

HWMR - Crystallization Study of the Gospel of Mark

Book One, Week 9

Message Nine

The Highlight of the Gospel of Mark

Scripture Reading: Mark 8:27—9:13; 13:8; 14:3-9

Unveiling His Death and Resurrection the First Time 8:27 -- 9:1

- Mark 8:27 And Jesus and His disciples went out into the villages of Caesarea Philippi. And on the way He questioned His disciples, saying to them, **Who do men say that I am?**
- Mark 8:28 And they told Him, saying, John the Baptist; and others, Elijah; but others, one of the prophets.
- Mark 8:29 And He questioned them, But you, who do you say that I am? Peter answered and said to Him, **You are the Christ!**
- Mark 8:30 And He charged them not to tell anyone concerning Him.
- Mark 8:31 And He began to teach them that the **Son of Man** must **suffer** many things and be rejected by the elders and the chief priests and the scribes and be **killed** and after three days **rise**.
- Mark 8:32 And He spoke this word openly. And Peter took Him aside and began to rebuke Him.
- Mark 8:33 But turning around and looking at His disciples, He rebuked Peter and said, Get behind Me, Satan! For you are not setting your mind on the things of God, but on the things of men.
- Mark 8:34 And He called the crowd to Him with His disciples and said to them, **If anyone wants to follow after Me, let him deny himself and take up his cross and follow Me.**
- Mark 8:35 **For whoever wants to save his soul-life shall lose it; but whoever will lose his soul-life for My sake and the gospel's shall save it.**
- Mark 8:36 **For what does it profit a man to gain the whole world and forfeit his soul-life?**
- Mark 8:37 **For what could a man give in exchange for his soul-life?**
- Mark 8:38 For whoever is ashamed of Me and of My words in this adulterous and sinful generation, the Son of Man also will be ashamed of him when He comes in the glory of His Father with the holy angels.
- Mark 9: 1 And He said to them, Truly I say to you, there are some of those standing here who shall by no means taste death until they **see the kingdom of God having come in power.**

Being Transfigured on the Mount 9:2-13

- Mark 9: 2 And after six days Jesus took with Him Peter and James and John, and brought them up alone into a high mountain privately. And He was **transfigured** before them,
- Mark 9: 3 And His garments became sparkling, exceedingly white, such as no fuller on earth could whiten them.
- Mark 9: 4 And Elijah with Moses appeared to them, and they were conversing with Jesus.
- Mark 9: 5 And Peter answered and said to Jesus, Rabbi, it is good for us to be here; and let us make three tents, one for You and one for Moses and one for Elijah.
- Mark 9: 6 For he did not know what to answer, for they had become extremely frightened.
- Mark 9: 7 And a cloud appeared, overshadowing them, and a voice came out of the cloud: **This is My Son, the Beloved. Hear Him!**
- Mark 9: 8 And suddenly, when they looked around, they no longer saw anyone, but Jesus only with them.
- Mark 9: 9 And as they were coming down from the mountain, He ordered them not to relate to anyone the things which they had seen, except when the **Son of Man has risen** from the dead.
- Mark 9:10 And they kept the word, discussing among themselves what rising from the dead was.
- Mark 9:11 And they asked Him, saying, Why do the scribes say that Elijah must come first?
- Mark 9:12 And He said to them, Elijah does indeed come first and restore all things. And how is it that it is written of the Son of Man that He should suffer many things and be counted as nothing?
- Mark 9:13 But I tell you that Elijah has indeed come, and they did to him the things that they wished, even as it is written of him.
- Mark 13: 8 For nation will rise up against nation, and kingdom against kingdom; there will be earthquakes in various places; there will be famines. These things are the **beginning of birth pangs.**

Being Conspired Against, Betrayed, and Loved 14:1-11

- Mark 14: 3 And while He was in **Bethany** in the house of Simon the **leper**, as He reclined at table, a woman came, having an alabaster flask of ointment, of very costly pure nard, and she broke the alabaster flask and **poured it over His head.**
- Mark 14: 4 But there were some who were indignantly commenting among themselves: Why has this waste of the ointment been made?
- Mark 14: 5 For this ointment could have been sold for over three hundred denarii and given to the poor. And they were infuriated with her.
- Mark 14: 6 But Jesus said, Leave her alone. Why do you trouble her? She **has done a noble deed on Me.**
- Mark 14: 7 For you always have the poor with you, and whenever you want, you can do good for them. But you do not always have Me.
- Mark 14: 8 She has done what she could; she has **anointed My body beforehand for the burial.**
- Mark 14: 9 And truly I say to you, Wherever the gospel is proclaimed in the whole world, what this woman has done shall also be told as a memorial of her.

We have seen that Christ's **death** was the **termination** of the old creation and that His **resurrection** was the **germination** of the new creation. In the new creation we enjoy Him, the all-inclusive One, as **our universal replacement** provided by God. Christ is not only our Savior—He is our life and everything to us. Not only is He everything to us; He is everything in God's economy. **God's economy is to produce a new man, and in this new man there is nothing but Christ. In the new man Christ is in everyone, Christ is everyone, and Christ is everything.** We all need to see this marvelous vision. (Life-Study of Mark, Chapter 41, Section 3)

DAY 1

I. The highlight of the Gospel of Mark is the vision of Christ's person with His all-inclusive death and His wonderful resurrection to be our entire, all-inclusive replacement for the producing, the bringing forth, of the one new man in the manifestation of the kingdom—8:27—9:13:

- A. After the Lord's followers passed through the steps recorded in Mark 1:1—8:26 (experiencing the healing of their hearing, speaking, and seeing organs), they were **qualified and able to see** a wonderful person, who is the secret of the universe, a mystery to all mankind, and the secret of God's eternal economy—7:31-37; 8:14-26; Acts 17:23; cf. John 1:18; Phil. 3:8, 10.
- B. After Peter made the declaration that Jesus is the Christ, the Lord began to **unveil the mysteries of God's economy** concerning Christ as the Son of Man with His death and resurrection; the Lord then brought His disciples to the mount of His **transfiguration** in order to show them that **God's desire in His economy is for everything and everyone to be replaced by Christ**, the all-inclusive One—Mark 8:27-37; 9:7-8.

DAY 2

II. Christ as the life-giving Spirit, with His death and resurrection, replaces everything and everyone; He replaces Moses, He replaces Elijah, and He replaces us; this One replaces everyone, everything, and every matter in the universe—1 Cor. 15:45b; Eph. 1:23; 1 Cor. 15:28; Col. 3:10-11:

- A. For Peter to make his absurd proposal to keep Moses (representing the **law**) and Elijah (representing the **prophets**) on the same level with Christ was for him to make **the law and the prophets equal with Christ to replace Christ**—Mark 9:4-6:
 1. In God's New Testament economy Jesus is today's Moses, **imparting** Himself as the law of the Spirit of life into His believers, and He is also today's Elijah, **speaking** Himself as the Word of life into His believers—Heb. 8:10; Rom. 8:2; Acts 3:22; Phil. 2:16; 1 John 1:1; John 6:63; Acts 5:20.
 2. **Being according to the law** means to walk according to the "letter" of outward statutes and regulations; **being according to the prophets** means to walk according to what other men say; **being according to Christ** is **to walk according to the Spirit mingled** with our spirit, the mingled spirit—2 Cor. 3:6; Gal. 1:10; 2:2; 1 Thes. 2:4; Gal. 5:25; Phil. 3:3; Rom. 1:9; 8:4.

The Only One Whom We Should Hear

In Matthew 17:3-8 Christ is revealed as the only One whom we should hear. The Lord brought Peter, James, and John "*up to a high mountain privately. And He was transfigured before them, and His face shone like the sun, and His garments became as white as the light. And behold, Moses and Elijah appeared to them, conversing with Him*" (vv. 1-3). Peter proposed that he make three tents, one for the Lord, one for Moses, and one for Elijah (v. 4). "*While he was still speaking, behold, a bright cloud overshadowed them, and behold, a voice out of the cloud, saying, This is My Son, the Beloved, in whom I have found My delight. Hear Him!*" (v. 5).

Not Moses—the Law, nor Elijah—the Prophets

Moses represented the **law**, and Elijah, the **prophets**. The law and the prophets were the constituents of the Old Testament as a full testimony of Christ (John 5:39). Today, since Christ has come, we should not listen to Moses or to Elijah.

Peter's absurd proposal was to put Moses and Elijah on the same level with Christ, which means to make the law and the prophets equal to Christ. This was absolutely contrary to God's economy. **In God's economy the law and the prophets were only a testimony to Christ**; they should not be put on the same level with Him.

Jesus Himself Only

In Matthew 17:5 the voice from out of the cloud said that we should hear the Son. In God's economy, after Christ came, we should "**hear Him**," no longer the law or the prophets, since **the law and the prophets were fulfilled in Christ and by Christ**.

"*When they lifted up their eyes, they saw no one except Jesus Himself alone*" (v. 8). Peter proposed to keep Moses and Elijah, that is, the law and the prophets, with Christ, but God took Moses and Elijah away, leaving "**no one except Jesus Himself alone**." The law and the prophets were shadows and prophecies, not the reality; the reality is Christ. Now that Christ, the reality, is here, the shadows and prophecies are no longer needed. No one except Jesus Himself alone should remain in the New Testament. **Jesus is today's Moses, imparting the law of life** into His believers. **Jesus is also today's Elijah, speaking for God and speaking forth God** within His believers. Today we do not have the law or the prophets. We only have a living person, the all-inclusive Jesus Christ. This is God's New Testament economy. (Conclusion of the New Testament, The (Msgs. 265-275), Chapter 7, Section 4)

DAY 3

- B. In God's New Testament economy, now that Christ has come, we should "**hear Him**"; we should no longer hear the law or the prophets, since the law and the prophets were fulfilled in and by Him; to "hear Him" is to hear what the pneumatic Christ as the speaking Spirit says in our spirit and to the churches for the testimony of "**Jesus only**"—Mark 9:7-8; 2 Cor. 13:3; Matt. 10:20; Eph. 5:26; Rev. 2:7; 1:2.
- C. In God's New Testament economy we should look away unto Jesus (Heb. 12:2) to see no one except "Jesus only" (Mark 9:8); no one except "Jesus only" should remain in the New Testament (Acts 9:4-5; 1 Cor. 12:12; Col. 3:10-11).
- D. Christ is God's Beloved, God's Favorite; **He is the One who replaces everyone and everything**; therefore, He should **have all the ground in our living**; everything in our living should be given over to Him so that we may live Christ, **grow** Christ, **express** Christ, and **propagate** Christ in every respect—1:10-11.
- E. God does not want anything of what we are in ourselves; **God wants only Christ**; **to deny ourselves is to be replaced by Christ** as the Spirit so that we may live Christ for His magnification—Mark 8:34; Gal. 2:20; Rom. 11:24; Phil. 1:19-21a.
- F. The Lord "*went up into the mountain to pray...and as He prayed, the appearance of His face became different, and His garment dazzling white*" (Luke 9:28-29); the Lord's pattern here shows that we can be replaced with the God of glory to be transfigured, conformed to the body of Christ's glory, through the process of the Spirit's transforming us from glory to glory by our prayer (2 Cor. 3:16, 18; Phil. 3:21; 4:6-7).

REPLACED BY CHRIST THROUGH DEATH AND RESURRECTION

How is it possible for us to be replaced by Christ? **We can be replaced by Him only through His death and resurrection.** Apart from His death and resurrection, Christ Himself would not be able to replace us. Also, it would not be possible for us to be replaced by Him. This replacement can be carried out only through Christ's death and resurrection.

We need to realize that it is necessary for us to deny our self. Our attitude should be of **willingness to be replaced**. We also need to see that a replacement has been prepared for us, and this replacement is Christ. In the words of Paul in Galatians 2:20, it should be no longer we who live, but Christ who lives in us.

When we live, we live according to our corrupt heart. We live according to ourselves, and within us we have an evil heart. If we would be delivered from what we are in ourselves, from our evil heart, we need to deny ourselves. **To deny ourselves actually means to be replaced by Christ through His death and resurrection.**

Christ's death on the cross included us. This means that when He died, we died with Him. Now we need to realize this fact and apply it to our living. To see that we have been crucified with Christ and apply this fact to our living is to **take the cross**. Therefore, to take the cross means to admit that we have been terminated by Christ's death and to apply this termination to ourselves. When we make this application, resurrection life comes in.

In our daily living, the crucified and resurrected Christ is the life-giving Spirit. The reality of Christ's resurrection is actually the life-giving Spirit. Whenever we **apply the cross of Christ**, the life-giving Spirit, as the reality of Christ's resurrection, comes in **to be our real replacement**. Then we are able to say, "*I have been crucified with Christ. It is no longer I who live—Christ lives in me.*"

(Life-Study of Mark, Chapter 26, Section 3)

DAY 4

III. The entire world situation is for the producing of the new man; from the day of the Lord's resurrection until He comes back is the period of a long delivery of the new man through the preaching of the gospel and the suffering of persecutions, which are "birth pangs" as the travail involved in the birth of the new man—Mark 13:3-8; Gal. 4:19:

- A. God's economy is to produce the new man, and **in the new man Christ is everyone, Christ is in everyone**, and Christ is everything; when we enjoy Christ as the universal replacement, He becomes everything to us, for **He replaces us with Himself**—Col. 3:10-11; Gal. 2:20.
- B. **Birth pangs** refers to all the tribulations in the New Testament age, including wars, famines, earthquakes, afflictions, and persecutions; birth pangs for the delivery of the new man are suffered only by the New Testament believers for the Lord's sake, whereas the **travailing in birth** in Revelation 12:2 refers to all the travails suffered throughout the generations by God's people in both the Old Testament and the New Testament—Matt. 24:6-9, 21.

BIRTH PANGS

Referring to wars, earthquakes, and famine, the Lord Jesus says in verse 8, “*These things are the beginning of Birth pangs.*” The Jews, as God's elect, will suffer “*Birth pangs*” to bring forth a remnant who will participate in the Messianic kingdom, the earthly section of the millennium.

At this point we need to say a further word concerning the Birth pangs spoken of by the Lord in 13:8. In order to understand this expression, we need to realize that **from the time of the Lord's resurrection, a birth has been taking place.** This is **the birth of the universal new man.**

The man created by God, the old man, failed God and became useless in fulfilling God's purpose. Because of this, **through Christ's death and resurrection** God has begun to bring forth a universal new man. The birth, or delivery, of this new man began with the Lord's resurrection, for we, God's called people, **were all resurrected with Christ.**

At the time of the Lord's resurrection, the delivery of the universal new man was not complete. Actually, that was only the **beginning** of the birth of the new man. This birth will **continue** until the end of the great tribulation.

Before He died, the Lord Jesus spoke concerning the birth of the new man: “*Truly, truly, I say to you, that you shall weep and lament, but the world shall rejoice; you shall be sorrowful, but your sorrow shall be turned into joy. When a woman gives birth she has sorrow, because her hour has come; but when she brings forth the child, she no longer remembers the affliction because of the joy that a man has been born into the world. And you therefore now indeed have sorrow; but I shall see you again and your heart shall rejoice, and no one will take your joy away from you*” (John 16:20-22). In one sense, a child, the new man, was born at the time of the Lord's resurrection. But in another sense, the universal new man, revealed in chapters two and four of Ephesians, has not yet been fully delivered. On the contrary, **this new man is still in the process of being born, and the process of birth, of delivery, involves suffering.**

The persecutions endured by the saints are considered Birth pangs by the Lord Jesus. These Birth pangs began from the time of the Lord's resurrection and ascension. Since the day of Pentecost, these Birth pangs have not ceased to be experienced by the Lord's followers. Because the delivery of the new man is still taking place, the **Birth pangs continue.** What the Lord says in Mark 13:1-8 is related to the **Birth pangs for the bringing forth of the universal new man.** (Life-Study of Mark, Chapter 39, Section 3)

DAY 5

- C. In one sense, a child, the new man, **was born at the time of the Lord's resurrection** (John 16:20-22), but in another sense, the universal new man revealed in Ephesians 2 and 4 **has not been fully delivered** (2:15; 4:24).
- D. When the Lord comes back, there will be a **rapture**, which will be the **final delivery of the new man**; we believe that we are living at the end of that period of time in which the new man is being delivered—Dan. 2:28, 44-45; 8:17.

DAY 6

IV. We can enjoy Christ as our replacement in the church life, which is depicted by the house of Simon the leper as a house of feasting in and with the presence of the Lord, to bring forth the new man—Mark 14:3-9:

- A. Mary received the revelation of the Lord's death through the Lord's words, and **she anointed His body beforehand for burial**, implying His death and resurrection; hence, **she grasped the opportunity to pour upon the Lord the best that she had**; to love the Lord with our best requires a revelation concerning Him as our all-inclusive replacement.
- B. **In the church life we have Christ as our replacement**; we in the church life are lepers who have been cleansed by Him to love Him supremely, and in our hearts there is room only for Him—cf. Col. 1:18b; Psa. 73:25-26.

In Simon's home in Bethany, the **Lord was the replacement for everything.** Those who loved Him did not have anything or anyone apart from Him within them or around them. They had only this wonderful Person, who was everything to them.

We have pointed out that in 14:1-11 we have a **miniature of the church life.** In particular, we have a miniature of the experience of taking Christ as the all-inclusive replacement. Therefore, in the church life as depicted by this miniature, we have Christ as our replacement. **We in the church life are lepers who have been cleansed by Him, and in our hearts there is room only for Him. Within us, around us, and with us there is nothing but the Lord. We take Him as everything through His death and resurrection.** (Life-Study of Mark, Chapter 42, Section 3)

V. As our replacement, the transfigured Christ is the all-inclusive, processed, indwelling life-giving Spirit in our spirit, and we have become one spirit with Him; as we live in and by the Spirit and even live this Spirit, He will become in us the reality of Christ with His death, resurrection, and ascension as our complete and full enjoyment; this is the way of the divine delivery of the new man to bring Christ back —Gal. 5:25; John 16:13; Rom. 8:16; 1 Cor. 6:17; cf. Eph. 4:3-4a, 23-24; Col. 3:10-11.

The Lord Being Transfigured in Us

We need to consider this understanding of the kingdom as the **transfiguration** of the Lord Jesus in the light of our experience. When you believed in the Lord Jesus and **received** Him, you received a Jesus who was not transfigured. Just as the **seed** received by the soil is a seed that has not yet been transfigured, so in our experience the Christ we received was a Christ not transfigured. The transfiguration of a seed requires the **growth** of that seed into a mature plant and the **blossoming** of that plant. Therefore, we may say that the transfiguration of a seed requires growth and blossoming. In a similar way, **the Lord Jesus we received needs to grow in us until He blossoms from within us.**

We are the soil, and the Lord Jesus is the seed of the kingdom. When we received Him into us, we received Him as the One who had not yet been transfigured in our experience. Have you received the Lord Jesus, and is He now in you? We all can testify strongly that we have received the Lord and that He is in us. But has the Lord been transfigured in you? If the Lord who is in you has not yet been transfigured, others will not be able to see the kingdom of God in you. Since we have not yet experienced this kind of transfiguration, **we need the Lord to grow in us until He blossoms.** That blossoming will be the transfiguration of the Lord Jesus in us in a practical way. Such a **transfiguration is the kingdom of God.**

Enjoyment and Ruling

The transfiguration of the Lord Jesus within us becomes not only our **enjoyment** but also God's **ruling**. **When the Lord Jesus is transfigured in us in a practical way in our daily living, that transfiguration becomes the kingdom of God ruling everything in our life.** This kingdom rules us and also gives us the full enjoyment of God. (Life-Study of Mark, Chapter 66, Section 1)