

a. He fled from Jesus on the night before Jesus was crucified. Mark 14:51-52 gives us an autobiographical comment. While Peter ended up denying Jesus, Mark ditched Him.

b. He folded on Paul. Years later, the Apostle Paul and his cousin Barnabas took Mark on the first mission trip. In Acts 13:5 he's referred to as an assistant or helper. When things got messy Mark folded and ended up going back home. This caused some conflict between Paul and Barnabas. Barnabas gave him a second chance but Paul was not willing to do so. Later on, however, Paul chilled out and saw that God loves to redeem and restore those who fold on Him (2 Timothy 4:11).

2. The Purpose of Mark.

The Gospel of Mark can be read in about 90 minutes and contains poignant and declarative statements. Mark is not only the shortest and earliest gospel, but it also has some very unique features. Mark's gospel is an ideal introduction to the Christian faith. When getting the gospel into other languages, Wycliffe Bible translators often start with Mark because of its brevity and its clear message. If you're a newer believer, Mark is a great book to read.

The events surrounding the death, burial and resurrection of Jesus Christ make up 40% of Mark's manuscript. Someone has described Mark's gospel as "a passion-narrative with an extended introduction." Jesus was born in order to die. His death was not a tragic accident but part of God's plan from the very beginning. Jesus is our Selfless Servant and He is our Suffering Savior.

Kent Hughes, in his commentary on Mark, tells about a world-renowned scholar of classic literature, Dr. E .V. Rieu. Dr. Rieu is known for a fantastic translation of Homer's Odyssey into modern English for Penguin Classics. An agnostic his entire life, Penguin publishers approached him at the end of his career and asked him to translate the gospels. That raised some eyebrows because people wondered how an agnostic classical scholar could translate Matthew, Mark, Luke and John. When Rieu's son heard about it he had a great reaction: "It will be interesting to see what father will make of the four Gospels," then he paused, "It will be even more interesting to see what the four Gospels make of father." He didn't have to wonder very long - when he translated them he came face-to-face with Christ, and became a committed Christian. His story is a testimony to the transforming power of God's Word.

3. The Principle Character of Mark.

a. His Person .

"Jesus" is his given name, which in Hebrew is Yeshua, which means "Yahweh is salvation." The angel of the Lord told Joseph in Matthew 1:21: "...you shall call his name Jesus, for He will save His people from their sins." His name is descriptive of His mission.

b. His Position .

"Christ" is the Greek title for Messiah, which means Anointed One. The question of Jesus' identity is the hinge point of the book. Turn to Mark 8:29: "And he asked them, 'But who do you say that I am?' Peter answered him, 'You are the Christ.'" Everything written before this confession of Christ focuses on Jesus as Servant and the verses that follow set the scene for his work as Savior. It's really the hinge of the book and the hinge of our lives. Peter confessed Jesus as Christ. Have you done that?

c. His Power .

"The Son of God" is a bold title which conveys full divine status (Mark 1:11, 3:11, Mark 15:39).

Conclusion: When Facing Suffering . . .

1. Look beyond it.

Jesus told them He would suffer many terrible things, He would be killed and three days later He would rise again (Mark 8:31). In the context of our Scripture today Jesus had just had a conversation with His disciples as they were walking along. In Mark 8:27 Jesus asked them, "Who do people say I am?" In other words, what are people saying about me? And they replied, "Well, some say you are John the Baptist, some Elijah, and others say you are one of the other prophets." So then Jesus asked, "Who do you say I am?" And Peter said, "You are the Messiah."

So when Jesus, "The Messiah," starts talking of His impending suffering and death, His friends did not take the news well. They did not take it well in part because they did not hear everything Jesus said. Jesus said that He, the Son of Man, would suffer many terrible things and be rejected by the leaders, the leading priests, and the teachers of religious law." They heard Him say that He would be killed. But they did not hear Him say that three days later He would rise again.

Admittedly, Jesus was not at all enthusiastic about the suffering and dying stuff, but Jesus did see through it. Jesus could see through the suffering and pain and dying and being buried to his resurrection. His disciples saw suffering and death. Jesus saw suffering and death and resurrection. He saw through it.

We too may choose to see through the gloom and despair of any moment assured that "all things do indeed work together for the good of those who love God." Maybe not immediately, but when we look beyond it we can see it through.

2. Don't play it safe .

As He talked to His disciples they took Him aside and told Him not to say things like that. Jesus turned and looked at them and said to Peter, "Get away from me, Satan! You are seeing things merely from a human point of view, not from God's (Mark 8:32-33). The Bible says that as Jesus talked with His disciples they pulled Jesus aside to caution Him against saying things like that. No one wants to hear suffering and dying talk. Be positive, Jesus! You're a winner, Jesus!

First of all, who says we aren't supposed to struggle or suffer in life? Who says there is no inherent value in the challenges of life? Who says pain and suffering are supposed to be avoidable evils?

Remember Job's comforters? They heard about Job's misfortunes and personal suffering and came to see him. They watched him for seven days and finally they could contain themselves no longer. They concluded that the innocent person doesn't perish and the upright person is not destroyed. Their experience showed that those who plant trouble and cultivate evil will harvest the same (Job 4:7-9). In other words, if you are suffering and experiencing pain and loss you must have done something wrong or God would not allow this to happen to you. However Job knew that was not the case. He had been a good guy and now his life was in shambles.

What about the teaching from James (James 1:2-4) and Romans (Romans 3:3-5). Well-meaning people want the best for us but they may not know or understand that what is best looks a lot different to them than it does to God. And Jesus perceived what His disciples were saying as a satanic attempt to dissuade Him from doing the will of God.

3. Follow Christ.

Jesus said if any of you wants to be my follower you should shoulder your cross and follow me. If you lose your life for my sake, you will find true life (Mark 8:34-35).

This week I read an amusing story about a little boy and his first day as a first grader. He had come up through pre-school and kindergarten and now he was in first grade. Accustomed to going home at noon in Kindergarten he was getting things ready to leave when he was supposed to be going to lunch with the rest of the class. The teacher noticed and asked, "What are you doing?" He replied, "I'm going home." His teacher tried to explain that now that he was in first grade he had a longer school day. She said, "You'll go to lunch with the class now and then you will come back to the room and we will do some more school work before you go home." He looked up at her in disbelief and then seeing that she was serious, he put his hands on his hips and demanded, "Who signed me up for this program?"

Sometimes we are a bit like that little guy in our approach and understanding of what it means to be a Christian. Even more so, what it means to be a devoted follower of Christ. What about this turning the other cheek stuff and what about this business of forgiving people 70 times 70 times and what about this talk of shouldering a cross and following Christ even if it means you lose your life when you do?

Being a Christian is probably as easy in the United States as anywhere on the planet. A quick look at The Voice of the Martyrs web site is a sobering experience. Religious intolerance is the rule rather than the exception in much of the world. When I learn of the suffering of Christians around the world, I am a little embarrassed. Here in the United States there is a lot of talk about our 1st Amendment rights. As you know the 1st Amendment of the United States Constitution prohibits the passing or creation of any law which establishes a religious body and directly impedes an individual's right to practice whichever religion they see fit. In other words the 1st Amendment guarantees freedom of religion. The freedom to practice a religion of choice is a constitutional right in this country. So there is always a great deal of concern about any and every threat to that freedom.

It is a curious thing that Jesus, while living under the boot of the Roman Empire never said anything about anything remotely having to do with the right of free expression of religious preferences. What He did say on several occasions is that if anyone who wished to follow Him, he must take up his own cross to do so. Jesus was very upfront with those who chose to become His followers (John 15:18-20). Jesus never sugar coats the Christian life. Jesus never pulled any kind of bait and switch on His followers. Jesus made no ifs, ands or buts about it. Being a Christian is sometimes about taking up and carrying a cross of suffering. But Jesus also said, "If you lose your life for my sake, you will find true life. (Mark 8:34-35).

4. There is no profit in caving.

Jesus asked His followers how they would benefit if they gained the whole world but lost their own soul in the process. Is anything worth more than your soul (Mark 8:36-37)?

Caving means to give in or surrender to the opposition. Jesus compared ease in this life against eternal loss in the next. Jesus compared struggling and even suffering and death in this life with totally cashing in the next. When a person decides to become a follower of Christ, Jesus wants that person to know that there is no cap or upper limit on how much you will spend before you cave. If the price of comfort and

ease in this world gets too high Jesus says it is better to lose everything to save your eternal soul.

For most of us it will not mean being hanged at any moment because we refuse to renounce our faith. But we are all constantly barraged with instances where we have to decide if we will do the easy thing and get by or perhaps even gain or do the right thing regardless of the consequences.

One minister tells how his dad became a Christian in his early thirties. He was a principled person anyway but as a Christian he wanted to be the kind of person God wished for him to be. He worked as the head mechanic in a local car dealership. His boss, always intent on making a profit began buying used parts from auto salvage yards for repairs in his garage. There is nothing wrong with that as long as the customer knows. But his dad learned that the used parts were being billed to the customers as new parts. After speaking with his boss he decided the best thing he could do was look for a different job. What a sacrifice for a man working six days a week to support a wife and four sons. He had a mortgage and a car payment. They were living from week to week. But this father did the right thing. He was not going to cave or sell-out even if it meant losing his job. He taught his sons a valuable lesson on integrity.

There is no eternal profit in caving in on matters of faith in this life. What does it benefit you if you gain the whole world but lose your soul in the process? When suffering in this life, see through it!

See It Through!

Our Church Identity

Recently a very interesting article entitled, "Is Your Church a Cruise Ship or Aircraft Carrier?" caught my attention. Here are some observations from a pastor named Brian Bill about this article. Hope it gives you something to think about.

People who attend "cruise ship churches," much like cruise ship passengers, often come to be entertained and catered to by the staff. Very little is expected of these church attendees. In fact, they tend to rate the quality of their experience – the music, the sermon and the way it made them feel – much like cruise ship passengers rate their satisfaction with various aspects of their trip.

Cruise ship churches tend to be internally focused on the needs of their regularly attending members. The main goal in these churches, as on a cruise ship, is to keep the "customer" happy and the complaints to a minimum. Leaders in a cruise ship church focus on the existing members rather than pursuing those far from God or encouraging others to do so. Very little of a church's calendar, training or communication is spent on activities to reach the lost or help those in need outside the church.

There are, however, churches that are more like aircraft carriers. These churches are designed to empower all members to find their God-given purpose in life, to equip them and to send them on missions into the world to reach and serve those who don't know Jesus, much like the crew of an aircraft carrier is all about launching military planes and equipping them well to carry out successful missions.

Did you know an aircraft carrier is the same size as many cruise ships, housing thousands of people? But what distinguishes an aircraft carrier ship isn't its size; it's the efficiency on the flight deck. The crew of an aircraft carrier can launch a plane every 25 seconds—all in a fraction of the space of a typical landing strip. The mission pervades every aspect of the ship. From the pilot to the person who restocks the ship's vending machines, everyone on a carrier knows his or her particular role and how it supports the mission—to equip, prepare, launch and receive aircraft back from their crucial assignments.

An "aircraft carrier church" has a clear mission that stems from the Great Commandment and the Great Commission. Everyone in the church knows why their church exists and plays a

role in the mission.

My hope is that we want to be more of an aircraft carrier church. Instead of meandering, we must be a people living on mission. Instead of just living for pleasure we must be focused on our God-given purpose. Instead of just cruising through life, be committed to the Great Commandment and the Great Commission. Live on mission by gathering, growing, giving and going with the Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ to the glory of God.

Let me be clear that I'm not against going on a cruise. I just don't want us to view our church as one.

God Bless You!
Bro. Allan

Opportunities For Service

Living out Your Spiritual Commitment... and Fulfilling Christ's Divine Plan

Sunday, April 9, 2017

Palm Sunday

Choir Rehearsal..... 9:00 am
Sunday School 9:15 am
Morning Worship.....10:30 am
Nursery: Volunteers as needed
Ushers: ? ? ? ?, Ken Nice, Don Sharp, Fred Kerns
Alternate: Isaac Waters

Evening Worship.....6:30 pm

Wednesday, April 12

Prayer Warriors.....10:00 am
Youth Study..... 6:30 pm
Prayer / Bible Study6:30 pm
Adult Choir 7:30 pm

Thursday, April 13

Maundy Thursday
Silent Lord's Supper...6:00 pm

Sunday, April 16, 2017

Happy Easter!

Breakfast.....8:15 am
Choir Rehearsal.....9:00 am
Sunday School.....9:15 am
Morning Worship.....10:30 am
Nursery: Volunteers as needed
Ushers: John Lewis, Gary Yarbrough, Joseph Coats, Isaac Waters
Alternate: Larry McKahan

No Evening Worship.....

Wednesday, April 19

Youth Bible Study.....6:30 pm
Bible Study..... 6:30 pm
Adult Choir..... 7:30 pm

Thursday, April 20

O Team.....6:30 pm

Up-Coming Events.....

April 9 — Palm Sunday

April 12 — Prayer Warriors 10:00 am

April 13 — Easter Bonanza with the Baptist Student Union 5:30 pm

April 16 — Easter Breakfast 8:15 am followed by our regular Sunday morning schedule

April 23 — Diversicare 2:30 pm

April 28-30 — Thunder on the Mountain

April 30 — SJBA Semi-Annual Meeting Fairport Baptist Church 6:30 pm

GROW Team

Commit to **GROW!** **Everyone make a contact!** Invite someone to Bible Study and Worship this week. ☺

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Sunday Nights

Please join us tonight at 6:30 pm as we begin a new study. Hope to see you here.

Wednesday Night Prayer and Bible Study

We are in the middle of a study entitled *Grace*. This week we view the fifth session of the study by Max Lucado as we journey to discover the depth of God's grace—*more than you deserve, greater than you can imagine, and all that you need*. Hope to see you here at 6:30 pm!

**North American Missions And Annie Armstrong
Easter Offering**
Envelopes are in the pews
for your convenience.
Our goal: \$1,500.00
To Date: \$ 956.00

**Prayer Warriors
Wednesday, April 12, 2017
10:00 am**

**Maundy Thursday
Silent Lord's Supper
6:00 pm
Easter**

Schedule

Please remember that Easter is Sunday, April 16. We will be having breakfast at 8:15. It will be followed by the regular Sunday morning schedule.

Kathryn Beavers' New Address—

Diversicare
3002 North 18th Street
Room 405
Saint Joseph, MO 64505
Phone: (816) 364-3293

To reach Kathryn, call this number. At the message, enter 2405 and this should ring her room.

LIVE FOR CHIRST-DYE SOME EGGS

Easter Bonanza

with the
Baptist Student Union!

4-13-17

5:30 pm

In the Commons Area
Free Food, Tie-Dye T-shirts,
Egg Coloring, Games

Join the Baptist Student Union and Friends for the opportunity to celebrate with music and hear from student speakers whose lives have been changed.

For the Record-

Attendance: April 2, 2017

Sunday School.....	43
Visitors.....	7
Total.....	50
Contacts Made.....	9
Morning Worship.....	48
Children's Worship.....	15
Wednesday Night	17

Financial Record:

Weekly Budget	\$ 2,040.52
Offering Received ...	\$ 3,159.31
Annie Armstrong	\$ 956.00

Offering Received by Mail:

April Counting Team:

Don Beavers and Jordan Lane

April Van Driver:

Mike Green

Remember to call 232-3747
before 8 am if you need a ride.

April Member Birthdays:

05... Datha Dillon
13... Alice Coats
15... Larry McKahan
25... Jo Mayse
29... Lois Pace
30... Daniel Waters
30... Nikki Garber

April Anniversaries

Joe and Pam Battreal

April 17, 1999

Bill and Juanita Haskins

April 17, 1948

Joseph and Alice Coats

April 29, 2000

Prayer Requests ...

Stephanie and Jason Terpack
Mary Sharp's brother-in-law
Don and Marcia —Don's Health
Troy Griswold—surgery recovery
Rev. A. B. Brown
Tracy Maisel and Tim Ford
Juanita and Bill Haskins—adjustments
Tim Izer
Gary & Peggy Fewins, Byron & Joel
George Ferbert—strength
Nellie Reynolds
Larry Danner—cancer treatment
Cynthia Burdick—cancer recovery
Jim Winans
Karissa and Matt Long and family
Betty Campbell
Lisa Bowers—Jack and Flo's daughter
LoLeta Middleton—strength
Ellen Blanton and Lois Ulmer—
Elvera's daughter & daughter-in-law
Stella Davis and Linda Rails—Doris
Richardson's sisters
Madeline Swink Ann Riddle

Kathryn Beavers Keon McKahan
Louanne Laurence Leona Reynolds
Jozy Winans Kenny Duty
Kevin Duty Buddy Means
Bill Haskins Debbie Sands
Pat Puckett Judy Anderson
Brenda Burgess Roscoe Lane
Carolyn Houts
Missionaries Don and Diane Combs
Nickolay Nazaruk, Peski 2 Church
David and Deborah Grace
Jeanette Swackhamer—Beja People
Our Nation and Leaders
Our Military Service people
Today's Prayer Requests ...

Our Nation and our Leaders ...

Five More New Families...
