and depressed. "Exceeding sorrowful" means that he became very sad.

I doubt if anyone has ever, or can ever, even begin to approach an understanding of what it meant to the Son of God to become a Man. The closest we can come to it is when the Lord makes known to us the awfulness of our sin, but we can never be as affected as our Lord was when He contemplated what was ahead of Him – the cup, and the hour. And all of this was before He made His supreme sacrifice in your place and mine.

But why did He bring His disciples along with Him? Did He want them

to protect Him from His enemies? No, absolutely not! As He would tell Pilate later He could call to His Father for an army of angels from heaven, but He didn't even do that.

What did He want from His disciples? He wanted them to "watch" and to "pray." Did He want them to pray for Him? I don't know the answer to that question, but my guess is that He probably did want them to pray for Him. He cried out to His Father in the words a little child would use, "Abba." See verse 35. He prayed that if there were any other way to save sinners, that might be done. But knowing that there was no other way, He submitted Himself to do the Father's will, and to take the sins of all of His people upon Himself that He might make a full and eternal atonement for their sins.

But what happened?

He went away to pray, and then came back to Peter, James, and John, and found them, not watching, but sleeping! And then we read in verse 38 that He spoke words which should have burned their way into Peter's heart especially, but also in to the hearts of James and John. He said,

38 Watch ye and pray, lest ye enter into temptation. The spirit truly is ready, but the flesh is weak (Mark 14:38).

He said this to the three who had come with Him into the inner part of the Garden, *but especially to Peter!* His spirit was ready, but his flesh was like our flesh: "weak." Neither Peter nor James nor John knew how much they needed to be praying, especially for themselves. They did not believe what the Lord had told Peter was coming. It was only by prayer that he could have been spared.

But the Lord went back to pray by Himself, and returned the second time to find His disciples asleep. The same thing happened a third time. And then He spoke the words to them that we find in verses 41 and 42.

(Read.)

Concl: We never know, as Solomon also told us in Proverbs 27:1, that we know not what any day will bring forth. And therefore we had better not boast about what we are going to do, or where we are going *tomorrow!* We can only be sure about today. We don't know what blessings shall come our way, *neither do we know what temptations we will meet.* So this means that we need to pray, to pray continuously, to pray fervently, and to pray in faith! Peter's experience ought to teach us

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how much we need to pray. But somehow it is always easier to sleep than it is to pray. None of us is strong enough to face and overcome the trials and temptations of life in our own strength. We might think that we are, like Peter did. But his experience should tell us that our best intentions are no substitute for prayer. If we are not praying, and praying constantly, we are being disobedient, and all disobedience is sin. We need to pray for others, but Peter's experience should teach us how important it is that we pray for ourselves. It is to be one of the most prominent habits of our lives, that we pray. This is how we are to seek and receive the blessing of the Lord.