



Bible Study
2014-2015

Heart of a Servant

The Gospel of Mark

LESSON 14 PART 1

CNN's Medical Producer, Sabriya Rice, did a special news report in 2011 about errors performed during surgery. She stated that in 2006 alone, there were approximately 2,700 surgeries performed on the wrong body parts of patients. So despite a doctor's intelligence, experience, capability, and good intentions, a scalpel's use went from an instrument of health to an instrument of harm in a matter of minutes.

What we see in Mark 14 is not a series of accidents, but what happens when God's creation and blessings are perverted and infiltrated due to sinful hearts and wickedness. A club that enables a shepherd to defend sheep is embraced as a weapon against the Chief Shepherd. A kiss that is meant to convey love and kindness is used deceptively to camouflage a traitor. A trial process that was established to bring guilty parties and criminals to justice is converted into a crime-infested hearing of injustice, lies, and repetitive violations of the law in its proceedings. Though one woman trades a treasured possession for eternal riches with Christ, one man trades his soul to the devil for a palm full of silver. We read of a beautiful garden providing the backdrop for a satanic victory, echoing the familiar theme of the first garden in Genesis. This chapter is where we see wrong being heralded as right and right erroneously condemned as wrong.

Yet, these dark circumstances and seeming victories by the enemy are only platforms for the Lord to display His goodness, grace, power and glory. Forever it is written that the cross was the necessary path to glory.

*Due to the length of Mark 14, we will only be covering half of the chapter for this lesson. May the Lord give you gracious revelation and application as you seek to learn more about Him in His Word.

Read Mark 14:1-2

1. Considered the most important pilgrim feast of the Jews is that of the Feast of Passover. It is a combination of two observances lasting eight days total: the first commemorating the death angel's "passing over" of the Hebrew households while they were slaves in Egypt, and second, the Feast of Unleavened Bread, which celebrated the first week of their actual exodus. The ceremonial feast is full of symbolism with the Passover meal holding irrefutable, prophetic significance to Jesus Christ and the crucifixion.
 - a. Whenever leaven is mentioned in the Bible (22 times in the Old Testament and 17 times in the New Testament), it nearly always represents evil or sin. Leaven (or yeast) is basically a substance that causes fermentation and the rising of dough. When a very small piece of old, fermented dough is placed within new dough, the dough will rise because the leaven/yeast spreads. What does Galatians 5:9 say?

Read Mark 14:3-9

3. This passage is a familiar one to many due to the fulfillment of Jesus' words in verse 9. What is often overlooked is the man who was once an outcast and isolated from all of his family, friends, and home, is now enjoying the company of Jesus and the disciples at his dinner table. The leaven in Simon's life has been purged and we can only imagine the joy, wonder and gratitude that must have come from his heart towards the Lord.

It is likely that the Mary in John 12:1-8 is this woman with the alabaster flask we are reading about in Mark 14. If so, then her brother Lazarus was also present and we can only imagine what must have been going through his mind and heart after Jesus raised him from death.

- a. Think of the individuals that were most likely present at the scene. Simon (the former leper), Lazarus (who was raised from the dead), Mary (who anointed Christ) and Martha (serving), Jesus' disciples (including Judas), and some unknown onlookers. Who do you most relate to in this passage and explain why?
 - b. Each of the people in our scene had a unique relationship and background experience with Jesus. Each had a testimony that could display the love, goodness, grace, power, and glory of God. Yet, only one woman was so moved to demonstrate openly the extravagant love she had for Him. An act of worship that was costly and sacrificial, yet incomparable to the cost and sacrifice Jesus was actually making for her. Notice these unique comparisons and contrasts.
 - 1) She poured out perfume that cost a year's salary. What was Jesus about to pour out and what would it cost Him?
 - 2) In Mark 14:5, they criticized her love and worship sharply. In verse 6, what kind of work did Jesus say it was and Who was it for?
 - 3) In verse 4, some said the perfume was wasted and thereby inferring that this one action of love and worship toward Jesus was not worth the expense. Yet, write out Jesus' response from verse 9 here.
 - c. Notice that the woman who loved the Lord so deeply was the one who was in touch with what Jesus was about to go through. Spirit-filled love and devotion provoked Jesus to come to her defense, to commend her in the face of criticism, to acknowledge her efforts with what she had, and proclaim a recordable testimony worthy of being read throughout the whole world.

Reflect on Jesus' words, "She has done what she could." Jesus will never ask more of us than what we are able to do, and with that ability to "do," He then gives us the grace and power to carry it out. Thinking on your own life of worship, love, and service done for Him, what do you believe the Lord would say of you? Explain why you feel this way.

- d. Read 2 Corinthians 9:7-8. What kind of heart does the Lord love and what is the promise of His supply for every "good work" we do for Him?

Read Mark 14:10-21

4. Noah Webster's definition of "covet" is "to long for inordinately or unlawfully; to desire after." Those who are covetous do not inherit the kingdom of God (1 Corinthians 6:10) because it reflects a heart discontent with God's provision and rebellious in its desire for that which God has forbidden. Judas was the holder of the money bag, chief complainer of costly worship, and covetous to the core. After three years of company with Jesus and His friends, hearing the truth and being instructed in righteousness, he would now walk through a time with the Lord overflowing with opportunities to repent and turn from his hard, deceitful and lying heart.

- a. Luke 22:8 tells us that it was Peter and John that were sent by Jesus with detailed instructions of how to find a place to celebrate Passover, but read Mark 14:16. Fill in the missing section of this verse.

"So His disciples went out and came into the city, and _____

_____ ; and they prepared the Passover."

- b. Jesus did not give generalities about the unseen future to His disciples. He prophesied meticulous details with certainty, so that as they unfolded, there was no doubt that He knew the end from the beginning. Even time itself could not shroud the actions of man nor the evil intentions in their heart from Him. So why do you think Jesus did not openly point out who was going to betray Him that night? Read verses 18-21 again and think about that.

- c. If you think back over your lifetime, the Lord has not openly revealed all of your wicked thoughts, actions and betrayals to others either. Each of us has played the role of Judas at some point. Read the lyrics to David's song and prayer to the Lord from Psalm 19:12-14. Rewrite them and make them your own to the Lord here.

Read Mark 14:22-26 and Luke 22:14-23

5. The Lord now takes ordinary objects, on an ordinary night, in an ordinary room, during an annual celebration, and transforms it all into an extraordinary covenant for all believers for the rest of time. Jesus never asked us to celebrate or remember His birth or His resurrection, but His death.

- a. Read Luke 22:15. How did Jesus describe His desire for this particular Passover with the disciples?
- b. Jesus had a passionate desire to share this meal because it would forever be a covenant He fulfilled between God and man. No more blood covenant by law or sacrifices made with animals (Exodus 24:8) for the forgiveness of sins, for fellowship, or for peace with God.

Jesus was instituting the new covenant which would fulfill several prophecies. How does Hebrews 7:22 and 8:6 describe this new covenant?

6. The disciples had no idea what Jesus was about to endure to establish this covenant for them. But Jesus knew every detail of the pain, suffering, rejection, shame, darkness and wickedness that He would begin to experience in only hours. Think about this reality in light of the questions below.
 - a. In Luke 22:17, 19, what did Jesus "give" to the Father after He took the cup and the bread?

- b. When you look at what the cup and the bread represented, it should overwhelm us that Jesus would give THANKS to the Father for them. Have you ever had a time in your relationship with the Lord, where you believed the will of God was going to be very difficult or painful for you to carry out? Briefly recount the experience here.
- c. Read 1 Thessalonians 5:18. Note that it does not say “FOR,” but “IN.” Is there something in your life presently that is very difficult to find anything thank-worthy about? Sit prayerfully with the Lord and ask Him to reveal to your heart how you can give Him thanks IN it. For example: someone in your family has a problem with alcohol and their words and actions cause you great pain and sorrow. You wouldn’t thank Jesus that they are in sin, but you can thank Him for the wisdom He gives you in how you should respond, for the power and restraint He gives to not react in the flesh like you used to without Him, or for His healing grace He has given you from hurtful words that have been spoken.

“Pride slays thanksgiving. The unthankful heart discovers no mercies; but let the thankful heart sweep through the day and, as the magnet finds the iron, so it will find, in every hour, some heavenly blessings!”
~ Henry Ward Beecher

Read Mark 14:27-31

7. Just as quickly as the disciples do not trust their own hearts when Jesus predicts betrayal by one of them (vs. 19), Peter then refuses to believe he is capable of denying his Lord. Jesus tells Peter straight out what he will do, but in Peter becoming vehement and refusing to believe this about himself, he is calling Jesus a liar without realizing it.

a. Read the list of what comes out of the heart from Mark 7:21-22. Which of these things do you believe you would NEVER do? Be honest before the Lord.

b. What does Proverbs 28:26 tell us?

c. If left to ourselves and our own hearts, there is nothing that any of us are not capable of doing. Jeremiah 17:9 says the heart is deceitful and wicked and Peter gives us the perfect demonstration of what we are capable of, even when God puts His finger on our sin. What encouragement do you find from 1 John 3:20-21.

8. Look up Psalm 62:8. The verse has 3 sections to it structurally, but it is also divine in its revelation. Answer these simple questions joyfully.

1) When and where is the depth of our trust to be placed?

2) What are we to do with our hearts?

3) By emptying our hearts of self and filling it with trust in the Lord, what does God promise to be for us in any situation and at any time?

“Trust in the LORD forever, for the LORD, the LORD himself, is the Rock eternal.”
~ Isaiah 26:4 NIV

9. Turn to Luke 22:31-34 and read a few more details to this prediction Jesus gave Peter. If you were to look up the original Greek words for “you” from verse 31 and 32, you would see that they are not the same words. The first “you” in verse 31 is plural. Jesus is saying, “Satan has asked for all of you, that he may sift you all as wheat.” But then in the next verse it is singular and directed mainly at Simon Peter.
 - a. Your Savior is personal. “But I have prayed for you,” Simon. Singular. Direct and intimate so that Peter would know, that when he has failed the test, he will return and should strengthen others so that they will not fall. Satan wanted all of them, but he took out the one most convinced of his invincibility. What does 1 Peter 5:8 say about your enemy and your attitude in light of it? Make it personal because Satan is no less personal than Jesus.
 - b. “Be sober and watchful” are the two things we are exhorted to do from 1 Peter 5:8. Remember these two words because they are often repeated throughout the New Testament. What does this look like practically to you? How do you apply this to your day-to-day life and situations. Give examples if you would like.

Read Mark 14:32-42

10. As Jesus and the eleven disciples leave the upper room (Judas having left the supper to betray Him), they cross over the Brook Kidron and come to a garden in Gethsemane. Jesus instructs eight of His disciples to sit down and wait for Him while He went to pray.

- a. You might find it interesting that we read no further directions from the Lord for these eight disciples. They were told to merely sit down, in the dark, and wait for Jesus after He has given them some very difficult things to hear, much less understand. Have you ever had a time where you could relate to the disciples to some degree? A time when you have had to “wait” on the Lord and felt as though you are in the dark? Maybe right now, you don’t understand all that is swirling around in your life, but you know He’s not given you specific instructions and your days feel somewhat intense. Briefly explain if you have gone through a time similar to this.
- b. Remember that there were believers in Jesus who were not walking as close to Him as the disciples were. The fact that Jesus kept them close and trusted them to wait for Him is significant. The Bible has great encouragement for us when the Lord has asked us to wait. Look up these verses and choose one that speaks to your heart most at this time. Write down a one-sentence reason why you chose this verse over the others.

Psalm 37:7-9
Psalm 130:5-6

Psalm 39:7
Isaiah 40:31

Psalm 62:5
Hebrews 10:36-37

11. In Mark 14:33-34, Jesus begins to share His soul’s anguish and pain with the other three disciples that were still with Him. His instructions are a bit different as He tells them to remain close to where He is going to pray but they were to “watch.”
- a. After Jesus had gone about a stone’s throw away from Peter, James, and John, He falls to the ground and wrestles in prayer with the will of His Father. We will come back to this important subject in the next lesson, but when He returned to His three closer friends, what is the personal, direct question He asked from verse 37?

b. He repeats the important word He had warned Peter about earlier, and the word He gives to each of us in verse 38. As Satan is looking to devour all of them this night, there were two things the disciples could do to prevent this from happening. What were they?

c. Write down each of these verses and receive them as Jesus' encouragement as His disciples today.

1) Matthew 25:13 -

2) 1 Corinthians 16:13 -

3) Luke 18:1 -

4) Ephesians 6:18 -

5) Colossians 4:2 -

d. Do you have an example of prayer making a difference during a dark time in your life?

“If you are strangers to prayer, you are strangers to God’s power.”

~ Billy Sunday

12. This passage can give us a good reflection on Jesus' relationships. Though He loved all men and played no favorites, there was still a difference in the closeness He shared with others. There were those who would soon come to attack Jesus in the garden. There was a disciple who would allow sin in his heart to remain until it propelled him to bitterness and betrayal. There were believers sleeping in their homes and then Jesus had eleven disciples that stayed close to Him. But even out of the eleven, three in particular were close enough to Him that He revealed His agony, deep soul pain and depression to the point His heart nearly died (this is the literal Greek rendering).

Thinking upon these things, how close is your relationship with Jesus? Are you a believer but one who might only go to hear Him at church once a week or only when it is convenient for you? Are you a disciple that follows Him on a daily basis? Do you long to be close enough to Jesus that your heart is burdened with what burdens Him? Mary was in-touch with His burial and poured out a lavish display of her love for Him. Do you respond to His invitations to watch and pray...if only for an hour?

End your lesson with a journal-type reflection on where you think you are in your relationship with Him and where you would like to be. Include a prayer if it comes to your heart.