

June 2, 2019 – Elmont Baptist Church
Message Series: The Gospel of Mark
Week 47: “...Not What I Will, But What You Will.”
Text: Mark 14:26-52

We’re unpacking and understanding the Book of Mark. The Gospel writer’s audience are Roman believers and he writes to help us see Jesus as the Messiah King and Suffering Servant. He works to answer three questions throughout the letter: “Who is Jesus?”, “What did Jesus come to do?”, and “What does Jesus expect of you?”

I don’t know about you, but I don’t particularly enjoy difficult or painful experiences. My usual MO is to try to avoid them if possible, and if I find myself in the midst of a difficulty, I try to get out of it as quickly as possible. That response to pain is just in us, and it doesn’t matter if it’s physical or emotional pain we want it to stop as soon as possible. Through God’s gracious kindness, most of the time after I’ve gone through a difficulty, I can see how God used that experience to change me or grow me in some way. Over the years I’ve learned that God doesn’t waste anything, and I try to remind myself of that when going through a difficult event or season – that God will use this for His glory and my good. That goes better at times than others. For too many of us we don’t think past what we’re going through at that moment and our mood, thoughts, and responses are all directed by our current circumstance. If we’re getting what we want, then things are good, and if we’re not, then look out. Do we like what times of difficulty reveal about the condition of our heart? Do we have ability to look up from our circumstance with vision and see ahead or do we walk with our head down only seeing right here and right now? One of the greatest tragedies of the Christian life is those who continue to live as though we’re still not sure if our King is going to win the war.

In our text today we find Jesus entering into His greatest trial while He is on earth. His mission is about to be accomplished, but in order to finish the job He will have to undergo greater distress and pain than any person ever will. It’s not the physical pain of the cross, but the spiritual pain of becoming our sin and enduring the wrath of God against our sin so that we will never have to. To endure this trial, He will have to look ahead and trust that the Father will bring good out of this. The disciples can’t do that yet. Although they’ve been told many times of Jesus’ death and resurrection, all they can see is right here and right now and their response is going to show that.

What we see in Jesus’ experience of distress and sorrow should help us see our great need for Him to work in us and change us to be more like Him. At the end of the day our words and actions answer the question of “whose will do we want the most? Mine or the Father’s?”

Let’s READ our TEXT

Through this passage we can see that...

In the midst of His deepest pain, Jesus wanted His Father’s will so much because He knew His Father’s heart so well.

Jesus Wanted the Father’s Will, and that...

✓ **Doesn’t Mean He Didn’t Struggle with It – v 33-36**

- He was “distressed”, “troubled”, and “sorrowful”
- He can sympathize with our weaknesses – Hebrews 4:15

This is such a comforting look at Jesus and one of the passages that really shows that He was 100% human while being 100% God at the same time. He doesn't walk to the cross like it's just another day. He understood the gravity of the situation and does not like what He sees. He is fully committed to the will of God and the glory of God, but there is still a distress that needs to be strengthened. I have no story of my own experience that can compare to this, but have been through seasons where I knew what God's will demanded of me and I didn't really like it, but was still committed to it. I didn't know what all would be required of me like Jesus knows, but I walked through it by the grace of God. It wasn't always pretty. One of those times – illus.: Season out of full-time ministry.

One comfort we can draw from this experience of Jesus is that He really can sympathize with our weaknesses. He never sinned, but He endured the weaknesses of human flesh like we do. He endured the temptations that we face. God is so good to record these moments for us that help us know that He is for us and strengthen us to stay committed to being for His glory.

✓ **Drove Him to Draw Near in Prayer – v 35**

- Enjoyed great intimacy – “Abba, Father”
- Declared what was true about the Father – “All things are possible for you”
- Was honest about His desire – “Remove this cup from me”
- Rested in the Father's plan – “Not what I will, but what you will”

Listen to the words of the hymn that they sang when they left the Passover meal from Psalm 118. We can only try to imagine how comforting those words of Truth must have been to Jesus as with each step He neared the cross. In just a couple of hours there wouldn't be a single person wanting to associated with Him, and He tells them that. They don't believe Him, yet. Nothing He can say can strengthen His disciples for what is about to happen, but there is something He can do to find strength for Himself. Pray. He goes where He did so often. Into a quiet place to be alone with His Father, and there we get to see a glimpse of incredible intimacy in the language that the Gospel writer records. Jesus says “Abba, Father”. No one in all of Israel would say this when speaking of or to God. Jesus, God the Son, says “Daddy” and cries out in anguish and asking His Father to scan time and space and make sure there's not another way to redeem sinful man. He doesn't throw away solid theology in His pain, but instead draws upon it – “Nothing is too big for you. You can do this”. I love that we see such boldness in Jesus to pray the desire of His heart without fear, and he does it three times. But not in defiance or opposition to finish the course, but seeking the strength to complete the mission. He's saying, “this is where I'm at. This is what I'm dealing with.” But then these beautiful faith-filled words “yet not what I will, but what you will.” Submission to rest in the Father's plan. Because of the intimacy of the relationship there is trust in the Father to use this pain for our good and His glory. More important than avoiding difficulty is making much of God through Christ. Praying “not my will, but Yours be done” is not a “faulty faith” or “just in case it doesn't happen the way I'm praying” way to pray. It's a faith-filled response to understanding we're asking for something with limited vision and understanding and we know our “flesh is weak”, so we choose to trust God's

plan to do what is best and strengthen us to walk faithfully through whatever that may be. It's praying in trust to our victorious King whose death and resurrection mean I never have to wonder if He is for me or has enough love and power to really make even this experience work for my good and His glory.

We too often do or don't things based on what we want in that moment or what we think others deserve or don't deserve from us. The more difficult our circumstance the more inward are our thoughts and desires. Jesus didn't arrive at decisions that way and at the worst moment of His earthly life His chief desire was to glorify the Father. Now I know, we're not Jesus. He was perfect, we're not. I'm aware. The question isn't about whether or not we walk through trials with an unwavering Godward focus and perfect resolve to finish the course, but has the truth of the resurrection of Jesus changed the posture of our heart and it's growing to what we see here in Jesus' prayer: A desire for intimacy with God through Christ, an growing knowledge of Truth to declare what is true about God, a security of relationship to be gut level honest in prayer, and a faith-filled trust to say "not what I want, but what You want." The hope is that we are encouraged that Jesus shows us how to deal with our weaknesses and rather than leaving us in them, He sympathizes, forgives, restores, and strengthens us.