

Faithfulness and Arrogance

Mark 14:22-31

Series: Christ our Focus

1. Introduction:

- a. This section is part of the Markian Sandwich begun last week.
 - i. A¹ – Betrayal of Disciples – Verses 17-21
 - ii. B – Last Supper – Verses 22-26
 - iii. A² -- Defection of the Disciples – verses 27-31
- b. Into the context of the infidelity and defection of the disciples Mark places the last Supper as the central part.
- c. Mark records that Jesus knew
 - i. Who the ultimate traitor was
 - ii. That all the disciples would defect
 - iii. And yet, Christ still communes with them during the Last Supper—offering himself for them and all like them.

2. Verse 22 – The Bread – His Body

- a. Christ breaks the bread in a symbolic gesture.
- b. He gives it to the disciples because similarly, he will give his body for them.
- c. When Jesus said, “This is my body.”
 - i. The Greek word—*Sōma*—he meant his body, his being, his very self.
 - ii. The result is the gift of Jesus himself.
 - iii. They may feed on him by faith whenever they gather for table fellowship in his name.

3. Verses 23-24 – The Cup

- a. At this supper, the attendees are traitors, cowards.
 - i. This table is not a table of merit but of grace.
 - ii. **Romans 5:6-8** For while we were still weak, at the right time Christ died for the ungodly. (7) For one will scarcely die for a righteous person--though perhaps for a good person one would dare even to die-- (8) but God shows his love for us in that while we were still sinners, Christ died for us.
- b. This is my blood

- i. In Hebrew the life of a creature resided in its blood; Jesus' reference to the cup as "my blood" thus implies his very life.
 - ii. The blood of the covenant must be understood with the original covenant of Moses in which the blood of a surrogate sacrificial animal was thrown on the people. The new covenant here instituted must be sealed by Jesus' blood; it is not simply thrown on the community but imbibed into the believer.
 - 1. **Exodus 24:8** And Moses took the blood and threw it on the people and said, "Behold the blood of the covenant that the LORD has made with you in accordance with all these words."
 - iii. Jesus' death as a vicarious sacrifice for the lawless, sinners, and transgressors.
- 4. Verse 25-26 – Until that day – A future Kingdom
 - a. When God's kingdom is finally realized.
- 5. Verses 27-28 – Defection
 - a. Christ informs them of their impending failure
 - i. Sovereignty
 - ii. God knows the state of the heart
 - b. The Greek word for fall away – *skandalizein* – means to "cause to stumble" or "to fall." It carries a passive sense, that is, it does not mean that the disciples will willfully defect but that eternal factors will act upon them and cause them to do so.
 - i. They are guilty – i.e. lack of prayer
 - ii. There is a failure to do what Jesus told them to do in Chapter 13 – watch and pray.
 - iii. Sins of weakness and irresoluteness rather than sins of intention are recorded for us here.
 - iv. We do not plan of sinning, but neither do we hold the fort when we ought.
 - c. I will strike – God does the striking as foretold in the Scriptures
 - i. Evil is used by God to fulfill his greater purpose.
 - d. Consolation – Verse 28 – the prediction of Jesus' resurrection from the dead
 - e. Jesus promises a renewal of discipleship. The Kingdom cannot be destroyed by human weakness or failure. He called them and will recall them.

- i. **Psalms 37:23-24** The steps of a man are established by the LORD, when he delights in his way; (24) though he fall, he shall not be cast headlong, for the LORD upholds his hand.

6. Verses 29-31 – Arrogance

- a. Whenever Jesus predicts his passion in Mark, the disciples respond with self-assertion and conceit rather than with humility.
- b. Peter responds for himself and as the spokesman for the disciples.
- c. Peter insinuates that the other disciples are weak but that he is strong.
 - i. He is the exception to the rule; where others fail, he will succeed.
- d. Reality – today
 - i. A threefold denial is not a momentary slip of weakness. Three times lets Peter and we know how quickly the best intentions can fade before a serious onslaught.
 - 1. What are we capable of?
 - ii. Peter protest even greater and in the process corrects Jesus.
 - 1. They all said the same
 - a. This is no corporate victimization

7. Final thought – the essential evil in the world and the essential atonement for the evil of the world are present at the table of the Lord’s Supper – whenever it is celebrated.

8. Benediction –

- a. **1 Timothy 1:15** The saying is trustworthy and deserving of full acceptance, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners, of whom I am the foremost.