**Round Top Church Christian Fellowship**

Sermon

*The Good News According to Mark,*

*An Apostle of Jesus Christ*

 *365 Day Disciple ~ Mark 14:26-42*

*Foot of The Cross Disciple*

August 19th In the Year of Our Lord 2018

Man Falls Away and is Scattered But the Power of THE Resurrection Calls Man Back to God

**Gethsemane** (Greek: Γεθσημανή, **Gethsemane**; Hebrew: גת שמנים‎, Gat Shmanim; Classical Syriac: ܓܕܣܡܢ‎, Gaḏ Šmānê, lit. "**oil press**") is an urban garden at **the foot of the Mount of Olives** in Jerusalem,  Wikipedia

**TEXT – Mark 14:26-42**

**Fall Away**

26 And after singing a hymn, they went out to the Mount of Olives.

27 And Jesus said to them,

"You will all fall away, because it is written, 'I will strike down the shepherd, and the sheep shall be scattered.' (Zechariah 13:7)

 28 "But after I have been raised, I will go before you to Galilee."

**Peter’s Promise**

 29 But Peter said to Him,

"*Even* though all may fall away, yet I will not."

 30 And Jesus said to him, "Truly I say to you, that you yourself this very night, before a cock crows twice, shall three times deny Me."

 31 But *Peter* kept saying insistently, "*Even* if I have to die with You, I will not deny You!" And they all were saying the same thing, too.

**Garden Prayer**

 32 And they came to a place named Gethsemane; and He said to His disciples, "Sit here until I have prayed."

 33 And He took with Him Peter and James and John, and began to be very distressed and troubled.

 34 And He said to them, "My soul is deeply grieved to the point of death; remain here and keep watch."

 35 And He went a little beyond *them*, and fell to the ground, and *began* to pray that if it were possible, the hour might pass Him by.

 36 And He was saying, "Abba! Father! All things are possible for Thee; remove this cup from Me;

 **yet not what I will, but what Thou wilt."**

 37 And He came and **found them sleeping,** and said to Peter, "Simon, are you asleep? Could you not keep watch for one hour?

 38 "Keep watching and praying, that you may not come into temptation; the spirit is willing, but the flesh is weak."

 39 And again He went away and prayed, saying the same words.

[repeating verse 36]

 40 And again He came and **found them sleeping,**

 for their eyes were very heavy;

and they did not know what to answer Him.

 41 And He came the **third time**, and said to them, "Are you still sleeping and taking your rest? It is enough; the hour has come; behold, the Son of Man is being betrayed into the hands of sinners.

 42 "Arise, let us be going; behold, the one who betrays Me is at hand!"

**Stand by Your Man**

1. Has there been a time in your life that you were going to stand by your friend or family member no matter what the cost?

Note: The # 1 abandoned people group in America is children by dead-beat dads and moms. A man or a mother who stands at the foot of the Cross does not abandon their children.

1. **Are** you prepared to stand for the Gospel in our time? Stand with Jesus? Stand for God and His plan for people?
2. **Have** you prepared yourself to be that disciple that would have been at the foot of the Cross in the presence of soldiers that put Jesus to death knowing you could be arrested and charged for treason?

To be clear, this does not mean to be militant or in someone’s face. This means not to shrink from the Believer’s responsibility to speak the truth about God’s Word, and to be a ready-witness in a culture that is permissive about everything. Society is not only permissive but heavily leans to silencing views that are not main-stream secular.

Contrast being a disciple of Jesus Christ at the foot of the Cross to being a disciple today. Disciples at the foot of the Cross risk meeting the same death as Jesus. Today, for the most part, in America, a person risks his friends not liking them and giving them a ‘thumbs down’ on their Face-Book page. However, if you are a Christian Baker in Colorado and refuse to bake a cake to celebrate a person’s transgender birthday, you may still find yourself in court to be judged by a jury of your peers.

However, true to his word, President Trump did what he could do from the Executive Branch of Government.

**PROTECTING RELIGIOUS FREEDOM: Throughout his tenure as President, Donald Trump has been a champion for religious liberty in the United States, restoring the ideals that have undergirded our Nation’s freedom and prosperity since its founding.**

* **On May 4, 2017**, the President signed an Executive Order to greatly enhance religious freedom and freedom of speech:
	+ taking action to ensure that religious institutions may freely exercise their First Amendment right to support and advocate for candidates and causes in line with their values; and
	+ ensuring that religious Americans and their organizations, such as the Little Sisters of the Poor, are not be forced to choose between violating their religious beliefs by complying with Obamacare’s contraceptive mandate or shutting their doors.
* The President has announced a reversal of the Obama administration’s policy and is allowing houses of worship to receive crucial disaster aid in times of crisis.
* The Trump Administration has taken a stand on behalf of religious liberty in the courts:
	+ it supported baker Jack Phillips’ right to operate his bakery.

https://www.whitehouse.gov/briefings-statements/president-donald-j-trump-stands-religious-freedom-united-states/

Throughout time, people of God have been persecuted for their belief. In the first century, there was a conflict between the Romans and the Jews because the Jews were ~~a~~ monotheistic. (They believed in just one God.) The Romans had adopted the Greek pantheon system of worshiping many gods. The Romans viewed the Jews to be strange and rebellious. The call by the Romans to declare the Emperor to be a god was a tool to keep an allegiance to the empire. Perhaps some of the Emperors actually believed they were gods, that is until they died. These self-proclaimed gods did not resurrect.

Obviously, the Jewish leadership positioned Jesus as a rebel and a threat to Rome. This is why the charge of Jesus claiming to be a king and God was front and center at his trial.

The disciples ran away for fear of being arrested as conspirators who had been plotting with Jesus against Rome and the Jewish Authorities. In America, we can plot to overthrow the government or its policies via election or referenda or any means necessary at any time we want. We have freedom of speech and press and association and religion to name a few civil rights. As long as we do not threaten (or commit) physical harm to someone, we can plot all day long and go to the public square to do so.

When people realize that there is a power greater than any force on the face of the earth generated by man - then they are set free. When people come to the realization, in the words of Corrie Ten Boom, that there is no pit deep enough that Christ is not deeper still then you are set free from any power of man. Yes, life is fearful at times. But when the risen Lord assists us in gathering ourselves, we rise. When Paul was arrested and appealed to Rome he used the whole prison experience to proclaim the Gospel of Jesus Christ which is God incarnate. We shall not forget that our mission, regardless of our circumstances, is to somehow proclaim the Gospel in word or deed to a fallen world.

Jesus knew the disciples would run away. God knows we are going to fail at times in our lives. However, He waits for us. He waits at a place where we can find Him, if we are looking.

**1 John 1:5-10**

5 And this is the message we have heard from Him and announce to you, that God is light, and in Him there is no darkness at all.

 6 If we say that we have fellowship with Him and *yet* walk in the darkness, we lie and do not practice the truth;

 7 but if we walk in the light as He Himself is in the light, we have fellowship with one another, and the blood of Jesus His Son cleanses us from all sin.

 8 If we say that we have no sin, we are deceiving ourselves, and the truth is not in us.

 9 If we confess our sins, He is faithful and righteous to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.

 10 If we say that we have not sinned, we make Him a liar, and His word is not in us.

However, there were some that were at the foot of the Cross. It is believed that the disciple whom Jesus loved noted in John 19:26 is John. Some make the case that it is Lazarus whom Jesus raised from the dead. The point being that there were a few people at the foot of the Cross who knew they too could be put to death for being there.

John 19:25-27 25 Therefore, the soldiers did these things. But there were standing by the cross of Jesus His mother, and His mother's sister, Mary the *wife* of Clopas, and Mary Magdalene. 26 When Jesus therefore saw His mother, and the disciple whom He loved standing nearby, He said to His mother, "Woman, behold, your son!"

 27 Then He said to the disciple, "Behold, your mother!" And from that hour the disciple took her into his own *household*.

4 This is the disciple who bears witness of these things, and wrote these things; and we know that his witness is true. (Jn. 21:24 NAS)

Man’s relationship with God has its ups and downs. However, God did not abandon His rebellious creation that He created in His image. Know this: we are separate from the animals but only with Gods’ Spirit inside of us. The Exodus is a great witness to God’s love and steadfastness. The disciples were not as rebellious as those in the Exodus. Jesus’s disciples were frightened. The Jews of the Exodus were just plain rebellious. But the same principle applies. God did not stop guiding their path. Remember the words of Nehemiah:

9:19 Thou, in Thy great compassion, **Didst not forsake them** in the wilderness; The pillar of cloud did not leave them by day, To guide them on their way, Nor the pillar of fire by night, to light for them the way in which they were to go.

 Remember, after Jesus told the disciples they would fall away, He also told them to meet Him in Galilee. Jesus knew that they would come to Him again. He continued to be their guiding light, to guide them on their way in which they were to go. Jesus looked past the Cross to the Resurrection time to be with His disciples. Jesus looks past your failures in life to a time He will be with you forever. He knows you are one of His. Believers confess from their heart and improve their lives in a process we call sanctification.

 28 "But after I have been raised, I will go before you to Galilee."

So, Jesus had a plan to address their short-comings. During the resurrection time Jesus breathed His Holy Spirit into them as recorded in John 20:19ff. He empowered them at that point. He also instructed them to wait in Jerusalem for additional spiritual power that would come at Pentecost (Acts 2).

27 And Jesus said to them,

"You will all fall away, because it is written, 'I will strike down the shepherd, and the sheep shall be scattered.' (Zechariah 13:7)

 28 "But after I have been raised, I will go before you to Galilee."

 29 But Peter said to Him,

"*Even* though all may fall away, yet I will not."

 30 And Jesus said to him, "Truly I say to you, that you yourself this very night, before a cock crows twice, shall three times deny Me."

 31 But *Peter* kept saying insistently, "*Even* if I have to die with You, I will not deny You!" And they all were saying the same thing, too.

Notice that Peter does not respond to Jesus telling him that He will be raised. (A miracle in any time.) However, Peter focused on not denying Jesus. Jesus tells them this when they all knew the Temple authorities were looking for them.

 32 And they came to a place named Gethsemane; and He said to His disciples, "Sit here until I have prayed."

 33 And He took with Him Peter and James and John, and began to be very distressed and troubled.

 34 And He said to them, "My soul is deeply grieved to the point of death; remain here and keep watch."

 35 And He went a little beyond *them*, and fell to the ground, and *began* to pray that if it were possible, the hour might pass Him by.

 36 And He was saying, "Abba! Father! All things are possible for Thee; remove this cup from Me;

 **yet not what I will, but what Thou wilt."**

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 Peter denies knowing Jesus three times, and the three disciples fall asleep three times. Jesus prays the same prayer twice.

 "Abba! Father! All things are possible for Thee; remove this cup from Me;

 **yet not what I will, but what Thou wilt."**

**Your Will Lord**

Verse 36 in Mark 14 is one of the more pivotal verses in the entire Bible. Why? Because the Truth this verse speaks is revealed throughout the Bible. This statement rings throughout creation. This proclaims God’s gift to man called “Free Will Choice.” Any self-proclaimed Biblicist who ever doubted man has “free-will” has not read this verse. God came in the flesh to demonstrate man has free-will-choice. Why does Jesus ask the question? Consider these points. Some overlap but all point to God’s purpose for our lives.

1. God wants us to realize that His purpose for our lives can be for another purpose than what we think.
2. God wants us to see that there will be these times in our lives that we need to seek Him and His Will over ours.
3. It is best for man if God’s Will prevails over man’s will.
4. God wants us to see that it is possible to have Him at work in our hearts and minds conquer all things.
5. God’s Will working in our lives points to our eternal life.
6. God’s Will has the power over death (resurrection).
7. Even in the face of physical death, God’s power at work in us prevails.

From the first relationship God had with Adam and Eve, this proclamation is at the heart of the Fall. In Genesis 2:17, God asked Adam for His (God’s) Will to be done and not his (Adam’s).

God’s Will was for Cain to have the same offering as Abel.

 Genesis 4

God’s Will was for man not to have evil intent and thought continually as in the days of Noah.

Genesis 6:5

 God’s Will was not to have man build a tower to reach to the heavens so he could make a name for himself.

Genesis 11

Throughout the Bible there is a clear challenge in the relationship between God and man concerning whose WILL will prevail. The will of man is highlighted in everything that he does. And if you do not believe this then just watch what happens when a man gets married. LOL.

Where does the “will of man” start? It starts with God our Creator. God designed for us to have a relationship with Him or not to have a relationship with Him. Our choice. Then again the question: **Who’s Will is in charge?** God gave Adam the choice (Genesis 2:17). Man answers the question every time: **I AM!** God says, ‘Wait a minute! It is not good for you to be in charge of yourself. You cannot manage your own affairs now that you have fallen from grace.’ One of the biggest lies in the world is that man can manage his own affairs without God. History mandates that man is murderous without God. Cain proved to us all that man is murderous without a surrendering of our hearts to God. The state-church proved that even if man pretends to act for God people are abused and lose their lives over what we consider today as cultural theological differences; like who can take the Lord’s Supper, who can water-baptize and who gets water-baptized and by what means, who can be a pastor or elder. Debates over icons images, origins of the Holy Spirit and the list goes on. Man was given free-will by God to manage the creation. He blew it. Man failed to manage himself. But God’s design is to have Him functioning inside us to be successful and live. God’s Word (The Bible) is the big managing book 101. However, God has revealed Himself through the creation to everyone from the beginning, and they are without excuse (Romans 1:18ff).

So, Believers are surrounded by a world that does not have God managing their hearts and minds. Secular man does not wait for Jesus to meet him at Galilee. Temporal minds do not wait fifty days in an upper room for God to empower them. Man is called to live life with God as our Director. To do this, we are called to the Cross of Jesus Christ. Jesus told Peter, James and John to “keep watching and praying that you may not come into temptation; the spirit is willing, but the flesh is weak” (Mark 14:37). Therefore, we are called to humble ourselves like Jesus did in the Garden. Father, not My will but Yours.

God comes to be one of us as Jesus who demonstrates for all people how to overcome this fallen world**. Father, not My will but Yours. The spiritual fruit of Peace is at the foot of the Cross**.

love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness,

23 gentleness, self-control; against such things there is no law. Galatians. 5:22-23

Notice that at the end of the list of spiritual fruits that there is no law against such things. There is no law of man superior to the Cross. Jesus demonstrated God’s intent for our lives at the Cross. Focus on Me, and I will bring you through it. Jesus says, “Meet me in Galilee”. Do you have such a place? Do you seek God in Galilee?

**How do I prepare to be at the “Foot of the Cross Disciple?”**

1. Do you **fear** the world more than you **love** God?
2. Do you see God’s eternal heaven?
3. Is your mind set more on temporal things than eternal?
4. When you get up in the morning do you pray for the Lord to guide your day?
5. Are you preparing yourself to be closer to God than you were yesterday?

Paul, the straight forward Apostle, writes to Believers in Rome.

Romans 8:5-11

5 For those who are according to the flesh set their minds on the things of the flesh, but those who are according to the Spirit, the things of the Spirit.

 6 For the mind set on the flesh is death, but the mind set on the Spirit is life and peace,

 7 because the mind set on the flesh is hostile toward God; for it does not subject itself to the law of God, for it is not even able *to do so*;

 8 and those who are in the flesh cannot please God.

 9 However, you are not in the flesh but in the Spirit, if indeed the Spirit of God dwells in you. But if anyone does not have the Spirit of Christ, he does not belong to Him.

 10 And if Christ is in you, though the body is dead because of sin, yet the spirit is alive because of righteousness.

 11 But if the Spirit of Him who raised Jesus from the dead dwells in you, He who raised Christ Jesus from the dead will also give life to your mortal bodies through His Spirit who indwells you.

AMEN