



Courage and Proclamation Mark 13-16

In Mark 14:27-28, Jesus told his disciples, “You will all fall away, for it is written, *I will strike the shepherd, and the sheep will be scattered*. But,” he continued, after I am raised up, I will go before you into Galilee.”

Times change, but the challenges of life often repeat themselves. When Jesus was arrested, most of the ‘disciple-sheep’ scattered, in fear for their lives. Then, as now, it takes more than quickly made promises (e.g., Peter who said, “Even though they all fall away, I will not!”) to follow Christ. He was a servant who gave up his life to ransom many. And, He wants to live in us – his present day servants – to bring the life-changing gospel to those who are wandering and lost in this world.

This study surveys the responses of people – some of them disciples – who were in-and-around God’s sacrificing Servant-Son as he went to the cross. We want to learn from their experience, and grow in our own courage to identify with and proclaim the good news of Jesus. **Faithful servants of the gospel understand that in all of our lives, the cross precedes the crown.**

GETTING STARTED – Discuss (10 minutes)

- Today, what would you say makes the gospel difficult to share with people? What are the barriers? What gets in the way?
- How much does our own fear get in the way? What are we afraid of? Can the Spirit help us with this?

TIME IN SCRIPTURE

Sometimes, we are UNPREPARED for the challenge – What do we learn about this from Mark 14:32-42?

Sometimes, we may be INTIMIDATED by the challenge – What was intimidating about what was unfolding in Mark 14:43-50?

**** NOTE:** Mark 14:51-52 Many NT scholars suggest that Mark (the author of the gospel, With Peter’s help) references himself in these verses, as the one who also ran!

Sometimes, we may be SCARED by the challenge – What do you think is happening in Peter’s heart in these moments?
Mark 14:66-72

Sometimes, we may be SUDDENLY CALLED INTO the challenge – What impact do you think this unexpected task made on Simon? Mark 15:21 (Do we get a clue from Romans 16:13?)

Sometimes, we can HAVE A NEW REALIZATION in the experience – Mark 15:33-39 describes the centurion’s experience. What insight did God give him about the crucified Jesus?

Sometimes, we just ACT IN COURAGE in the challenge – why do you think Joseph of Arimathea stepped forward?
Mark 15:42-47 What does it take for courage to replace fear?

Finally, in his resurrection, Jesus felt it necessary to hold his disciples accountable for their fear (Mark 16:14-15). **If Jesus were present in your group as you are meeting right now**, what do you think He would say to you right now about sharing the good news about Him?

PERSONAL TO US

In this final consideration of CHOOSE GREATNESS – SERVE, we find Mark’s account urging us to openly and eagerly serve Jesus’ “the world is broken, let’s fix it” mission by sharing the life-changing gospel.

Have you made any personal decisions, and taken any steps, to step forward and serve the Lord in this way with someone? As you finish together, pray about any of the “barriers” that were studied (above). Then ask God’s Spirit to create a new chapter in your life of eager, courageous gospels sharing.