Is the End Near?

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[0:00] This is the First Mustang Pulpit Podcast, a podcast of the weekly preaching and teaching at First Mustang.! Thank you for joining us. And they were amazed.

And those who followed were afraid. And taking the twelve again, he began to tell them what was to happen to him, saying, See, we are going up to Jerusalem, and the Son of Man will be delivered over to the chief priests and the scribes, and they will condemn him to death and deliver him over to the Gentiles.
And they will mock him and spit on him and flog him and kill him. And after three days, he will rise.
You can be seated.
Everything about the Old Testament is pointing toward the salvation that God provides. Genesis 1, Genesis 2 tell the story of creation. Genesis 3, we have Adam and Eve in the garden.
They sin, and the consequences, the curses of sin are then given. The animal realm has changed. The earth has changed. The nature of mankind is forever impacted by that.
[1:13] But just right after that sin happens, we are told in Genesis 3, 15 that God has a plan, and it's a plan for our redemption. This was the plan actually from the foundation of the world, the Bible tells us.

And the rest of your Old Testament from Genesis 3, 15 on is telling the story of how that redemption is going to come. It is, of course, ultimately revealed to us in the person of Jesus Christ, and that becomes the central story of the Bible.
The Old Testament looking toward the Old Testament looking toward the Old Testament. The Old Testament looking toward the sacrifice to come. The Gospels explain that Christ is the sacrifice, and the rest of the New Testament telling us as a church our role in going to tell the story of salvation found in Jesus.
It is the story of redemption that is the theme of the Bible. The same is true here in the Gospel of Mark. The story of redemption is the central theme.
Mark devotes ten chapters to three and a half years of the ministry of Jesus, and six full chapters to this last week of his life.
[2:26] That's true for all the Gospels, that that is their focus, is this final week, what we call the Passion Week of Christ. The story of his triumphal entry, the events leading up to his betrayal and arrest and crucifixion and ultimately his resurrection.

In the Gospel of Matthew, one-third of the Gospel is about the last week of Christ. In Mark, it's a third. Twenty-five percent of Luke is just about that last week in the life of Jesus, and nearly half of the Gospel of John, chapters 12 to 20, are about the last week in the life of Jesus.
As we continue to study through the Gospel of Mark, we come here to verses 32 to 34, and just as a reminder, as the text tells us, they are making their way toward Jerusalem. We are now just days away from the triumphal entry.
When the triumphal entry takes place, at that point, we are then just a few days away from the events of the crucifixion. And so, while we are still in Mark's Gospel, a few page turns away from the details of the crucifixion, we are now just a few days away from that last week in his life that will take up the rest of the Gospel of Mark.
And in this short paragraph, just three verses, 32, 33, and 34, what may seem like a pretty obvious retelling of this prophecy related to the cross and the resurrection, I think actually has a couple of details here that are very important and insightful for us if we have eyes to see it this morning.
[4:20] I want to do this by just showing you two main things that are a part of this short passage as we preview the coming end of the life of Jesus leading up to his resurrection.

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And I'll do it first by looking at the emotions on the walk to Jerusalem, because the emotions are very telling for us here. The emotions on the walk to Jerusalem.
It tells us again in verse 32, they were on the road going up to Jerusalem. Jesus has been up north, coming down through the area of Perea.
He has spent the night near the Dead Sea. People have brought little children to him to bless as they are making their way to Jerusalem. He's just encountered a man we know as the rich young ruler.
According to Luke, he's going to be going to Jericho, where he will meet a man named Zacchaeus. And at that point, he will be about 20 miles away from Jerusalem, although the elevation is 3,500 feet higher.
[5:32] And so that's why it would be described as going up to Jerusalem. And then this phrase that at first feels like something we would just quickly move past, but we don't want to do that.

They were on the road going up to Jerusalem, and Jesus was walking ahead of them. Our temptation, if we're just quickly reading through the Bible, would be to see that as maybe an insignificant detail, but it's far from insignificant.
When you look at the emotions of the walk to Jerusalem, make note first of confidence. Confidence. Jesus was walking ahead of them.
He leads the way. Full of resolve. Confident in what he is doing. And it's a very significant detail. And the reason it's so significant is because of what Jesus is about to tell them. He's about to remind them what he's already told them before, that very soon he is going to be handed over, delivered over.
[6:53] He's going to be betrayed, and the text tells us he will be condemned to death. He first gave this prophecy three years ago.

It's recorded in John chapter 2. He then gave it about one year ago. That's in Mark chapter 8. And he did it six months before this, right after the transfiguration.
That's recorded in Mark chapter 9. Three different times he has spoken openly to his apostles here about what is to come.
He is marching toward Jerusalem days before the events of the cross, and he's out in front.
He leads the way. He's not running from this. He's not hiding from this. He understands this is his mission. His confidence is seen when it is juxtaposed with the other emotions that we see.
[8:08] In verse 32, it next says, And they, his apostles, they were amazed. That's our second emotion. You have the confidence of Jesus and the amazement of the apostles.

And the reason why the apostles are amazed is if Jesus is right, and he's about to be handed over, he's about to be delivered up to be crucified, he's about to die, they are amazed that he would be so confident in what he's doing to be out in front and lead the way.
I mean, if somebody were to come into this town looking for you, hoping to find you for the purpose of arresting you, you would probably find yourself in hiding.
And if you found yourself having to be out in public for some reason, you would no doubt try to blend in with the crowd and try to put as many people between you and those who may be seeking your demise, not Jesus.
Mark makes it clear Jesus was walking ahead of them, triumphantly walking to the cross.
[9:29] The apostles are amazed. He's not hiding. He's not running. He's leading.

A third emotion we see is fear. Fear. It says Jesus walked ahead of them. They were amazed. And those who followed, this is the crowd of people who have been walking with him down this path to the area of Perea. Those who followed were afraid.
You have the confidence of Jesus, the amazement of the apostles, and the fear of the crowd. Now, as they're marching here toward Jerusalem, they're going to be singing what's known as the Psalms of Ascent, Psalm 120 to Psalm 134.
And we see the emotions of this walk when we understand why the crowd is afraid.
[10:35] When you understand why the crowd is afraid, you then understand why the apostles were amazed that Christ was so confident.

It's the springtime. We're right near the month of April. And just a few months ago, chronologically, in the events of the life of Jesus, around November, Jesus went up for the Feast of Tabernacles. Let's record it for us in John 9. In November, the leaders declared anyone who confessed Jesus as Messiah would be put out of the synagogue.

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And it was just a few weeks before this event in Mark 10, likely in late February, that the leaders tried to stone Jesus and put him to death.
The apostles were stunned when Jesus was willing to go to Bethany, just over the hills of Jerusalem, to go to the work of raising Lazarus back from the dead, because they knew people were trying to kill him.
[11:52] And I'll just, let me just show it to you. Keep Mark 10 marked, but just turn over quickly to John 11. Let me show this so you can see with your own eyes here. John 11. There was a time where Jesus would not lead the way, not because he was afraid, but because his time had not yet come.

People had tried to kill Jesus before, but it wasn't his time. Verse 55 says, Now the Passover of the Jews was at hand, and many went up from the country to Jerusalem before the Passover to purify themselves.
And they were looking for Jesus, and saying to one another as they stood in the temple, What do you think? That he will not come to the feast at all? Now the chief priests and Pharisees had given orders that if anyone knew where he was, he should let them know so that they might arrest him.
In other words, it's become public knowledge that the leaders are looking to destroy Jesus. The people fear the end is near.
And questions begin to swirl all around. Is Jesus going to hide? Is he not going to show up? Is he not going to be here? Word has gotten out that they are looking for him, and if they find him, they want to arrest him.
[13:24] And the reason they want to arrest him is they want to kill him. And so what a sight. The crowd, in fear of what may happen, the apostles amazed at their leader, Jesus confidently walking and leading the group up to Jerusalem.

These are the emotions of those who are with Jesus. There's confidence. There's amazement. And there's fear. Those who were most fearful were those who were focusing on the threats of the world.
The one who is leading the way with confidence is the one who has his heart and mindset on the mission for which he came. And I just want to remind you, congregation, that our confidence comes when we remind ourself of the mission that we have in the victory Christ has already won.
When we look at the threats of the world, we're going to get discouraged. We're going to become fearful. It's when we remind ourself that Christ has already accomplished for us what we could not. When we remind ourself Christ has already won the battle that we could not. Christ has already purchased our salvation for all who believe, and we set our eyes upon him, and we follow him, and we remind ourselves that the cross, while graphic and glory, was the place where our salvation was purchased once for all.
[15:15] And so, we set our eyes upon him, and we can be confident, not in ourselves, but in the work he has done, and therefore, we are faithful to fulfill the mission he has given to us.

That's the emotions on the walk to Jerusalem. But while they're walking, we see a second thing, and it's the prophecy of the events to take place in Jerusalem.
The prophecy of the events to take place in Jerusalem. And I want you to make note of these so you can see with detail all that Jesus is saying. First, Jesus says, God is accomplishing something. This isn't just about threats. God is accomplishing something. Look at verse 33. He was telling them what was to happen, saying, see, we are going up to Jerusalem.
Now, right when he says that, the crowd and the disciples probably take a bit of a deep breath. Because there's a certain word right away that grabs their attention.
[16:30] You know what word it is? Jesus, we. We are going to Jerusalem. The apostles are amazed that Jesus is so confidently leading the way.

The crowd is fearful because they know the threats against Jesus. And Jesus says, here's where we are going. Now, if you're a frightened follower, and Jesus says, these things are going to happen, including, they're going to come and arrest and kill me, and by the way, you're going with me, that can make you filled with fear.
He says, we are going. Now, you would go to Jerusalem for Passover. You would go to Jerusalem for Pentecost. You would go up to Jerusalem for the Feast of Tabernacles.
And Jesus says, we're going up, this is for Passover here, to commemorate God's deliverance of His people during the Exodus. See, we are going up to Jerusalem, and the Son of Man will be

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delivered over to the chief priests and scribes.
Son of Man, as you know, is Jesus' preferred way. He referred to Himself over 84 times in the Gospels that would take place. And He says, the Son of Man is going to be delivered.
[17:51] Now, we covered the uniqueness of that word and the detail of it back in Mark 9, 31. It's true that Jesus will be betrayed by Judas.

It's true that the officers will come to arrest Him. It's true that the nation is going to betray Christ and hand Him over and demand His execution.
But what Mark 9, 31 showed us in the language is Christ ultimately is being delivered over, handed over by the Father to them because this is the purpose of God.
Jesus is betrayed by Judas, yes, but it's all according to the definite plan of God. Again, let me just help you see this with Scripture.
Acts 2, verses 22 and 23 says this, Men of Israel, hear these words. Jesus of Nazareth, a man attested to you by God with mighty works and wonders and signs that God did through Him in your midst as you yourselves know.
[19:02] Here's verse 23. This Jesus delivered up according to the definite plan and foreknowledge of God.

You crucified and killed by the hands of lawless men. The New Testament's commentary on what Jesus meant when He said, I will be delivered over.
The explanation from the New Testament itself is that lawless men, they did this, they're responsible for this, they are guilty for this, yet it happened according to the definite plan and foreknowledge of God.
God's foreknowledge in Acts 2 is not just knowing what people will do, it's His definite plan. That's the language of Acts 2. The wicked men are held responsible for their sinful actions.
And yet, the events of the cross are according to the foreknowledge, not just that He knows something, but the definite plan of God for our redemption.
[20:18] And if your thought today is, well, pastor, resolve that for me, how it is, people are held responsible for what they choose to do while God is sovereign over even those events and His foreknowledge, my answer is, I feel no pressure to resolve that which the Scripture clearly affirms and does not feel the need to explain.

As Spurgeon said it, when it comes to human responsibility and divine sovereignty, you don't reconcile friends. They stand together. Is the cross the foreknowledge, the definite plan of God? Yes. Are guilty people making sinful choices that they're accountable for? Yes. If that keeps you awake at night, take it up with God, not me, I'm just reading the text.
The events of the cross happen because of the definite plan of God according to His foreknowledge, and yet, Judas does what his heart wants to do, the leaders do what they want to do, the mob does what they want to do, but it's not just good luck or good fortune that it all worked out the way God wanted to.
This was all according to His definite plan. Which, by the way, is why Jesus walked so confidently. And by the way, it's why you should too.
[21:46] not because you're Jesus, but because you're His. And the same sovereignty that planned all the details of the cross and the resurrection is the same sovereignty that you lay your head upon each night and say, I belong to God.

And you may stay awake at night trying to figure out how all these things can be. That's fine. But at some point, you've got to come to this conclusion. The Bible presents God as the one who has declared the end from the beginning and He has no rival.
And this is why the church is triumphant. Because we serve a sovereign God. Jesus teaches a second thing, and that is that the rejection of the people is real.
These are real people making real choices according to their heart's desire, and the rejection is real. We see it back to verse 33. See, we are going up to Jerusalem and the Son of Man will be delivered over to the chief priests and the scribes and they will condemn Him to death.
This is what they choose to do. They reject. And their rejection is going to be carried out. And the rejection gets carried out over the course of six different trials for the purpose to deliver Him over to the Gentiles.
[23:35] Now, remember, the Jewish people do not want to have to get Rome's permission to put someone to death. They want to be free to do that, but they're not.

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Now, every once in a while, if Rome has turned their eye to look somewhere else, they might could get by with putting someone to death. And if they could put someone to death their own way, they wouldn't do it by crucifixion.
That's Roman. They would do it by stoning. That would be their preferred way to do it. But most of the time, they can't get by with that, and they've got to get Rome's approval.
And certainly, at this point in time, with the events and all the people coming to Jerusalem, Rome is in town. Rome is watching. You're not going to get by with anything, and so, they're going to have to hand Jesus over to the Gentiles.
They're going to have to get Rome's approval to put Jesus to death. And the third thing Jesus tells us is that hatred will motivate their actions.
[24:38] Verse 34, they will mock him and spit on him and flog him. This takes place once Jesus is arrested.

We'll get to that when we get later on in the Gospel of Mark. Jesus will be arrested, and they're going to take Jesus in front of Caiaphas, the high priest, the Sanhedrin.
They're going to be then taken and handed him over to the Roman authorities. That's Pilate and Herod, and so, you're going to see those trials unfold. Six trials, Annas, the former high priest, Caiaphas, the Sanhedrin, that's one, two, three.
Those are the Jewish trials. They're going to then go in front of the Roman authorities, Pilate for trial four, Herod for trial five, back again to Pilate a second time for trial six.
It's in the course of this second set of three trials, Pilate, Herod, and Pilate, that they are going to just unleash hatred upon him. You're going to see them calling for his demise and cheering for him to be crucified.
[25:46] He's going to be mocked, he's going to be spit upon. When he hangs on the cross, pastors by are going to curse him. He's going to be flogged, scourged, something that many people didn't even survive that part of.

But many who were arrested and were being crucified never even made it to crucifixion because the events that led up to being nailed to the cross were so devastating, many lost their lives before they even got to the crucifixion itself.
Hatred will motivate their actions. A fourth part of the prophecy, Jesus says that he will die. Verse 34 again, they will mock him and spit on him and flog him and kill him.
These are all the things Jesus prophesies about the crucifixion. God is accomplishing something, he's working his plan, but the rejection of the people is real.
Hatred is what motivates their actions. Jesus will die. And in the fifth part of the prophecy, death will not end the story.
[27:06] The very last sentence of verse 33, and after three days, he will rise. Death will not end the story.

The reason why the crowds were so afraid while they were walking up to Jerusalem is they thought the end was near. They knew that people were looking for Jesus.
They knew that people were trying to catch and condemn Jesus. They knew that people had already said, if you find him, let us know because we want him. And the reason they wanted him was to not discredit him, but to destroy him.
the reason the crowd all around Jesus is so frightened and so fearful is they fear that if Christ goes into Jerusalem that the end is near.
He's going to be captured. Jesus himself has said they're going to get me, I'm going to be delivered over, they're going to mock me, they're going to spit on me, that's insulting, but that doesn't end a man's life, they're going to flog me, that could end a man's life, and then to make it clear, they will kill me, he will be put to death.
[28:22] This is why the crowd is so afraid. This is why the apostles are so amazed that Jesus leads the way. I mean, Jesus is leading the way while he's telling people what's about to happen to him.

And the crowd is surely thinking, if this is true, why are you out in front? Get in the middle, walk low, cover your face, let us surround you, let us shield you, get in the back where no one can see you, but of all things, Jesus is out in front, and the people are amazed, because the people here from the very words of Jesus that when we make it there, they're not just going to hate me, they're not going to just mock me, they're going to kill me.

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Why is Jesus so confident in the face of such a real threat? It's because after three days he says, I will rise.
How does he know he's going to rise? because this is the plan of God. Acts 2 says this is the foreknowledge of God.
This is his plan. On the path to Jerusalem, God is in control. Church, you need to understand the ramifications of that.
[30:00] God is God. Yes, real people make real threats and carry out real desires. It's true. And yet, all of that is under the umbrella of this truth.

God is in control. For Paul, a little bit later on in church history, a few decades from now, in this text, the apostle Paul is going to face real threats from real people, and they will really put him to death. And God is in control. And today, in our day, real people in the world make real threats to Christians and carry out their heart's desires to actually martyr believers.
It happens. It's real. And yet, God is in control. And one of these days, you're going to come to the end of your life.
And it may be by disease, it may be by a natural disaster, it may be by the threats of an evildoer, and God is in control.
[31:43] God is in control. And so, I want to implore you, to walk and live your life confidently in the midst of real threats.

Not because you're Jesus, but because you're His. And the same almighty God that's in control over the events of the Passion Week is the same God who's in control over the events of the end of days, whenever that comes, and is the same God that's in control and sovereign in your life, in all details, in every season, no matter what.
This is why believers need not live in fear. And you say, but don't you know this is a dangerous world? Sure it is, but God is in control. Don't you know that real threats are made against believers? Yes, but God is in control. Don't you know that there's all kinds of terrible things on the news? Yes, but God is in control. And it's the confidence of knowing that whatever threats may come our way from the hands of those outside the church, their hatred may be real, their threats may be real, and they may even act on those threats and even in that moment, our hope is in the God who rules and reigns over all things with no peer and with no rival.
And so the people of God march on following the mission and the mandate the Lord left for us.
[33:38] and it's worth noting that while in Mark 10, just a few days before the triumphal entry, it starts in chapter 11, the apostles are amazed at what Jesus is doing, the crowd is fearful, and in just a few days, right before the events of the crucifixion, the disciples are running and they're fleeing in fear, they're as afraid as they've ever been, most of his followers have deserted him because of fear, and something changes all that.

Something changes and these apostles who run in fear very soon are going to be willing to lay down their lives as they boldly preach the gospel.
Something changes and something happens where people who were much more talk than they were action, something transforms them and they now are filled with such courage that the threats of mankind have no power over them.
You know what it is? It's the resurrection. resurrection. In fact, Jesus' own brothers didn't even believe in who he was until something happened.
The resurrection. After the resurrection, his own brothers who didn't even believe his message or believe his mission, they now believe and submit themselves to him and are willing to give up their lives for the sake of the gospel.
[35:33] See, one of the reasons why Jesus leads the group so confidently is not because the threats weren't real, they were. And it's not because the threat of death wasn't real, it was.

It's because he knew how this was all going to end. See, the crowd was afraid the end was near, meaning that when he dies, the story ends. Jesus says, you've got it right, I will die, but the end is nowhere near.
Because after three days, I will rise. That is showing you the sovereignty of God, the perfection of his plan, and the confidence that you and I can have that we can trust every word of scripture.
So what about you this morning? Do you find yourself filled with fear? Maybe it's fear of the world, fear of headlines, fear of your own mortality, fear of what someone has said about you, or fear of what may happen to you a year from now, or five years from now, or twenty years from now.

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If you find yourselves filled with fear, here's the answer. Look to Jesus. See Christ. Look to Jesus leading the way with boldness and confidence in his mission and certainty in his plan.
[37:23] You find yourself today without hope? You find yourself today more consumed by the world around you than anything else?

Here's the answer. Look to Jesus. See him. And understand that the very people who are watching Jesus constantly lead away in just a few days will see the tragic news that he was put to death. The threats were not imagined. The threats were real. But they have the assurance that after three days he will rise.
And you have the assurance that to be absent from the body is to be present with the Lord. And you have the assurance that Christ is coming again to receive you to himself.
And you have the assurance that great is your reward in heaven. And you have the assurance that to live is Christ and to die is gain.
[38:46] so yes this is a hard world. And yes there are threats against believers. And yes disease is real.

And yes the outer man wastes away 2 Corinthians 4. Here's the promise. as God's people you belong to him.
And Jesus said if I live you live. And even when it seems like the world has won which on the events of the crucifixion it did.
It seemed like that. and on Saturday of the crucifixion it seemed like that. Jesus said cling to this promise. After three days I will rise.
And he did. Amen. He keeps his word. He keeps his promise. his promise. So when you're tempted to retreat in fear at the threats of this world or the threats of disease whatever it may be I want you to remember Mark 10 32.
[40:19] And Jesus was walking ahead of them. Not afraid because he knew how the story would end.

And in the same way we walk not afraid because we know how this ends. We will be with the Lord. That's true for Christians. Should you be here this morning and you don't know Christ is your Savior that promise isn't true for you. But it can be.
the Bible says that we are all sinners that all have fallen short of the glory of God. But the wages of sin is death but the gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord.
That if we would believe in his name if we would repent from our sin and have faith in the Lord Jesus Christ the promise of scripture is that by his grace we will be saved.
[41:25] I want to be very honest and direct with you if you don't know Christ as savior you should be more fearful than you are. but the good news for you is that Jesus died and on the third day he was raised to life and that all who believe in him all who belong to him are saved forgiven redeemed and restored and I want to invite you this day if you don't know Christ as your savior to turn from your sin to cling to the mercy of Jesus Christ and to say in your heart Lord I know that I'm a sinner but I'm trusting in you

I'm trusting in the work of your son who has paid for my sin I'm clinging to the power that has raised Christ back from the dead and I'm giving my whole heart to you and I will follow you all the days of my life those aren't magical words it's just a biblical response to the truth of the gospel and if you've never given your life to the Lord Jesus I implore you even this day to confess your sin cling to Christ and follow him all the days of your life Lord we thank you for your word today and pray that it would give boldness and confidence and courage to those who are fearful that it would give hope to those who are shaken that it would bring conviction to those who are unconverted and in all things may it bring us clarity of just how great you are and the sovereignty of your will and while our finite minds can understand much there is some things just too great for us to fully grasp and that's okay because you're
God and we're not may you give us faith to trust courage to follow and a will that would seek the glory of your son and not our own we pray in Jesus name amen to to to to!
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