**Round Top Church Christian Fellowship**

Sermon

*The Good News According to Mark,*

*An Apostle of Jesus Christ*

 *365 Day Disciple ~ Mark 14:41-72*

*The Trial of Man*

August 26th In the Year of Our Lord 2018

(Unless otherwise noted, 1995 Updated New American Standard quoted)

Matthew 7:7-8, and verses 13-14

7 "Ask, and it shall be given to you; seek, and you shall find; knock, and it shall be opened to you.

 8 "For everyone who asks receives, and he who seeks finds, and to him who knocks it shall be opened. . .

 . . . 13 "Enter by the narrow gate; for the gate is wide, and the way is broad that leads to destruction, and many are those who enter by it.

 14 "For the gate is small, and the way is narrow that leads to life, and few are those who find it.

The latter verses in Mark 14 detail the arrest and courtyard trial of Jesus at night. These actions symbolize man’s struggle with God becoming one of them. This is an epic event demonstrating man’s fallen-drive to put “God on trial.” The reality is that the trial of Jesus is the “Trial of Man.” God is always on trial. Every day men from all over the world put God on trial. Many say that America is no longer a Christian nation. This could mean that other religions who ascribe to a god are present. However, in the growing secular climate that America has been in the last 100 years, the statement really is intended to declare that there is no God. The trial of God is on-going in the hearts and minds of people everywhere. Therefore, do not look upon the account of Jesus’ arrest and trial as a one-time event. The leadership of the Jews had a history of killing Gods’ prophets. And the history of man does the same. God is on trial all the time all over the world.

**Scripture referencing persecuting and killing God’s prophets.**

**Matthew 5:12** "Rejoice, and be glad, for your reward in heaven is great, for so they persecuted the prophets who were before you.

**Acts 7:52** "Which one of the prophets did your fathers not persecute? And they killed those who had previously announced the coming of the Righteous One, whose betrayers and murderers you have now become;

**Luke 13:34** "O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, the city that kills the prophets and stones those sent to her! How often I wanted to gather your children together, just as a hen gathers her brood under her wings, and you would not have it!

**1 Thessalonians 2:14-15** 14 For you, brethren, became imitators of the churches of God in Christ Jesus that are in Judea, for you also endured the same sufferings at the hands of your own countrymen, even as they *did* from the Jews, 15 who both killed the Lord Jesus and the prophets, and drove us out. They are not pleasing to God, but hostile to all men,

**Predictable Fallen Men**

There isn’t any doubt that fallen man played right into the hands of God. Fallen man is predictable. We can see that the term “total depravity” is easy to contemplate. The One who comes to save humanity from themselves is crucified for their efforts.

**The Plot**

God becomes the model man in Jesus to demonstrate the reality of God living in the heart and mind of a person like you and me ~~I~~. The main driving force behind Gods’ actions is love (John 3:16). In addition, God presents the creation as basically good in contrast to dark with no light. (Genesis 1). From the beginning, there is a contrast between the dark and the light which parallels the ability to choose between the two.

Some have asked why God created the earth and man. We cannot see into the mind of God. However, from a human perspective, we can appreciate the need for companionship. Was God lonely? Did God need to flex his creative powers to feel better? We may never know the “why” in this life.

Oh, the depth of the riches both of the wisdom and the knowledge of God! How unsearchable His judgments and untraceable His ways! 34 For who has known the mind of the Lord? Or who has been His counselor? 35 Or who has ever first given to Him, and has to be repaid? 36 For from Him and through Him and to Him are all things. To Him be the glory forever. Amen.

Romans 11:33-36 CSB

**However,** we do live with the results of the creation. The fact is that we are here. We have each other. We have a definite amount of time to live. We have great challenges that we must survive in this fallen world. However! We do know the “why” of the Cross. In anthropomorphic terms, God gave (gifted) His only Son, born from Him (Holy - seed), to pay the price for sin by dying on The Cross for the sins of all people. This statement accepts the prerequisite that all people owe a debt to God for the commission of actions and thoughts that are not good, thus sinful. For acts and thoughts that go against God’s “good” created order is sin. People do not like to hear the Word, but God calls for us to understand our fallen condition in order for us to realize our need for Him.

Access to God’s payment for our sin is accomplished by surrendering our hearts to God (circumcision of the heart -Deuteronomy 30:6-9; Acts 2:37 – hearts pierced, cut). What must we do? We must ask God to do this (Ezekiel 36:37). 'Thus, says the Lord God, "This also I will let the house of Israel ask Me to do for them). Everyone is greatly encouraged to read Ezekiel 36. This Old Testament passage demonstrates how God desires to work in a person to change their life forever and is directly linked to John 3, as Jesus teaches the teacher of Israel, Nicodemus, that a person must be reborn of Spirit. Focusing on Ezekiel 36, there isn’t any more of a declarative passage in the Old Testament that shows God’s plan for redeeming fallen man. This passage is written to the Jews first, but the wider audience is all of mankind. Never forget that the Hebrew people are a window to all of men’s hearts. They represent all of us.

**Surrendering** to the conviction of God’s Holy Spirit allows God to come into (circumcise, cut, pierce) the heart (total person) and mind, the psyche (soul) of a person and reorder them spiritually. This spiritual reordering places God as the number-one guide in our lives, the number-one instructor. The Bible states this principle in this way: “Love God” as the greatest teaching in the Bible. The second element of human reordering is totally dependent on the first. Love our neighbor as God wants (Matthew 36: ff; Mark 12:30, 31; Deuteronomy 6:5; Leviticus 19:18).

By becoming a man, God fulfills Old Testament prophetic Scripture that the Messiah would come (Isaiah 53 for one reference). The Hebrew people had long anticipated The Messiah. However, God, as Messiah, came to teach eternal principles. The first major address called the Sermon on the Mount, Jesus, the Messiah, describes what it takes to be a citizen of heaven not a citizen of an earthly kingdom. "Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven. (Matthew 5:3). The first principle for life Jesus teaches is concerned with entrance into the kingdom of heaven not earth! This is Jesus’ number one focus. We are already here in this earthly kingdom. For good or worse, we are members already of this earthly kingdom. The third beatitude does say, "Blessed are the gentle, for they shall inherit the earth” **(Matthew 5:5).** This is referencing **Psalm 37:11** “But the humble will inherit the land, and will delight themselves in abundant prosperity” and also tied to **Psalm 22:26** “The afflicted shall eat and be satisfied; Those who seek Him will praise the LORD. Let your heart live forever!” Therefore, “inherit the earth” is tied to “Let your heart live forever.” Living forever is living in God’s kingdom of heaven. Jesus is constantly quoting Old Testament Scripture like the Psalms.

 The additional kingdom of heaven reference in the Sermon of the Mount is in verse ten. 10 "Blessed are those who have been persecuted for the sake of righteousness, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven. (Matthew 5:10). Again, the Messiah, Jesus, points to being a citizen in God’s heaven.

**Mark 14:41-52**

**The Hour of Betrayal Has Come as the Disciples Sleep**

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!"

**Judas Shows Up with a Kiss**

 43 And immediately while He was still speaking Judas, one of the twelve, came up,

accompanied by a multitude with swords and clubs,

from the chief priests and the scribes and the elders.

 44 Now he who was betraying Him had given them a signal, saying,

"Whomever I shall kiss, He is the one; seize Him and lead Him away under guard."

 45 And after coming, he immediately went to Him, saying "Rabbi!" and kissed Him.

 46 And they laid hands on Him, and seized Him.

**Peter’s Violent Response**

 47 But a certain one of those who stood by drew his sword, and struck the slave of the high priest, and cut off his ear.

**Matthew 26:51; John 18:10** Simon Peter therefore having a sword, drew it, and struck the high priest's slave, and cut off his right ear; and the slave's name was Malchus.

**Scripture Fulfilled**

 48 And Jesus answered and said to them, "Have you come out with swords and clubs to arrest Me, as against a robber? 49 "Every day I was with you in the temple teaching, and you did not seize Me; but *this has happened* that the Scriptures might be fulfilled" (reference, see Isaiah 53:7).

 50 And they all left Him and fled.

**Young Man Follows**

51 And a certain young man was following Him, wearing *nothing but* a linen sheet over *his* naked *body*; and they seized him.

 52 But he left the linen sheet behind, and escaped naked.

**Jesus’ First Trial**

**Your First Trial**

**What do you say?**

The Temple leaders had longed for this day when they could have a trial for Jesus. However, their evidence was non-existent. They were offended by the exposure of their own failure to understand God’s will, plan and administration of the offices in which they held. Starting with the Sermon on the Mount (Matthew 5), Jesus had told them about their misapplications.

**Matthew 5:21-24**

**21 "You have heard that the ancients were told, 'You shall not commit murder' and 'Whoever commits murder shall be liable to the court.'**

 **22 "But I say to you that everyone who is angry with his brother shall be guilty before the court; and whoever shall say to his brother, 'Raca,' shall be guilty before the supreme court; and whoever shall say, 'You fool,' shall be guilty *enough to go* into the fiery hell.**

Here at Jesus’ trial, the leaders displayed hate for Him. Just as Jesus taught them in the Sermon on the Mount, hate can lead to murder, because they had not reconciled with God first. They had come to Jesus time and time again as they should have to seek clarification. However, they had their minds full of hate and murder from almost the very beginning of Jesus’ ministry. When they came to Jesus, their goal was to trap Him and not reconcile. Again, they were not capable of reconciliation because of their lack of love for God. They loved themselves and their positions more than they loved God. Therefore, they were capable of murdering their neighbor.

 From this we can learn that when we go to reconcile with someone it is not for the goal of boxing them into a corner. We need to tell them what was so offensive and seek for them to understand. We should look for a positive outcome; so, when we see the other person walking down the street, we can say hello with gladness in our hearts. Of course, not everyone wants to discuss hard feelings, but we must make an attempt once we are aware of their views.

**Mark 14:53-72**

**Jewish High Priest, Chief Priests, Elders, Scribes, Whole Council**

**Gathered Awaiting Jesus’ Arrival**

53 And they led Jesus away to the high priest;

and all the chief priests and the elders and the scribes gathered together.

 54 And Peter had followed Him at a distance,

right into the courtyard of the high priest;

and he was sitting with the officers, and warming himself at the fire.

 Peter had some nerve to follow the arresting party back to the courtyard of the Hight Priest. He had promised Jesus that he would not leave Him. This is evidence that Peter’s initial efforts were consistent with his pledge to Jesus. However, in the face of mounting confrontation, Peter’s nerve would falter. It is one thing to follow Jesus’s arresting party, but, when questioned about his relationship with Jesus, he made his denials.

**Mark 14 continued**

 55 Now the chief priests and the whole Council kept trying to obtain testimony against Jesus to put Him to death; and they were not finding any.

 56 For many were giving false testimony against Him, and *yet* their testimony was not consistent.

 57 And some stood up and *began* to give false testimony against Him, saying,

 58 "We heard Him say, 'I will destroy this temple made with hands, and in three days I will build another made without hands.'"

 59 And not even in this respect was their testimony consistent.

REFERNCE"On the evidence of two witnesses or three witnesses, he who is to die shall be put to death; he shall not be put to death on the evidence of one witness (Deuteronomy 17:6).

**There is only one way to convict an innocent man. You need false testimony. You need to hold the trial in secret. Historians know, from Sanhedrin records, that capital cases were to be tried in the daytime, and the verdict reached during the daytime. Trials were not to be conducted on a Sabbath or a feast day. Jesus was arrested and tried on the eve of Passover.**

The High Priest had heard the false testimony against Jesus concerning ‘tearing down’ the temple and rebuilding it in three days. This is a critical charge, but one that is impossible to understand given the size of the Temple and Jesus as just one man. It is more the talk of a man who is unstable. So, the High Priest goes for the condemning question, a question that one man could be responsible for, “Are You the Christ, the Son of the Blessed One?” The High Priest knew that if Jesus proclaimed this then, under Jewish Law, it would be a capital offense. 20 'But the prophet who shall speak a word presumptuously in My name which I have not commanded him to speak, or which he shall speak in the name of other gods, that prophet shall die.' (Deut. 18:20; see also Deut. 17:12; Zechariah 13:3; Leviticus 24:12-16).

16 'Moreover, the one who **blasphemes** the name of the LORD shall surely be put to death; all the congregation shall certainly stone him. The alien as well as the native, when he blasphemes the Name, shall be put to death (Leviticus 24:16).

**Mark 14 Continued**

 60 And the high priest stood up *and came* forward

and questioned Jesus, saying,

"Do You make no answer?

 What is it that these men are testifying against You?"

 61 But He kept silent, and made no answer.

Again, the high priest was questioning Him, and saying to Him,

"Are You the Christ, the Son of the Blessed *One*?"

 62 And Jesus said, "I am; and you shall see the Son of Man sitting at the right hand of Power, and coming with the clouds of heaven."

**Daniel 7:13-14**

13 "I kept looking in the night visions, And behold, with the clouds of heaven One like a Son of Man was coming, And He came up to the Ancient of Days And was presented before Him.

 14 "And to Him was given dominion, Glory and a kingdom, that all the peoples, nations, and *men of every* language Might serve Him. His dominion is an everlasting dominion Which will not pass away; And His kingdom is one Which will not be destroyed.

**Psalm 110:1** *A Psalm of David*. The LORD says to my Lord: "Sit at My right hand, Until I make Thine enemies a footstool for Thy feet."

 63 And tearing his clothes, the high priest said,

"What further need do we have of witnesses?

 64 "You have heard the **blasphemy**; how does it seem to you?"

And they all condemned Him to be deserving of death.

 65 And some began to spit at Him, and to blindfold Him, and to beat Him with their fists, and to say to Him, "Prophesy!" And the officers received Him with slaps *in the face*. (Isaiah 50:6)

**Peters’ Denials - The Cock Crows “TWICE”**

**"You, too, were with Jesus the Nazarene."**

**"This is *one* of them!"**

**"Surely you are *one* of them, for you are a Galilean too."**

**Mark 14 continued**

 66 And as **Peter** was below in the courtyard,

 one of the **servant**-girls of the high priest came,

 67 and seeing **Peter** warming himself,

she looked at him, and said, “You also were with Jesus the Nazarene.”

68 But he denied *it*, saying,

 **"I neither know nor understand what you are talking about."**

 And he went out onto the porch.

 69 And the **maid** saw him,

and began once more to say to the bystanders,

 **"This is *one* of them!"**

 **70 But again he was denying it.**

 And after a little while the **bystanders** were again saying to Peter,

 **"Surely you are *one* of them, for you are a Galilean too."**

 71 But he began to curse and swear,

 **"I do not know this man you are talking about!"**

 72 And immediately a cock crowed a second time.

 And **Peter** remembered how Jesus had made the remark to him,

"Before a cock crows twice, you will deny Me three times."

 And he began to weep.

**Peters’ denials** represent all of us. We should not look upon Peter as an oddity. Under the circumstances, the vast population of Christians would have responded just like Peter had. The Good News restores Peter just like the Good News restores all of us. During the Resurrection time, Jesus restores Peter as chronicled in the Gospel of John.

 If we confess our sins, He is faithful and righteous to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness (1 John 1:9).

 WE can see the boastful promise of Peter to never leave or deny Jesus as wishful thinking representing all of believing humanity. The life of the Believer is in such a state. There is ebb and flow. There are good days and bad days. There are days of embarrassment to God and our neighbor. However, through it all, God is always there waiting for us to call to him.

**Matthew 7:7-8** 7 "Ask, and it shall be given to you; seek, and you shall find; knock, and it shall be opened to you. 8 "For everyone who asks receives, and he who seeks finds, and to him who knocks it shall be opened.

**Revelation 3:19-22** 19 'Those whom I love, I reprove and discipline; be zealous therefore, and repent. 20 'Behold, I stand at the door and knock; if anyone hears My voice and opens the door, [NOTE: The door to salvation is locked on your side.] I will come in to him, and will dine with him, and he with Me. 21 'He who overcomes, I will grant to him to sit down with Me on My throne, as I also overcame and sat down with My Father on His throne. 22 'He who has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches.'"

AMEN