

**Introduction**

1. We have been working over the past month to get our screened porch ready for summertime use and fun.
  - a. One of the first things we did was have a brick mason redo the steps from the tearoom to the porch.
  - b. The original steps were done in a hurry at the end of original construction and the brick mason at that time didn't understand what we wanted.
  - c. We didn't like the steps but lived with them until a good friend stumbled and fell on them. Fortunately she was not hurt, but we knew those steps had to be changed—they were a stumbling hazard.
2. In this passage, Jesus tells His disciples that all of them will stumble and fall away from Him as the time comes for Him to be handed over to the Jewish authorities and be crucified.
3. **Read Mk 14:27-31.**

**A. Jesus Predicts More Betrayals (27-28)**

1. At the end of the last lesson, Jesus and His disciples had completed their Passover Seder by singing a hymn and departing for the Mt. of Olives and the Garden of Gethsemane ("oil press"). This garden at the foot of the Mt. of Olives is a grove of olive trees with an olive oil press.
2. Also in the last lesson, Jesus had predicted that He would be betrayed by one of His own disciples.
  - a. He had said that "one who dips bread into the bowl with me" would betray Him (cf., Mk 14:20).
  - b. We know from Mark's continuing story that this betrayer was Judas Iscariot (cf., Mk 14:44-46).
3. However, Jesus predicted in this passage that His betrayal will include all of His disciples: "You will all fall away" (27).
  - a. "fall away" (Gk., *skandalisthsesthe* - "fall away, take offense, cause to sin" – cf., Mk 4:17, 6:3, 9:42-47); scandal
  - b. Note the word used of Judas' betrayal was *paradidomai* (cf, Mk 14:10,18), which means "hand over." Judas' betrayal was pre-meditated and active while the betrayal of the disciples, while active, would come without pre-mediation or thought other than for self-preservation.
  - c. The disciples would not lose their faith permanently but would lose their courage temporarily.
  - d. In the near future, all of His disciples will be scandalized by their betrayal of Him.
  - e. William Lane notes, "'To be offended' at Jesus is the opposite to believing and delighting in him. It implies the desire to be dissociated from him because too close an association with Jesus invites the treatment he receives. Jesus' word emphasizes once again that every time he speaks of his passion, he provokes a crisis for the disciples (see above on Ch. 8:31f.; 9:31f.; 10:32)" (William Lane, *The Gospel of Mark*, 511).
4. James Brooks comments, "The theme of abandonment dominates 14:27-72: Jesus was abandoned by denial (Peter, vv. 66-72), indifference (Peter, James, and John in Gethsemane, vv. 37-41), betrayal (, vv. 42-45), and fleeing (the Twelve and the young man, vv. 50-52). Such examples serve as encouragement and warning for readers/hearers who have sometimes abandoned Jesus or are tempted to do so in persecution. This section shows that the unfaithfulness of the disciples was foreseen by Jesus and prophesied by Scripture. An explanation was needed for the conduct of those who became the leaders of the early church" (James Brooks, *Mark*, 231).
5. Jesus was not upset by their impending betrayal but saw it as another fulfillment of prophecy: "I will strike the shepherd, and the sheep will be scattered."
  - a. "'Awake, sword, against my shepherd, against the man who is close to me!' declares the LORD Almighty. 'Strike shepherd, and the sheep will be scattered, and I will turn my hand against the little ones'" (Zech 13:7).
  - b. In the context of Zechariah's original message, James Brooks notes the alteration of the quotation from first person future ("I will") to second-person imperative ("Strike") such that Jesus ". . . emphasizes that God smote the Shepherd in accordance with his will and that the Shepherd was not smitten by men contrary to divine providence. Sometimes the quotation of a brief passage is intended to recall a larger one, and that may be the case here. Zechariah 13 tells about a coming cleansing from sin and reform of existing religious institutions. As a result of being smitten, Jesus effected such things" (Brooks, 231).

- c. Daniel Akin also adds, “This prophecy referred to the ‘martyrdom of the eschatological prophet’ (Edwards, *Mark*, 428). The Father will strike His Son, the Good Shepherd (John 10). His suffering and death is divinely ordained and sanctioned. Using the evil intentions and actions of sinful men, God will work the greatest possible good in saving sinners” (Daniel Akin, *Exalting Jesus in Mark*, 332).
  - d. Jesus rightly interpreted Zechariah’s words as applying to Himself and His disciples at that moment.
  - e. Warren Wiersbe writes, “The quotation from Zechariah told the disciples what to do when the Jews arrested Jesus: *scatter!* In fact, at the very time of His arrest, Jesus said, ‘Let these [disciples] go their way’ (John 18:8). In other words, ‘Men, get out of here!’ I have read eloquent sermons blaming Peter for ‘following afar off,’ but they completely miss the point. He was not supposed to follow at all! Had he obeyed the Lord, he would not have attacked a man with his sword or denied the Lord three times” (Warren Wiersbe, *Be Diligent*, 167).
6. Unlike with Judas’ betrayal, Jesus predicted that He would see His disciples again.
- a. He said He would appear to them again after He had “risen” (Gk., *egerthenai*) which is a reference to His resurrection.
  - b. He said He would “go ahead” (Gk., *proago*) of His disciples as a shepherd leading His sheep. They would follow Him back to Galilee where their journey with Him had first begun.
  - c. Brooks notes, “Mark wanted to assure his readers/hearers that Jesus regathered the scattered disciples, forgave, and restored them. This was a reassuring word as Mark’s community faced persecution in which they too would be scattered” (Brooks, 232).

## **B. Peter Denies Jesus’ Prediction (29-30)**

1. Peter declared in no uncertain terms that “Even if all fall away (Gk., *skandalisthesontai*), I will not (Gk., *ouk ego*).”
  - a. Peter directly contradicted Jesus’ word about his impending betrayal.
  - b. Peter said it in the strongest possible way, and in essence called Jesus a liar.
  - c. Once again, Peter believed that the Master didn’t know what He was talking about. Peter had previously attempted to correct Jesus in a similar situation when Jesus first predicted His own death and resurrection (cf., Mk 8:32-33).
  - d. Lane surmises, that Peter’s “. . . statement offers a remarkable contrast to the outburst of Ch. 8:32. There Peter denies suffering as Jesus’ lot, while here he accepts it not only for Jesus but also for himself (verse 31). The profession of loyalty made by Peter and his companions, however, only serves to heighten the completeness of their failure in the impending hour of crisis” (Lane, 512).
2. Jesus made a strong truth statement rebuking Peter’s denial of his betrayal.
  - a. “Truly, I tell you” (Gk., *Amen lego soi*) – This is the last time Jesus used the word “Truly” in Mark.
  - b. The betrayal will come sooner than Peter can imagine. Jesus added, “today—yes, tonight—before the rooster crows twice you yourself will disown me three times” (30).
    - 1) “disown” (Gk., *aparnese*) – this word is more specific than “fall away” (Gk., *skandaliso*) and points to the fact that Peter will verbally deny, disown, and refuse to affirm or confess his identification as a believer or follower of Jesus.
    - 2) The vocal spokesman who so strongly and verbally denies his impending betrayal of Jesus will soon use strong words to deny his association with Jesus (cf., Mk 14:66-72).
    - 3) “three times” points to Peter’s superlative rejection of Jesus. Peter’s rejection of Jesus will be beyond doubt and no one-time mistake.
    - 4) These events will take place before the dawn of the new day ahead.
3. Once again Peter denied that he would disown Jesus or fall away from Him.
  - a. He adds a strong affirmation of loyalty by saying “even if I die have to die with you (Gk., *sunapothanein*).”
  - b. Apparently, Peter had finally understood some of what Jesus had said about His impending death, but he still didn’t understand his part in the events about to unfold with the new day.
  - c. Again, Peter was the vocal spokesperson for what all the other disciples were thinking. They didn’t dare speak until this point but with Peter’s emphatic pledge of loyalty to Jesus “all the others said the same” (31).

4. Next week our story continues in Gethsemane as Jesus prays in preparation for all that lies ahead with His passion.

**C. Questions/Thoughts for Reflection**

1. Have you ever done something bad that you absolutely knew you would never do? Did it surprise you?
2. No one, including you, is a super-Christian unable to sin or betray Jesus in any way. If you, like Peter, think that you are such a super-Christian, then you have a case of pride going before a great fall.
3. Have you ever thought that you knew more than God and that something in His word didn't really apply to you? If you have, then, like Peter, you have called God a liar.
4. Have you ever betrayed Jesus by simply being silent when you should have spoken up? Have you ever betrayed Jesus by going along with the crowd instead of acting like Jesus?
5. If you have denied or betrayed Jesus in the past, where did you go or what did you do to be with Him again?