

June 9, 2019 – Elmont Baptist Church
Message Series: The Gospel of Mark
Week 48: “And Jesus Said, ‘I Am’...”
Text: Mark 14:53-72

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?”

It’s hard to believe that there is a sizable part of our population that has never witnessed a Dallas Cowboys Super Bowl. It’s been a long, long time. I remember those early 90’s teams that seemed unstoppable winning three Super Bowls in four seasons. I remember the opponents, the scores, and most of the players, but for some reason there is only one actual play that really sticks out in my memory, and, if you’re a Cowboys fan, it was one you’d rather forget. *Describe Leon Lett play.* The Dallas Cowboys won the game 52-17, but for some reason that play is the only one that I can remember each time that game is mentioned. It’s not as though that one moment of failure defined the game or changed the outcome. The victory was in hand as it was near the end of the game and the lead was safe.

If we’re not careful, we can get caught up in our failures and forget that the war is won and the victory is safe in the hand of our King. Though we still sin and fail; His victory is so all-encompassing it not only covers our sin but turns it on its head for our good and the glory of our great King.

Let’s READ our TEXT

Through this passage we can see that...

The victory and compassion of Jesus mean that our failures are fully forgiven and used for our good and His glory.

The Victory and Compassion of Jesus Mean...

✓ **Our Failures are Fully Forgiven**

- Following at a distance
- Fear of man > Love for Jesus
- Failure with our words

We see rather common human struggles in this glimpse of Peter. In verse 54, we see that he is literally following at a distance, but this is accurate of where he is spiritually as well. We too get in seasons where we follow at a distance. Other things creep in and steal our attention and affection. It’s not that we don’t like or even love Jesus, but there are other things that take the priority position of our heart. Those things can be physical, relational, or emotional. For Peter right now, it’s emotional. He’s scared for his life. He feels it’s safer to be warmed at the enemy’s fire than it is to be close to Jesus. Again, he still loves Jesus, but the fear of man is just bigger right now. Just a flash forward: Peter is going to change dramatically after the resurrection of Jesus and the coming of the Holy Spirit, but he is still going to struggle with how he is viewed by others. We see evidence of that in Paul’s letter to the Galatians. When our hearts are fearful of what others think of us, then our words will express that fear. We will not seize opportunities to declare our love and allegiance to Jesus, to speak up

against sin, and testify to the power of restoration and forgiveness. We will keep silent or join in the conversation we know to be foolish.

But here's the good news for Peter and us: Jesus knew all this was going to happen and even told Peter about it. Luke's record of Jesus warning Peter is alarming and amazingly gracious at the same time. What we see here is that yes, Peter messed up big time, but bigger than His mess up, was Jesus' compassion and forgiveness. Our failure isn't final if our response is repentance. Because grace is not an excuse to sin.

✓ **Used for Our Good and His Glory**

- Develop humility (not being defensive)
- Depend upon Jesus (not our strength)
- Declare His name (not ours)

Before this experience Peter was bold and outspoken. He was quick to speak up and step out. Those aren't bad things especially when surrendered to Jesus, but can turn into arrogance and pride very easily. When told that they would all fall away from following Jesus and that Peter specifically would deny even knowing Jesus, his response was a lot of "I won't" and "I will never". He was confident in his own strength and ability. That confidence needed to go, so that he could put his confidence on Jesus. We see a picture of humility in Jesus when being questioned. He doesn't do what we do and get defensive, but is able to remain silent trusting the Father's plan. Peter is going to learn humility through this experience. James 4 gives us the instruction to "humble ourselves before God". We can humble ourselves or God can humble us. Trust me the prior is better than the latter. This is a lifelong learning process. We don't arrive at humility, we grow in it. To grow in humility, we actively engage in doing things that are selfless. You work to break selfish habits and replace them with selfless ones. As we grow in humility, and more and more depend on Jesus, then the natural overflow that we will seize opportunities to declare His name and worth because we won't be as concerned with needing to tell everyone about our name and worth. These lessons are most often learned through trial or failure. The encouragement is that none of your failures are wasted or final. The beauty of the promises of Scripture are that God can and will take everything and turn it in such a way to use it for your good and His glory. Your failures do not cancel out promises like Genesis 50:20, Matthew 11:28-30; Romans 8:1, 28, 32; Hebrews 4:16 and many others.

The victory and compassion of Jesus mean that our failures are fully forgiven and used for our good and His glory.

If hearing that truth causes you to be comfortable in your failures, then please understand that that is not a good thing. Hearing this truth should cause you to repent and find comfort in the forgiveness of Jesus. Maybe it's that you've been following at a distance and you know it's time to make your relationship with Jesus the priority. Are you confident in your own strength rather than in Jesus? Are you aware that that is a faulty foundation to rest your confidence on? What are you doing to grow in humility? Evaluate your heart, thoughts, and habits. Confess what you know isn't right and then be so encouraged that all that is not wasted. God used it to teach and change your heart. Thank Him for that.

Genesis 50:20

20 As for you, you meant evil against me, but God meant it for good, to bring it about that many people should be kept alive, as they are today.

Matthew 11:28-30

28 Come to me, all who labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. 29 Take my yoke upon you, and learn from me, for I am gentle and lowly in heart, and you will find rest for your souls. 30 For my yoke is easy, and my burden is light."

Romans 8:1

1 There is therefore now no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus.

Romans 8:28

28 And we know that for those who love God all things work together for good, for those who are called according to his purpose.

Romans 8:32

32 He who did not spare his own Son but gave him up for us all, how will he not also with him graciously give us all things?

Hebrews 4:16

16 Let us then with confidence draw near to the throne of grace, that we may receive mercy and find grace to help in time of need.