

门徒的跌倒衬托耶稣的伟大——马可福音14:26-31

Disciples' Failure Contrasts Jesus' Greatness—Mark 14:26-31

Introduction and Outline

- Scripture Reading: Mark 14:22-26; 66-72; 1 Corinthians 10:12–13; 1 Peter 5:5–11

Mark 14:26-31 (NASB1995)

26 After singing a hymn, they went out to the Mount of Olives. 27 And Jesus said to them, “You will all fall away, because it is written, ‘I will strike down the shepherd, and the sheep shall be scattered.’

28 But after I have been raised, I will go ahead of you to Galilee.” 29 But Peter said to Him, “Even though all may fall away, yet I will not.” 30 And Jesus said to him, “Truly I say to you, that this very night, before a rooster crows twice, you yourself will deny Me three times.” 31 But Peter kept saying insistently, “Even if I have to die with You, I will not deny You!” And they all were saying the same thing also.

- Of all the lies that this world promotes, the most popular are those that encourage people to believe in themselves. Many celebrities have famous quotes urging us to learn to believe in ourselves.
- In contrast, the Bible proclaims a vastly different message. A pastor once summarized it this way: “*The design of the Scripture is to give all glory to God; to exalt none but the infinite majesty of Heaven, to humble all mankind, and empty them of themselves, that God’s grace may be all, and men themselves nothing, but entirely dependent on the mercy of God through Jesus Christ.*”
- In today’s passage, the disciples, having followed Jesus for over three years, once again stumbled and fell due to prideful self-confidence. They trusted too much in their own abilities and were convinced that they would never fall. Yet the reality proved them wrong—their self-confidence was utterly self-deceived.

Proverbs 11:2: “When pride comes, then comes dishonor, but with the humble is wisdom.”

Proverbs 16:18: “Pride goes before destruction, and a haughty spirit before stumbling.”

Proverbs 18:12: “Before destruction the heart of a person is haughty, but humility goes before honor.”

Proverbs 29:23: “A person’s pride will bring him low, but a humble spirit will obtain honor.”

- Against the backdrop of the disciples’ utter weakness, Jesus’ power to keep them and to restore them shines even more brightly. The Bible’s purpose is to reveal our utter dependence on God and to ascribe all glory to Christ alone.
- Outline:
 - Title: Disciples’ Failure Contrasts Jesus’ Greatness—Mark 14:26-31
 - 1. Disciples’ Timidity vs Jesus’ Boldness (vv. 26-27a)
 - 2. Disciples’ Ignorance vs Jesus’ Omniscience (27b)
 - 3. Disciples’ Weakness vs Jesus’ Power (v.28)
 - 4. Disciples’ Pride vs Jesus’ Humility (vv. 29-31)

Disciples’ Timidity vs Jesus’ Boldness (vv. 26-27a)

- “After singing a hymn, they went out to the Mount of Olives.” Jesus was leading His disciples to Gethsemane to pray, knowing they would need to pray fervently for the road ahead. Though Jesus was

about to endure unimaginable suffering, He showed no fear or weakness. Instead, He moved forward resolutely, fully prepared to embrace the solemn and holy moments ahead.

- “You will all fall away”: A clear prophecy of the disciples’ upcoming failure. The disciples needed to know their knowledge of themselves was woefully inadequate and that Jesus knows them perfectly and completely.

In Matthew’s account, Jesus explained that their falling away would be “because of Me.” Stumbling over Jesus is a hallmark of unbelievers (Luke 7:23; 1 Peter 2:7–8), yet for these eleven disciples who deeply loved Jesus, the idea that they would ever stumble over Jesus would have been unthinkable.

【Application】 Do not overestimate your spiritual strength.

Disciples’ Ignorance vs Jesus’ Omniscience (27b)

- “because it is written, ‘I will strike down the shepherd, and the sheep shall be scattered.’”: Quoted from Zechariah 13:7. The original passage does not explicitly define who the “sheep” are—it could refer to all of Israel. However, Jesus, in His divine omniscience, applied it specifically to the eleven disciples. And yet, the disciples obviously didn’t accept Jesus’ interpretation.

【Key Point】 Jesus not only knows all our weaknesses but also all the details of Scripture and how they will be perfectly fulfilled. How firm a foundation we can have for our lives when we place our faith in Jesus and His Word!

【Reality】 Sadly, the disciples at this moment still had their faith placed on their own strength. And the result? Total failure. They had yet to learn how weak their faith was and how desperately they needed the sustaining power of Jesus.

Disciples’ Weakness vs Jesus’ Power (v.28)

- “But after I have been raised, I will go ahead of you to Galilee.” Jesus had already explicitly foretold His resurrection at least three times. While the disciples knew this prophecy, they still didn’t fully believe it. Jesus meant a literal resurrection—He would truly rise from death and leave the tomb. Yet the disciples continued to refuse believing it.

John 10:18: “No one has taken it away from Me, but I lay it down on My own initiative. I have authority to lay it down, and I have authority to take it up again. This commandment I received from My Father.”

- “I will go ahead of you to Galilee”: The meeting in Galilee is a uniquely important one. The Great Commission in Matthew’s Gospel was delivered during this gathering. Additionally, 1 Corinthians 15 mentions a time when Jesus appeared to over 500 brethren at once, likely also referring to this large gathering in Galilee. However, this wasn’t the only time Jesus appeared to His disciples after resurrection.

Acts 1:3: “To these He also presented Himself alive after His suffering, by many convincing proofs, appearing to them over a period of forty days and speaking of the things concerning the kingdom of God.”

【Key Point】 The disciples' faith was weak and prone to failure before the resurrection, but it kept growing stronger with each post-resurrection encounter with Jesus. The power of Jesus' resurrection was what fortified their weak faith. Their transformation was not because they discovered some hidden potential within themselves, but because they learned to increasingly rely on the power of the risen Christ.

Disciples' Pride vs Jesus' Humility (vv. 29-31)

- “Peter said to Him, ‘Even though all may fall away, yet I will not.’” Peter outright denied Jesus' assessment of him. This statement reflected a deeply prideful heart in three ways:

Toward God: Resisting God's Word.

Toward others: Comparing himself with others, thinking himself better than them all.

Toward himself: Overconfidence and overestimating his own abilities.

【Key Point】 It was exactly this kind of pride that led to Peter's eventual failure.

1 Corinthians 10:12: “Therefore let him who thinks he stands take heed that he does not fall.”

【Application】 Never assume you are standing firm. Do not let the assurance of salvation produce an arrogant attitude in you.

- “Truly I say to you, that this very night, before a rooster crows twice, you yourself will deny Me three times.” Jesus knew how Peter would treat Him, yet He willingly went to the cross for Peter, giving His entire life to serve him. This is the ultimate picture of a humble servant. A prideful leader would've immediately fired Peter knowing how he'd behave.

“But Peter kept saying insistently, ‘Even if I have to die with You, I will not deny You!’” Still, Peter stubbornly defended himself and refused to accept Jesus' assessment.

【Key Point】 The surest way for a Christian to stumble is to refuse to acknowledge their own weakness.

- “And they all were saying the same thing also.” The other disciples echoed Peter's heroic sentiment, claiming they'd rather die a martyr's death than to deny Jesus!

Summary

Ultimately, the disciples did all die a martyr's death for Jesus. Yet, the final message they proclaimed with their death was certainly not their own loyalty but the grace and power of Jesus working in them. If asked how they could live such faithful lives, they would not boast a hair of their strength. Instead, they would point to Jesus' grace.

Luke 22:31–32: “Simon, Simon, behold, Satan has demanded permission to sift you like wheat; **but I have prayed for you, that your faith may not fail.**”

The ultimate message from the disciples' failures is the abundant grace and power of the Lord Jesus. We do not lose our faith because Jesus has already prayed for us before the Father.