

Get Behind Me, Satan; Mark 8:30-33

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And Jesus went on with his disciples to the villages of Caesarea Philippi, and on the way he asked his disciples, who do people say that I am? And they told him, John the Baptist, and others say Elijah and others, one of the prophets. And he asked them, but you, who do you say that I am? Peter answered him.

You are the Christ, and he strictly charged them to tell no one about him. And he began to teach them that the Son of Man must suffer many things, and be rejected by the elders and the chief priests and the scribes, and be killed, and after three days rise again. And he said this plainly. And Peter took him aside and began to rebuke him, but turning and seeing his disciples, he rebuked Peter and said, get behind me, Satan, for you are not setting your mind on the things of God, but on the things of man 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. For whoever would save his life will lose it. But whoever loses his life for my sake and the gospels will save it. For what does it profit a man to gain the whole world and forfeit his soul? For what can a man give in return for his soul?

For whoever is ashamed of me and of my words in this adulterous and sinful generation, of him will the Son of Man also be ashamed when He comes in the glory of His Father with the holy angels. And he said to them, Truly, I say to you, there are some standing here who will not taste death until they see the kingdom of God after it has come with power.

So as we turn to this section here, we find that we are working through the most pivotal of Mark's sections here, this section in which the declaration you are the Christ comes and then the what follows that is this. Most startling of rebukes of Peter to rebuke Jesus.

And then of course, Jesus will then rebuke Peter for Peter's rebuke. So there's a lot of rebuking going on in this passage. But the rebuking actually starts before that in verse 30. And he strictly charged them to tell no one about them. So this is following, of course, Peter's declaration when he says, Who do you say that I am?

And Peter says, You are the Christ. And so immediately after that, we read these words. He strictly charged them to tell no one. Now those, that word translated strictly charged, is the same word that's translated rebuke, twice other in the passage. It's the same word that's translated in chapter 1, as Jesus speaks to the demon, who says, I know who you are, you are the, Holy one of God.

And Jesus rebuked him and told him to say nothing more. Same word is used here. So Jesus is charged to Peter is something more than just a strong suggestion. The word implies for us, not just a, a stern asking, but instead it re it implies. that there is a consequence that is to be, that is to be realized.

Either keep this charge, say nothing to no one, or there are consequences that are to follow. So his rebuke of them is sharp and clear and stern. And the rebuke is to say, say nothing to no one about

this. So this is a bit odd for us to. Come across as finally, Peter now declares you are the Christ. We might want to say if we were writing the gospel, we would be the ones that would probably want to say now, Peter, you're finally getting it.

Now we've got something to work with. So now let's take this and everybody needs to hear that you are now declaring him to be the Christ. And you just need to proclaim this. That's probably how it's We would have the gospel to play itself out, but Jesus instead takes the opposite stance and he says, okay, now that you've made this declaration, say nothing to no one.

And he doesn't just suggest it. He commands it and says, you are to say nothing to no one about this. So why would Jesus command them to silence when Peter just now has realized and declared this man is the Christ? After all, Jesus did send them out earlier to proclaim. In chapter, four, he just, he sent them out there to make this proclamation.

So why the, the, the command to silence now? Well, the proclamation that Jesus sent them out to before, if you remember, there's actually chapter six, not chapter four, but when Jesus sent them out previously, if you recall, they were sent out, first of all, with the supernatural abilities to heal the sick and cast out demons and these sorts of things.

But then, if you also remember, they were given these specific instructions. The instructions had to do with if they are refused, if they refuse you, if, if your peace doesn't fall upon their house, then you are to leave, shake the dust off your sandals and leave. But then the message that we're told, the specific message that they told the people was the message that Jesus has been proclaiming since chapter one, which is.

Repent, repent for the kingdom of God is at hand. So we're told that that's the proclamation that they were making when they were sent out before, which is to say that it stops something short of saying you need to repent. And guess what? We are with this man and he's the Christ. Now perhaps some of their testimony included something of the nature of, of, you know, you need to come hear our teacher.

You need to hear him. He's, he's an incredible rabbi. And some even say. He might be the Messiah, perhaps it included something of that nature, but we're told in chapter six that the basis, the summary, the, the summary of their message was repent for the kingdom of heaven is at hand. They weren't sent out to proclaim that Jesus is the Christ.

Now upon the declaration, we're going to immediately realize in the verses that are to follow why Jesus commands them to silence. And the reason is because they clearly are misunderstanding What Messiah is here to do. Remember, this is going to be the question that dominates the second half of the gospel.

Why has he come? What is the work that he's come to do? So this question remains completely unanswered in Peter's mind. And so therefore Jesus says, we don't need you to proclaim that I'm the Christ when your proclamation is going to be a combination of truth and lack of truth. A combination of clarity and non-clarity.

A proclamation of Jesus as Messiah, when the understanding of what Messiah is here to do is muddled and unclear, and in fact, in some aspects, false. So he strictly commands them to make, to

say nothing to no one about them. And then verse 31, and he began to teach them. So in your Bibles, you probably have a new subheading under or right above verse 31.

And I believe that to be In my opinion, just a little bit misleading because the way I understand it would actually put verse 31, not just together with verse 30, but in fact, part of the same sentence as verse 30. So I would read it this way, and he strictly charged them to tell no one about him, and he began to teach them that the Son of Man must suffer many things.

So I see those two things. Flowing together, nice and, and tight with one another. And I think that subheading sort of distracts us, but any, in any case, verse 31, and he began to teach them. So we were learned right away of a change in direction, a change in theme. And again, we've noticed. that this direction in the gospel is going to take a marked and a noticeable change here in chapter 8 anyway.

And here the change happens right at that moment. And He began to teach them. So that speaks of a teaching that is new and different and in some way separated and distinct from the teaching of the first half of the gospel. He began to teach them. That the Son of Man must suffer many things. So the Son of Man has not just come to die.

He did come to die. We'll read about that in chapter 10, verse 45. The Son of Man came not to be served, but to serve others and give His life a ransom for many. But not just die, but the Son of Man has come to suffer. Indeed, the wording here is very strong. He must suffer. And not just suffer a few things.

But he must suffer many things. He must be the fulfillment of Isaiah 53 in verse 3, that the Son of Man must be a man of sorrows, acquainted very closely and intimately with grief. So Jesus must not only be a sacrifice in our place, but God's plan for Him, God's design for the sending of the Son of Man necessarily includes Suffering on the part of the Son of Man, Jesus cannot just have a life of ease and comfort up to the point that he's betrayed and sacrificed on the cross.

He must also suffer a great many things and only some of those things will be physical. Many of those sufferings of the Christ will be spiritual and emotional as the weight of sin and the weight of what he has come to do weighs heavily upon him. Indeed, this suffering really began. Back in chapter one, as Jesus was plunged under the water, the one, the water of our repentance, the water of our sin, Jesus was plunged under that water in a, in a way taking upon himself the burden of the sin of others.

And so his suffering really began at that point, but he must suffer. Many things we are told and not just suffer, but he must be rejected. So this word rejected, it speaks very clearly of a rejection that is not just a simple, passing over or someone that just sort of maybe considers something lightly and then moves on to the next thing.

But instead, this word speaks of a close and careful examination and then upon conclusion of the examination, So the word here speaks of something that's the opposite of probably what many of us have experienced. Has anybody ever experienced the wonderful experience of sending in a job application or a resume, and you get the rejection, and you are convinced that the person never looked at it?

Anybody ever had that happen to you? That you're convinced that a human being never saw your application. That's the opposite of this word. The opposite of this, of this What the opposite of what I just explained would be this word in which this speaks of a rejection That comes on the heels of a careful considering Jesus must be considered.

He must be carefully examined before he is rejected. He cannot be rejected just because the religious leaders in Jerusalem don't feel like traveling up to Galilee to hear what he's all about. Instead, he must be examined closely by the leaders of Israel, and after examination, be rejected by them. This is why I believe that the Gospels paint a picture of Jesus in which he is so patient with the Pharisees.

As you read the Gospels, particularly the Gospel of John, do you ever get a little bit frustrated with Jesus? And you want to say to Jesus, why are you still talking to those people? Isn't it clear that they're never going to believe in you? Why are you still engaging them and giving them the platform to accuse you and malign you and scandalize you?

Do you ever feel like that Jesus should have just withdrawn from them before he did? He must be examined by them. He must open his teaching bare to them. They must hear him. He must go to Jerusalem and he must teach in the temple courtyard for a week. He must go before the religious leaders and be carefully examined by them before he is rejected.

He is not to be rejected on a whim. He must be Approve, he must be looked at and disapproved of, and he must be rejected, we're told by the elders and the chief priest and the scribes and be killed. So the rejection must come from those who compose the religious leadership of the people of God.

Jesus will be, be rejected by more than just the, the, the scribes and the Pharisees and the chief priests and the elders. He will be rejected by everyone in essence, if you remember back to the triumphal entrance Sunday or Palm Sunday, the previous one, or maybe the one before, I can't recall, but remember, as we talked about, as Jesus enters into the city on that triumphal day and the people are shouting, Hosanna, blesses he who comes in the name of the Lord, if you recall what the people are doing there, they are choosing him, they are choosing Jesus to be their Passover lamp.

But the same people who chose him will also, after a week of his teaching in the Holy City, We'll reject him. So he will be rejected by the people. He will be rejected by Pilate. He will be rejected by Herod. In a real sense, he will also be rejected by his disciples as they flee for their own life on the night of his arrest and as they deny him three times.

He will be rejected even by his own people. But the primary and the most fundamental rejection that Jesus must experience is the religious leaders The elders, chief priests, and the scribes of his own people. Those who have been elected, appointed, anointed as the religious leaders of God's own people, they must be the ones who bear the burden to reject him.

So they will reject him, and he will be killed, and after three days Now, verse 32, and he said this plainly, plainly, that word oftentimes is translated openly, such as in John's gospel, chapter seven. We're told that he said these things openly, so no longer will Jesus now speak of his coming suffering and ways that are veiled or masked in any way he has spoken of his coming suffering, but he's done it in ways that were.

Well, really, not possible to discern what he was saying only by what he said. Remember when he said, for example, that, when they accused him, they say, Why aren't your disciples fasting like the Pharisees disciples are fasting, or John's disciples are fasting? And he says to them, Well, when the bridegroom is taken, that's the time to fast.

And that's a sideways illusion, so to speak, to his suffering and his being killed. So Jesus has made allusions to that, but no more will Jesus make allusions to his suffering and death. He will now speak of this. And the wording that Mark uses leads us to believe that this wasn't just an isolated incident or as we're going to see three incidents in the next three chapters of Jesus speaking of his suffering.

Instead, as we read the word that he said this plainly, the word said is in the imperfect. So that could rightly be translated. He said this, and he said it, and he kept saying it, and it was one of the things that he just seemed to dwell on. Or earlier, when we're told that, um, that, he began to teach them.

The word there, teach, is in the present infinitive, which also speaks of a repetitive teaching, a constant type of teaching. This becomes a mantra of Jesus, starting here at the end of chapter 8. So he says this openly, he says this plainly, and he says this repeatedly. And then Peter took him aside and began to rebuke him.

This is perhaps the greatest example in all of human history of one who is so right and yet so wrong. Isn't it? So close and yet so far. So correct. And yet so mistaken all at the same time, Jesus or Peter has just barely finished the words. You are the Christ when now we read these words that Peter took him aside and began to rebuke him.

So we are told very plainly in first Corinthians. Paul tells us that the cross is the stumbling block for Jews and the first Jews to stumble upon the cross were the twelve. The very first ones to stumble upon this was Peter and those whom he spoke for because as we'll see that Peter is often the spokesman of the twelve.

Peter was a natural born leader. God created him to lead people. And so he's naturally stepping out and speaking for other people on many occasions. And this is one of those occasions when he's speaking for, for the other 11. And he and the other 11 are the first to hear of this cross. And they're the first to choke on it.

So taking him aside now as he takes him aside. I think perhaps we're to hear something there in Mark's words of you recall his theme that he now starts. We've changed from the theme of the water as Jesus is either on the boat or walking beside the Sea of Galilee or just getting out of the boat in the first half.

Now the theme is on the way he's constantly on the way on the way on the way. And so perhaps. Mark wants us to hear something as he took him aside, maybe taking him off the way. Maybe this misunderstanding, this confusion, this spiritual miscomprehension on the part of Peter is meant to be seen by us as taking Jesus off the way.

temporarily off the path of his traverse to Jerusalem, taking him aside, he's going to take him aside and rebuke him. Also rings, at least in my ear, the echo of what we talked about at the first

miraculous feeding. Remember the first miraculous feeding? And we talked about how they were going to take him and make him king by force.

And we talked of the irony, the sad irony of thinking that you are going to forcibly make someone your ruler or your king. And so here is the same theme coming back once again as Peter takes the master aside, the one who is just proclaimed to be the anointed one, and he's going to set the anointed one straight on a few things.

It's exactly the same thing as taking him by force and making him king. So he takes him aside. Ostensibly to save him some embarrassment from this little talking to that Peter's going to give him, and he began to rebuke him. Same word there. He began to not just say to Jesus, Jesus, let's, let's rethink this thing Instead.

The word rebuke speaks to us once again of a stern command that carries an implied consequence. Jesus, we have proclaimed our loyalty to you. If you continue on this path, you're going to lose us. And not only us, you're going to lose this, this crowd, these people we've already left. We've already lost many when you started giving that teaching about eating your flesh and drinking your blood.

But if you continue on this path, I'm warning you, Jesus, you're going to lose everybody. So he began to rebuke him. Now why do you think that Peter, we're told, began to rebuke him? It's as though the rebuke wasn't completed, isn't it? Now why, if that's the case, why wasn't Peter's rebuke completed, do you think?

We're not told, but I love to speculate on these things. Could it be that Peter's rebuke was interrupted by Jesus words, Get behind me, Satan? Could it be that Peter hadn't yet gotten the rebuke fully out before Jesus is now saying, Stop right there, Peter? Possibly. Or, possibly, Peter himself Once he started, found he was unable to follow through.

You ever been there? You ever been in the place where you were going to rebuke someone of great respect and authority, and you rehearsed the rebuke, and the words that you've rehearsed start coming out, and as they start coming out, you just feel this sense of deflation, of, well, now that I hear myself, I just don't think I can follow through with this.

That ever happened to you? I remember one time in my life, I was going to rebuke my mother. And same thing, sort of, you know, I knew what I was going to say. And then just about one sentence into it, it's like, I don't think I can continue with this. You know, maybe that's Peter here. Maybe as the words start coming out, Peter's anger is almost immediately diffused as he's looking into the savior's face, into the master's face and reading in his face.

He just stepped in it. He just went somewhere he was not to go. So perhaps that's why he began to rebuke him, but turning and seeing his disciples. So once again, the theme is on the way, on the way. So Jesus now has to turn. So he turns and we're told sees his disciples. I think that in that look, we're told that there's this look and seeing the disciples.

I think that in that we should read that Jesus, of course, knowing their hearts from John 2, 14, Jesus knows their hearts, but in that look, Jesus is looking to them as though to say in that look that he knows. That Peter's speaking for them, too. And so he turns, perhaps, to look at them as if to say, I know that you, too, are thinking the same thing.

So this rebuke that you're about to hear is for you just as much as it's for Peter. But he gives them this look, and wouldn't you just Well, I was about to say, wouldn't you like to see that look? But I guess we wouldn't like to see that look. Sometimes the looks of Jesus Have you ever noticed the looks of Jesus?

They come sometimes at these moments that are so powerful, but you can just perhaps imagine in your sanctified imagination, the Savior looking at Peter as Peter completes the third denial or the Savior looking at the rich young ruler as the rich young ruler chooses earthly possessions over eternal riches.

Or the Savior looking down straight into the face of the Apostle John and his mother, Mary, and saying to John, take her and treat her as your own. The looks of the Savior. This is one I don't think anyone in the room would have wanted to be on the other end of as he turns and seeing his disciples. He rebuked, same word, this is the third rebuke in the passage now, he rebuked Peter and said, Get behind me, Satan.

So we'll rest there for just a few minutes to understand Jesus counter rebuke, which is to say, Get behind me, Satan. So this word Satan, the word Satan means literally adversary. It's a word that shows up in our New Testament about 35 times. And in the New Testament, it's always referring to the person. He is the being that we know of as the devil, as Lucifer.

His most common pronoun, or not pronoun, but his most common designator in the New Testament is Satan. He has many other names in the New Testament. God of this age, God, prince of the power of the air, the evil one, the adversary, the enemy. But the most common one is this one, Satan. And we find it capitalized in the New Testament.

So we should be careful to understand Satan is not his name. His personal name is not Satan. His personal name, we would know of as Lucifer. Instead, Satan is his title. So in the same way that the Christ is the title of Jesus. So also, the Satan is the title of Lucifer. So we call him that, and I think sometimes we call him that by default, thinking that that's his name, when really it's not his name, it's his title.

His title is adversary. This same word shows up many, many times in the Old Testament, and very rarely in the Old Testament is it used to refer to the adversary, the being known of as Satan, but oftentimes it shows up in the New Testament as just An adversary, Solomon we're told that God raises up adversaries against, Solomon by the king of Tyre.

And the word there is Satan. God raises up Satans against King Solomon. We're told that King David had Satans such as Shimei that that Shimei when he was accusing David was Satan against so, against David. We're even told that the angel of the Lord, in, in Old Testament language, we know that the angel of the Lord means the second person of the Trinity.

The Son of God, Jesus Christ, making an appearance in the Old Testament. We're even told in Numbers that the angel of God is called Satan. In that very bizarre episode, of Balaam and the donkey. Remember that? As God raises up this, or causes this donkey to see the angel of the Lord, who is standing in the path, and we're told that the angel of the Lord stood in his path as an adversary, as Satan.

So, that's literally the basis, the meaning of the word is adversary, and then when we get to the New Testament, this becomes the title, capital A, adversary, capital S, the Satan. Because he is primarily the adversary, the adversary of the kingdom of God, the adversary of the Son of Man. He is the adversary.

So when Jesus says to Peter, get behind me adversary, get behind me Satan, Jesus is not implying here that Peter has now been indwelt. by the king of the kingdom of evil and that Jesus now has to perform some type of exorcism to get Satan out of Peter. Instead, as he calls Peter Satan, he is saying to Peter that the words that you have said, the rebuke that you have given to me, the thought process that's behind that rebuke, This is the work of the Satan.

This is the work of the adversary. Get behind me, adversary. Get behind me, Satan. You stand between me and the cross. And anyone who stands between me and the cross is the Satan, is the adversary. So get behind me. If you are to be with me, you are not to be between me and the cross. You are to be behind me as I am going to the cross.

So he clearly declares here that this adversarial work this this encouraging of Jesus To when I shouldn't say encouraging it's much stronger than that this rebuke of Jesus to say Jesus This is not in keeping with the plan That this rebuke of Jesus to attempt to keep him from the cross is the work of the adversary of the Satan So we ask ourselves the question, well, what exactly does Satan want to do?

What's Satan's goal after all? Does Satan want to keep Jesus away from the cross? Or does Satan want to kill Jesus and put Him on the cross? What does Satan really want to do? Because we find Satan actually doing both. Chapter 1, we find Satan as the adversary. Comes to Jesus in the wilderness and tempts Jesus for 40 days to bypass the cross.

To choose glory without the suffering. Or here we see the adversarial work of the Satan clearly to keep Jesus from the cross. Or at least an attempt to do that. We see the other great temptation of Christ in the garden the night of His arrest. And that temptation is the same. Don't take this cup. Do anything but take this cup.

And so we see that, but then we also see in places like John 13 or Luke 22, we see that Satan indwells who? Judas to betray Christ over to the cross. So what is it that Satan wants? Does he want to kill Jesus, or does he want to keep Jesus from the cross? Well, I think that the answer lies, first of all, just in remembering his nature.

Jesus says in John's Gospel, as he's talking to the Pharisees, he says, You're like your father, your father, the devil. The Satan. He's two things. He's a murderer. He's a liar from the beginning. That's his nature. His nature is to murder. So in a similar way as God's nature is love and God's nature is mercy and God's nature is justice and God's nature is holiness in a similar way.

The Satan's nature, Lucifer's nature is to murder. And so while Satan may demonstrate this desire to keep Christ from atoning for God's people by convincing him to not go to the cross, it's almost as though when he's presented the opportunity to murder someone, he just can't resist himself. He just has to murder because that's his nature.

It's like the old story. Remember the old story? You probably heard this in the fairy tale books. The old story of the snake who wanted to cross the river and the snake couldn't swim. And so the

snake goes to the hawk and says to the hawk, will you, will you pick me up and take me across the river? And the hawk says to the snake, no way.

For as soon as I pick you up, you're going to bite me. And then we'll both fall into the river and we'll both die. I'm not going to do that. And the snake says, why would I do that? Because if I bit you, you would drop me, we'd both fall into the river and both die. I'm not going to do that. I will not bite you.

And of course, he talks the hawk into picking up the snake. The hawk picks up the snake, starts flying across the river. And what does the snake do? Bites the hawk. The hawk looks down and says, why did you bite me? Because now we're both going to fall in the river and die. And the snake says, that's my nature.

That's what I do. That's who I am. In a similar way, this is the nature of the Satan. Almost like when he has the opportunity.

Now, in a greater way, what this is really showing us is the awesome power of the Creator God who holds everything in His control so that when it suits His will to use the Satan to bring a trial to His Son, to test and to prove His Son so that His Son will succeed where the first Adam failed, When that suits his will, that's how God uses the Satan.

When it suits his will to use the Satan to be the means by which his son is betrayed unto the cross, which is the purpose his son came for, that's how God uses him. You see, Satan is a pawn in God's hands. And we should always remind ourselves of that. He is a pawn in God's hands. You may have seen the painting.

this representation of God and Satan playing chess, nothing could be further from reality because God and the Satan are not equal opponents, not even close. Something closer to, to reality would be something like The Satan playing tic tac toe, while God holds in His hands the lives of 9 billion people and uses all of those 9 billion people for His purpose.

While also holding every star in its place and every planet in its orbit, while also causing the plants to grow to feed the livestock, to feed the people who serve His purpose. That's a more accurate picture. While the Satan plays tic tac toe, God runs the universe. In a similar way, God uses the king of the kingdom of evil at his will, at his discretion, to his whim.

When his purpose is to use the Satan to bring an adversary against his Messiah, so that his Messiah will demonstrate where the first Adam failed, I will not fail. But it will one day fit God's purpose to use the Satan to betray Christ unto the cross. Once again, it will fit God's purpose to use the Satan for that last demonstration.

For that last demonstration, this is what I do to evil once and for all, as he defeats him finally and casts him into the lake of fire. Get behind me, Satan, for you are not setting your mind on the things of God, but on the things of man. If you have an italicized King James, you'll notice that things is italicized because it's supplied by the editors of our scriptures.

So literally Mark has Jesus's words as being for you are not setting your mind on the God But on man, you are not setting your mind on the God, but on the man. So there's a contrast here that

must not escape us because the contrast, the dichotomy, what's at odds here is not what we would have put at odds if we were writing the scriptures.

If we were writing the scriptures, we would almost assuredly say something like this. Get behind me, Satan, for you are not setting your mind on the things of God, but on the things of Satan. Wouldn't we? That would have been what we would have said. But that's not what Jesus said. The contrast instead that Jesus draws is the contrast between the things of God And the things have fallen.

Man, the things of the flesh, it's as though Jesus is calling attention to the fact that if, if we needed yet another reminder of the depravity of man, Jesus says, here's another one. You need to be reminded once again of the total depravity of man. Here it is. The total depravity of man is such that I can literally contrast the things of man against the things of God, and that makes my point.

I can literally just say the opposite of the things of God is the things of man and I don't need to say anything else because that explains it all. That's what Jesus is saying here, that the things of man, the heart of man is so contrary to the things of God that Jesus can just say, here's the two paths.

Here's the crossroads. Here's the separation. Here's the dichotomy. Your mind is either, like Romans 8 verse 7 tells us, either set on the Spirit or set on, not the devil, on the flesh, on the things of fallen man. So once again, a reminder for us. That sin has touched every part of who we are. Sin has perverted everything about us to such a degree that Jesus can say the things of man are always opposed to the things of God.

Did you catch that? The things of man are always opposed to the things of God. It is not correct for us to say That perhaps, apart from God, we could maybe have one holy thought. That apart from God, maybe we could do one righteous deed. Because the scriptures teach us, Isaiah 62, that even our most righteous of deeds are polluted garments or filthy rags in His sight.

Now, that's not the same thing as saying that we as fallen people are as evil as we could possibly be. But it is saying, very plainly, that everything we think, everything we feel, everything we do, is tainted with sin. To such a degree that Jesus can simply say, here's the two paths. There's the path of the things of God, there's the path of the things of man.

So here's, once again, our reminder of the depravity of mankind. So that's the text. We've just kind of walked through the text, step by step, and we've endeavor to just understand something about what Jesus is saying, what the situation is. But now let's just take a few moments and let's just think about some applications of this.

Many passages of Scripture, you often, I think, hear me say things like, the application of this passage is just simply look to Jesus. Does that sound familiar? Many passages just simply say that to us. Just look to Christ. Just look to Him and just see Him. And just adore Him and appreciate Him. This passage is not that way.

This passage is rich in pragmatic application. And so let's endeavor to take a look at some of these. I have in your notes six of these applications. There are many more. I have no doubt that there are many more, but here are six that I feel like just cannot be skipped over. Six applications of the passage.

And for each of these applications, I trust that once we see these, all of us will see them. They're plain in the text. We need to have no, do no gymnastics with the text, no, word searches or investigations. They're all plain. They're all open. We'll see these all in the passage. And the first application is this regardless of the clarity of the teacher, regardless of the insightfulness, regardless, regardless of the lucidness of the teaching, regardless of the, how well a teacher articulates the scriptures, spiritual understanding cannot occur without a divine touch.

You say, well, pastor, you keep saying that same application. I'm not writing this. I'm just showing you what Mark is saying, how Mark is repeatedly bringing us back to the same theme, which is to say there is no spiritual comprehension that happens outside of a divine touch, outside of divine intervention.

So let's think about this. Jesus Christ, we're told chapter 1 verse 1, is the Son of God. He is the perfectly filled man. He is the perfect man Perfectly filled by the Spirit, which makes him the perfect teacher, which makes his teaching perfectly clear, perfectly articulate. Jesus teaching is highly, the maximum degree of 'understandableness.'

It could not be taught or preached better than Jesus did it. And furthermore, we are told that Jesus now teaches this, what, plainly. And yet, what happens to Peter? He still misunderstands. He still fails to grasp, he still fails to get it when the best teacher, when the perfect teacher is exposing these truths to him and doing so plainly and as the text led us to believe not just once but repeatedly.

When Peter yet has to understand the spiritual realities that Jesus is teaching him, we must step back and say, without divine intervention, this cannot happen. This can never happen. And furthermore, we cannot say, well, You know, this is really new. This is something Peter's never heard before. It's going to take Peter a little bit of time to kind of grasp this, to get his arms around it.

And he's starting to. But you know, you can't expect too much of Peter because all of this is so new. You got to give him a little bit of time to absorb this. He's getting there. We can't say that. Why? Because of Luke's gospel. Luke chapter 18, look at verse 31. And taking the twelve, he said to them, See, we are going up to Jerusalem, and everything that is written about the Son of Man, you see Jesus is teaching there, everything that is written, in other words, Jesus is saying, this shouldn't be new, Peter.

You've read this. This is in your scriptures. You've been exposed to this. You've seen this. You've read it. Everything that is written about the Son of Man by the prophets will be accomplished, for He will be delivered over to the Gentiles, and will be mocked and shamefully treated, and spit upon, and after flogging Him they will kill Him, and on the third day He will rise.

That sounds pretty plain. That sounds pretty straightforward, pretty lucid, pretty articulate. Yet, they understood how many of those things? None. None. They weren't starting to get it. Jesus didn't need to just repeat Himself a number of times and eventually they would catch on. They understood none of it.

Why? This saying was hidden from them and they did not grasp what was said. You see, without divine intervention, there will be no spiritual comprehension. The spiritual light will not go on short of God turning it on. Now, I realize we're in this This difficult time, this odd sort of time

where Peter and the Apostles are literally like the very end of the Old Testament era, a time in which although they are physically with the Son of God, who is perfectly filled by the Spirit, the Spirit has yet not been given to the church.

So I realize we're in that odd sort of time. But let's talk about ourselves and just apply this to ourselves. The truth is, without divine intervention, none of us comprehend. But furthermore, here's the bigger takeaway. Without divine intervention, the plainest, clearest teaching of the Word of God leads not to belief but unbelief.

You see that? It leads to adversity against the kingdom. It produces not just partial understanding. It doesn't produce indifference. Apart from the work of the Spirit, the preaching of the Word of God produces adversaries to the Kingdom of God. That's what it produced in Peter, was an adversary to the Kingdom of God.

Now, there are many ways that we could talk about how the Scriptures show us that's done. We'll leave that to perhaps Wednesday night if we want to return to that subject there, but here's the truth. The truth is this. It is simply not true to say, so and so doesn't believe, but it's better for them to be in church to not be in church.

Hearing the gospel and not believing it is better than not hearing it at all. Not according to the scriptures. Because what the scriptures teach us is that the proclamation of God's word is like a lightning rod. It's a dividing point. It separates the sheep from the goats in such a way that every time the Word of God is proclaimed, you have a decision to make.

And you cannot avoid that decision. Right now, I am forcing you, by preaching God's Word, I am forcing you either to believe and be drawn closer to God, or disbelieve and be pushed further from Him. Those are the only two options. The proclamation of God's Word

And Jesus, the perfect teacher, the most articulate teacher of the scriptures, even he, apart from the work of the Spirit on Peter's heart, the result was that Peter is now acting adversarially to the kingdom of God. That's the first application. The second application is this. The adversary, Satan, is We're seeing we're shown something here about his nature about his power and about his work now.

Let's be careful to Remind ourself that it is not our place to spend much time and effort Understanding our enemy now. I understand that the the philosophy of Knowing your enemy if you know your enemy then you're better off I understand that philosophy works in a lot of other areas of life Not in the kingdom of God.

Because the scriptures never teach us that we are to devote time and effort to understanding our enemy. There are certain truths about our enemy that are presented in the scriptures. The scriptures will say certain things to us about how our enemy comes against us. And it says those things because the scriptures want us to know something about our enemy.

But the scriptures spend far more time teaching you of your enemy within your own sin, because that's your real enemy is your enemy within. So the scriptures spend far more time helping you to understand your own sinfulness, and even far more time than that, helping us to see the Christ. And so while we do not spend.

Tremendous time understanding the nature of Satan and the work of Satan. Nevertheless, when we're confronted with it in the Scripture, we notice it, and we call attention to it, and we move on, which is what we'll do here. Because what we see the Satan doing here is what he is able to do. First, let's just state what he's not able to do.

Satan is not able to control your thoughts. Satan is not able to exert his will over you. He's not able to make you sin, nor is he able to make you think anything. But here's what he can do. He can insinuate thoughts. He can imply thoughts. He can suggest thoughts. And sadly, many times that suggestion, we grasp it, we pick it up, and we run with it, and we take that thought and we make it ours.

But that's all that he can do. This is what he does to Peter. Because Jesus credits Satan with the origin. Get behind me, Satan. So Satan can't make Peter think these thoughts. Satan can suggest it to Peter. Peter's the one who picked it up and ran with it. So as he suggests these thoughts to Peter, he can do the same thing to us.

He can suggest or imply or tempt with thoughts. Have you ever wondered, remember in Ephesians chapter 6, at the end of that Armor of God passage, remember how we're told that the shield of faith is what we use to extinguish the fiery darts of the enemy? Remember that passage? Ever wonder what the fiery darts are?

That's what the fiery darts are. The fiery darts are suggestions or implications that the enemy can pose to suggest that you think mean thoughts of God or lowly thoughts of God or sinful thoughts. And so the enemy can suggest this and he does it to Peter. And the takeaway here for us is this. This is why the scriptures say to us to guard our tongues.

Because in the moment of stress, in the moment of heat, in the moment in which we're taken off guard, that's when the enemy finds the opportune moment. And that's when the enemy can suggest those thoughts, and those thoughts, if you're not guarding your tongue, become words, and words can never be unspoken.

Peter can never unspeak the words that he spoke to Jesus on that day. Just like your words can never be unspoken and that's where the enemy can have a field day That's where he can have a playground is in the suggestion of things To the believer that in perhaps the heat of the moment or the anger of the moment or the chaos of the moment and we fail to guard our tongues well, those implied thoughts come out of our mouth and then the sin is done.

So once again, just a reminder for us. Set a guard over our hearts. Next, let's take a look at the next application here. Um, the next application that we see on the back page is this. We are always sinning, we are always sinning, when we seek to spare God from the embarrassment of His own words. You see, this is what Peter did.

This, Peter takes Jesus aside, and as he takes Peter aside, I mean, as Peter takes Jesus aside, What is he doing? Is he taking him? It's taking him aside. He's seeking to spare Jesus a little bit of the embarrassment that's coming from a rebuke from a student. And we can almost, almost appreciate Peter for that to say, Well, at least he didn't do it in front of the other 11, even though the 11 clearly have talked about it.

So he's seeking to save Jesus something of the embarrassment. of a pupil coming to Him and saying, Okay, Jesus, I think we're sort of getting off the rails a little bit. You need to stop talking about dying. And in His attempt to save Jesus from the embarrassment of His own words, we see a sin that we can also fall into so plainly today.

Because we are always sinning when we seek to save God from the embarrassment of His own words. How would we want to save God from the embarrassment of His own words? Well, the ways in which that temptation comes to us are myriad, aren't they? Some of the teachings of God's Word that sort of rub against culture today.

We know the ones that rub raw against the culture today. We can see those as maybe embarrassments or maybe other parts of the Scripture that are hard to wrestle with. Just, yesterday I started, I started wrestling with one of the most bizarre passages in Scripture, Genesis chapter 9, the drunkenness and nakedness of Noah.

Isn't that a bizarre passage? Well, sometimes, wouldn't you, aren't you tempted to just say, wouldn't it be better if this just wasn't here? Isn't this kind of embarrassing when non-believers read these things in the Scriptures and they don't make sense or they seem so odd or so bizarre?

Beware of ever seeking to save God the embarrassment. of his own words, because we always sin against him when we know better than him and we seek to save face for God. Now, are we ever called to save God from embarrassment of words? Yes. When the words are yours. We are most certainly called to save God the embarrassment of our words and our lives when our lives don't match the teachings of His scriptures.

That's what Hebrews 6 and verse 6 is all about. That you are holding Him up to shame and contempt. Because you've tasted the goodness of God and yet found Him lacking and said, Well, God's really, He's really great, but He's not all that, you know. That's the embarrassment that we are called to save God against.

But we are never, we are, in fact, just a little bit later in the passage, if you notice at the end of chapter 8, where Jesus will make this statement again, He who is ashamed of my words and this generation, guess what's coming? I'll be ashamed of Him before the angels and before my Father who is in heaven.

We never. We never are in the right when any part of our heart is embarrassed by anything that God has said and we seek to save him from that embarrassment. Next, and this is a difficult one for some of us, but it's plain in the passage and all of us will see it. The enemy will often use adversaries to hinder the kingdom of God and those adversaries that he will bring up against you will often be loved ones and family.

Who are, and get this part, who are acting out of genuine love and concern. You see that in the passage? So let's ask ourselves this question. Did Peter love Jesus? Undoubtedly. That much is beyond question. Peter for all his faults, loved Jesus. Peter's the only disciple that is ever recorded Jesus asked him, do you love me?

Three times. And then Peter gives that response that I dare say many of us would think twice about. Lord, you know everything and knowing everything, you therefore know that I love you.

Isn't that a bold response? Lord, you know my heart. My heart is bare to you and you know that I love you. And yet Peter's love and concern for Christ.

Peter didn't want to see these things happen to Jesus. The enemy uses the love that Peter had for Jesus to attempt to hinder the kingdom of God. And that's a big lesson to learn. Because the enemy does that in the lives of every believer. Every believer. What does God call of every child of God. What does God desire?

What does, what's God's calling on every child of God? To sell yourself completely for Him. Isn't that His call upon us? To spend everything upon Him. To spend your life entirely upon Him. That's God's call upon every believer. Remember the parable of the Pearl of Great Price, Matthew 13? The guy finds this pearl and it's so valuable, it's so precious that he goes and sells everything to have that.

The pearl of great price is Christ. And that's God's call upon every believer to spend everything upon Him.

And in the spending of everything upon Him, what often happens? Here's what often happens, and I've seen this happen more times than I care to remember in the body of Christ. Is God will place a call upon a man or a woman to do something for the Lord. And that something requires sacrifice. And other believers or other family members out of genuine love and concern will come and say, You know, don't you're asking too much of yourself.

You're doing too much. Don't exert yourself like that. God doesn't want you to wear yourself out. You've heard that? God doesn't want you to wear yourself out. God wants you to save some for yourself. Really? I'm not sure what chapter and verse that's found in. But instead, what I find is the pearl was so valuable, the man went and sold everything.

God calls every one of us to spend everything. upon him. And don't hear in that spin, don't hear money, hear self. That's what he asks. He holds out for you an eternity of riches. And he says, in this life, serve me with zeal. Serve me with abandon. Use up this life for me. And again, from the best of motives.

From a genuine love and concern, oftentimes that believer will hear, take the pedal off the gas a little bit. Take your foot off the gas a little bit. Just slow up a little bit. God doesn't want you to just wear yourself out. Can you see this is what Peter was doing? Can you see this is how the adversary used Peter?

Get behind me, Satan. Remember the story of Paul, as Paul is on his way to Jerusalem, Acts 21. and he is on his way to Jerusalem. And what does Paul know is going to happen there? Because Jesus has told him What's Paul know is going to happen. He knows he is going to be arrested and he's, he knows he's going to end up in front of Caesar.

And you remember as he comes together, acts chapter 21 with those believers and there's this guy, Agabus, whom we're told is a prophet, and he takes this belt and he ties his arms up with this belt and he says, this is what's going to happen to him when he gets to Jerusalem. They're going to arrest him. They're going to put him in prison.

And we're never going to see him again. And do you remember the reaction? The people started pleading, Paul, don't go to Jerusalem. Don't go to Jerusalem. They're going to arrest you. And oh, Paul's reaction is pure gold. Verse 13 of Acts 21. Then Paul answered, what are you doing weeping and breaking my heart? For I am ready not only to be in prison, but to even die in Jerusalem for the name of the Lord Jesus.

Paul says, what are you doing? Jesus has sent me there. He came to me in prison and told me I would be arrested. What are you doing trying to talk me out of what God has told me to do? Do they love Paul? You bet they love Paul. Remember Acts chapter 18, the last meeting with the Ephesian elders and how they were weeping because Paul said, You'll never see me again because I'm going to Jerusalem.

And when I get there, they're going to arrest me. And they're weeping and pleading. Don't do this, Paul. Save yourself, Paul. God doesn't want you to die. God doesn't want you to be put in prison.

Paul was pretty bold, but he wasn't quite bold enough to say what he could have said, which was, get behind me, Satan. Get behind me, adversary. For the adversary, for our adversary, is using your love and your concern to hinder his kingdom. Now, the next application, we'll make this quick, but we do need to call attention to this, and it's this.

Love for God is simply not enough. You see that in passage. Love for God is simply not enough. Peter loved Jesus and he loved him genuinely. He and the Apostle John were probably the two Apostles that loved Jesus the deepest. And yet his love for Jesus was not enough. Peter needed more than just love. He needed to hear and obey.

He needed to hear his words and obey his words because Jesus's words are often counter instinctive or counter intuitive to what simple love would tell us. Love cannot be our only directive. Our love for Jesus must be guided and, and directed. by his words and by his teaching. The church today has gotten itself into such a foolish position because so many in the Western church culture have let love for God and pragmatism be the only guides and they have led the church down paths of foolishness that are quite embarrassing.

In the pathway of love for God and pragmatism in the culture, the Western church now, we have developed things like churches that are just for cowboys, churches that are just for truckers, churches that are just for bikers. There's even churches for people who don't like church. And I don't mean just a few.

There's thousands of churches that exist by their own words because we're here for people who don't like church. Listen, if the pearl of great price is not precious enough, That you can overlook some sort of churchiness that you don't particularly care for. He's not a very great pearl, is he? But in our love, in our pragmatism, we have allowed such foolishness to crop up today.

In the seeker sensitive, let's make church as seeker sensitive as we possibly can. And all of that came from, let's not question the motives, people that love Jesus, people that want to see Jesus kingdom grow. Yet people who allowed love and pragmatism to be the only guide, and they never can be the only guide, that's what Peter was following.

Peter loved Jesus, and Peter rightly saw, you know, this is kind of a problem. Our leader dying is sort of a problem, but Peter loved Jesus and his pragmatism, they come together. To give this wide

open door for Satan to just march right on through in our love for Jesus. We must not allow the hard doctrines, the doctrines of the sinfulness of man, the bloody atonement of the cross, even the miraculous.

We talked about this just this past Wednesday and how our love for Jesus. Love for Jesus might cause us to want to take Jesus and redefine Him just a little bit. Just lower Him down just a little bit so that everybody can celebrate Him. But to do that, what do we got to do? Well, we got to take some embarrassing things that He said out.

We got to remove some of those embarrassing words. You see, love for Jesus is simply not enough. Love for Jesus and pragmatism only will lead us to conceal or at least mute the most important truths of our faith.