

The Cruciform Witness in the Olivet Discourse

David Rickman

I. MARK'S GOSPEL

Many of the earliest sources we have documented have associated the authorship of the Gospel of Mark to John Mark as some sort of interpreter for Peter. At some level, it seems that the book of Mark was written under the leadership of Peter.

- A. Though the suffering and crucifixion of Jesus is a definitive feature in all the gospels, the book of Mark, particularly, emphasizes the suffering of the Messiah through its passion predictions, lessons on servanthood, and discipleship (8:31–32; 9:12; 9:31–35; 10:32–34; 10:43–45, etc.).

II. PETER AND THE CRUCIFIED MESSIAH

*²⁷Jesus went out, along with His disciples, to the villages of Caesarea Philippi; and on the way He questioned His disciples, saying to them, "Who do people say that I am?"
²⁸They told Him, saying, "John the Baptist; and others say Elijah; but others, one of the prophets."
²⁹And He continued by questioning them, "But who do you say that I am?"
Peter answered and said to Him, "You are the Christ."
³⁰And He warned them to tell no one about Him.
³¹And 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 again.
³²And He was stating the matter plainly. And Peter took Him aside and began to rebuke Him.
³³But turning around and seeing His disciples, He rebuked Peter and said, "Get behind Me, Satan; for you are not setting your mind on God's interests, but man's."
³⁴And He summoned the crowd with His disciples, and said to them, "If anyone wishes to come after Me, he must deny himself, and take up his cross and follow Me.
³⁵"For whoever wishes to save his life will lose it, but whoever loses his life for My sake and the gospel's will save it.
³⁶"For what does it profit a man to gain the whole world, and forfeit his soul?
³⁷"For what will a man give in exchange for his soul?
³⁸"For whoever is ashamed of Me and My words in this adulterous and sinful generation, the Son of Man will also be ashamed of him when He comes in the glory of His Father with the holy angels." (Mk 8:27–38)*

*²¹From that time Jesus began to show His disciples that He must go to Jerusalem, and suffer many things from the elders and chief priests and scribes, and be killed, and be raised up on the third day.
²²Peter took Him aside and began to rebuke Him, saying, "God forbid it, Lord! This shall never happen to You."
²³But He turned and said to Peter, "Get behind Me, Satan! You are a stumbling block to Me; for you are not setting your mind on God's interests (or 'the things of God'), but man's." (Mt 16:21–23)*

- A. Revelation and Rebuke

1. And He warned theme to tell no one about Him

- a) Several factors could contribute to why Jesus did not desire His messianic status to be made known in widespread ways. The gravity of the will of God being obeyed in future sacrifice, knowing what was in man (Jn. 2:25) - He avoided the arrogant swells toward

self-exaltation and power, and the context of messianic claimants of His day being crushed by political powers all played into this (along with others).

2. 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 again.

a) Necessary (cf. Lk. 9:22; 17:25; 24:26; Matt. 26:54)

b) Rejected (as allusion to Ps. 118 – seen later in passage of wicked tenants – Mark 12:1-12)

The stone which the builders rejected Has become the chief corner stone. (Ps 118:22)

3. And He was stating the matter plainly

a) 'Plainly' (Gk. *parrēsiā*) is translated in NT variously as: boldly, confidently, openly, and publically.

*“As Schweizer says, the phrase “he made this very clear to them” should be compared with the similar phrase in 2:2 and 4:33. The emphasis in the phrase is on the importance of the remark just made or about to be made. Peter’s response to the first passion prediction indicates he understands quite well what Jesus is saying—he just doesn’t like it.”*¹

4. And Peter took Him aside and began to rebuke Him.

*The word for “rebuke” (Gk. *epitiman*; see further at 4:39) is customarily used for rebuking demons, that is, the worst and most ultimate form of evil. The use of this word with reference to Peter’s rebuke of Jesus indicates the degree of Jesus’ error about suffering messiahship in Peter’s mind.*²

¹ Ben Witherington III, *The Gospel of Mark: A Socio-Rhetorical Commentary* (Grand Rapids, MI: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., 2001), 243.

² James R. Edwards, *The Gospel according to Mark*, The Pillar New Testament Commentary (Grand Rapids, MI; Leicester, England: Eerdmans; Apollos, 2002), 255.

“Began” (cf. v. 21) suggests that Peter gets only so far before Jesus cuts him off (v. 23). Peter uses very strong language. “Never, Lord!” [see further comment in footnote 3] is a vehement Septuagintalism..... Peter’s strong will and warm heart linked to his ignorance produce a shocking bit of arrogance. ⁴

5. But turning around and seeing His disciples, He rebuked Peter and said, “Get behind Me, Satan

- a) The command to ‘get behind’ is clearly a rebuke, however it can also carry a sense similar to the idea of “fall back in line, behind Me” (i.e. with the other disciples). This could strongly enforce the idea of “Follow Me” in the way of suffering unto death in the following statements.

“It is intriguing that the very same phrase οπισω μου [behind me] occurs in both v. 33 and v. 34. In the first instance, when coupled with a strong verb, it means “get behind me” or even “get out of my sight,” but in the second case it means what it normally means elsewhere in Mark, namely, “after me,” which, when coupled with the verb “to follow,” means “to follow after me” (i.e., “be my disciple, follow my example”) or even “get in line behind me.” Peter has a choice—he can either be a hindrance or obstacle serving Satan and so be something Jesus must leave behind on the way to the cross, or he can be a follower of Jesus, in which case he gets in line behind Jesus, takes up his own cross, and prepares for suffering as Jesus is doing.” ⁵

- b) ‘Satan’ (σατανᾶ) transliterates the Hebrew *śāṭān*, which means opponent or adversary.

[Commenting on Matthews parallel] Satan offered Jesus the kingdom without the cross at Jesus’ temptation (4:8–9); Peter now offers the same temptation and encounters the same title (4:10; Cullmann 1956b: 27). In the early Christian perspective, the devil influenced this world so deeply that the world’s values were quite often the devil’s values (Jas 3:15; 4:7; Eph 2:1–3; 4:25–27); by valuing the things humans value (such as lack of suffering), Peter shows himself to be in league with the devil (16:23). The religious leaders later echoed Satan’s temptation as well (27:42–43). That Peter is a

³ D. A. Carson, “Matthew,” in *The Expositor’s Bible Commentary: Matthew, Mark, Luke*, ed. Frank E. Gaebelin, vol. 8 (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan Publishing House, 1984), 377.

⁴ Carson, comments on the language of Peter’s response: ἰλεώς σοι, κύριε (*Hileōs soi, kyrie*, “Never, Lord”) has been understood two ways. 1. The word *hileōs*, used in the NT only here and in Heb 8:12, is taken to mean “propitious,” “merciful,” “gracious”; and the entire expression is an abbreviation of something longer, either ἰλεως εἶη σοι ὁ θεός (*hileōs eiē soi ho theos*, “May God be merciful to you”) or ἰλεως ἔσται σοι ὁ θεός (*hileōs estai soi ho theos*, “God will be merciful to you”). Coupled with what Peter next says, the rebuke is still there but in rather soft language: “This won’t happen to you, Lord, for God will be merciful to you” or “may God be merciful to you” (cf. Moulton, *Prolegomena*, p. 240; TDNT, 3:300–301). 2. It is far more likely that *hileōs* is merely a homonymic rendering of the Hebrew הַלְיָלָה *hālīlāh*, “far be it from”). This is a common Septuagintalism and has the force in confrontational situations of a very strong “Never!” or “Be it far from you!” or “God forbid!” [D. A. Carson, “Matthew,” in *The Expositor’s Bible Commentary: Matthew, Mark, Luke*, ed. Frank E. Gaebelin, vol. 8 (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan Publishing House, 1984), 378.]

⁵ Ben Witherington III, *The Gospel of Mark: A Socio-Rhetorical Commentary* (Grand Rapids, MI: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., 2001), 243–244.

“stumbling block” (16:23; not in Mark) again plays on his name: the “rock” could have negative as well as positive functions⁶

6. for you are not setting your mind on God’s interests, but man’s.

³³But when Jesus turned and looked at his disciples, he rebuked Peter. “Get behind me, Satan!” he said. “You do not have in mind the things of God, but the things of men.” (Mk 8:33 NIV)

“Mark’s context defines the content of “things (or thoughts) of God” (τὰ τοῦ θεοῦ) as having to do with the necessity of Jesus’ suffering and death. God’s purposes will be accomplished by the obedience of his Son, even to death. The “things of humans” (τὰ τῶν ἀνθρώπων), whether Jewish or Roman, would be oriented toward conquest and assertion of power.”⁷

7. And He summoned the crowd with His disciples, and said to them, “If anyone wishes to come after Me, he must deny himself, and take up his cross and follow Me.

- a) Jesus includes the crowd in the call to bear the cross. No one is exempt from the cost of discipleship He is demanding.
- b) The call for the disciple to take up his cross and follow refers to crucifixion, the Roman means of execution and standard answer to the revolts of the day and all that they entailed. The call to take up the cross is the call to embrace martyrdom.⁸

Those who would follow Jesus and proclaim him as judge of the living and the dead must be prepared to die for their faith. Not all will die as martyrs, of course, but all must embrace martyrdom at a heart level. This is the “cost” of being a disciple (cf. Luke 14:25–35).⁹

ὀπίσω μου [after Me] is used here not as in v. 33 but in its more normal NT sense (see 1:17, 20 etc.), and the double use alongside it of ἀκολουθέω [follow] (cf. 1:18; 2:14) confirms that we have here a basic condition of discipleship. It is to join Jesus on the way to execution.¹⁰

⁶ Craig S. Keener, *The Gospel of Matthew: A Socio-Rhetorical Commentary* (Grand Rapids, MI; Cambridge, U.K.: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., 2009), 433–434.

⁷ Craig A. Evans, *Mark 8:27–16:20*, vol. 34B, Word Biblical Commentary (Dallas: Word, Incorporated, 2001), 19.

⁸ “One of the repeated emphases of the entire New Testament is that it is the very nature of the church to be a martyr people. When Jesus taught that a man to be his disciple must deny himself and take up his cross (Matt. 10:38; 16:24), he was not speaking of self-denial or the bearing of heavy burdens; he was speaking of willingness to suffer martyrdom. The cross is nothing else than an instrument of death. Every disciple of Jesus is in essence a martyr” (G. E. Ladd, *A Commentary on the Revelation of John* [Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1972], 104).

⁹ John P. Harrigan, *The Gospel of Christ Crucified: A Theology of Suffering Before Glory* (Paroikos Publishing, Kansas City, MO 2015).

¹⁰ R. T. France, *The Gospel of Mark: A Commentary on the Greek Text*, New International Greek Testament Commentary (Grand Rapids, MI; Carlisle: W.B. Eerdmans; Paternoster Press, 2002), 339.

27“Whoever does not carry his own cross and come after Me cannot be My disciple. (Lk 14:27)

If disciples “come after” and imitate their teacher, their lives are forfeit from the moment they begin following him...Although genuine disciples may fall short on their commitment at times ([Matthew]26:69–75), the Gospel tradition emphasizes that those who wish to follow Jesus must understand from the start that they are surrendering their lives to him. From this perspective, most modern Western Christians remain unconverted, a point we should grasp to grapple effectively with the impact Jesus’ words would have had on his own contemporaries.¹¹

8. “For whoever wishes to save his life will lose it, but whoever loses his life for My sake and the gospel’s will save it.

a) “Wishing” to follow Jesus (vs. 34) is set opposite of “wishing” to save one’s life (vs. 35).

The promise of true life is not attached to death in itself, but to the loss of life...The possibility of literal martyrdom as the outcome of Christian discipleship is clearly envisaged here; cf. 13:9 (ἐνεκεν ἐμοῦ) [for Me]. Jesus’ expectation of his own death must have raised this possibility, and the experiences of the early church from Acts 7 onwards would add weight to it. The specific mention of the εὐαγγέλιον [gospel] as the cause of loss of life indicates that the disciples are to play an active role in mission rather than merely privately following the teaching of Jesus, and that it is in this missionary work that they are likely to meet with persecution and death.¹²

26“If anyone comes to Me, and does not hate his own father and mother and wife and children and brothers and sisters, yes, and even his own life, he cannot be My disciple. (Lk 14:26)

25“He who loves (verb – present, active: ‘is loving’) his life loses (‘is losing’) it, and he who hates (‘is hating’) his life in this world will keep it to life eternal. 26“If anyone serves (present, active) Me, he must follow (present, active, imperative) Me; and where I am, there My servant will be also; if anyone serves (present, active) Me, the Father will honor him. (Jn 12:25–26) 13

9. “For what does it profit a man to gain the whole world, and forfeit his soul? 37“For what will a man give in exchange for his soul?”

¹¹ Craig S. Keener, *The Gospel of Matthew: A Socio-Rhetorical Commentary* (Grand Rapids, MI; Cambridge, U.K.: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., 2009), 434–435.

¹² R. T. France, *The Gospel of Mark: A Commentary on the Greek Text*, New International Greek Testament Commentary (Grand Rapids, MI; Carlisle: W.B. Eerdmans; Paternoster Press, 2002), 341.

“In this way Jesus equates service to God with hating life in this age and being led unto martyrdom—these the Father will honor with eternal life.” [John P. Harrigan, *The Gospel of Christ Crucified: A Theology of Suffering Before Glory* (Paroikos Publishing, Kansas City, MO 2015)]¹³

- ³*What advantage does man have in all his work Which he does under the sun? (Ec 1:3)*
- ⁷*No man can by any means redeem his brother Or give to God a ransom for him — ⁸For the redemption of his soul is costly, And he should cease trying forever — ⁹That he should live on eternally, That he should not undergo decay. (Ps 49:7–9)*

10. “For whoever is ashamed of Me and My words in this adulterous and sinful generation, the Son of Man will also be ashamed of him when He comes in the glory of His Father with the holy angels.”

B. Examining Peter’s Responses

1. Most likely, Peter was sympathetic toward the zealot movement within the sect of Pharisaic Judaism of his day (house of Shammai and others). This movement found context from the Maccabean revolts and its distinctive perspective caused men to relate to the prophetic promises of the God of Israel as necessarily synergistic; meaning their view of the promises of God required the cooperation of man’s strength for them to be accomplished. This manifested itself with the rising up of the strength of man with political revolts and attempts to overthrow Gentile occupying powers.
 - a) Peter’s rebuke of Jesus after confessing His identity as the Messiah of Israel was in light of Jesus’ prediction of suffering and death as the Messiah; one that was incongruent with Peter’s more zealous views concerning the establishment of the Son of David in Jerusalem.

2. Peter’s innate response in Gethsemane

¹⁰Simon Peter then, having a sword, drew it and struck the high priest’s slave, and cut off his right ear; and the slave’s name was Malchus. ¹¹So Jesus said to Peter, “Put the sword into the sheath; the cup which the Father has given Me, shall I not drink it?” (Jn 18:10–11)

⁵²Then Jesus said to him, “Put your sword back into its place; for all those who take up the sword shall perish by the sword. (Mt 26:52)

- a) Peter’s denial of Jesus in the midst of the crucifixion events was likely related to his disappointment due to his zealot-leaning Messianic expectations. This Man from Nazareth in whom he had put his hope to restore the Davidic kingdom was brutally crucified as a seemingly embarrassing climax to a short season of public ministry; in the same manner as other failed messianic claimants of the day.¹⁴
3. At Peter’s restoration, Jesus calls Peter to love and lay down his life for the sheep as He did (Jn. 10:11) and speaks concerning the way Peter would bring glory to God through his death.

¹⁴ See also – “Theudas” Acts 5:36 [cf. Josephus *Ant* 20.97-99]; “Judas the Galilean” Acts 5:37 [cf. Josephus *Ant* 18.4, 9, 23-25, 20.102; *Wars* 2.56, 118, 433; 7.253]; and “the Egyptian” Acts 21:38 [cf. Josephus *Wars* 2.261].

18“Truly, truly, I say to you, when you were younger, you used to gird yourself and walk wherever you wished; but when you grow old, you will stretch out your hands and someone else will gird you, and bring you where you do not wish to go.” 19Now this He said, signifying by what kind of death he would glorify God. And when He had spoken this, He said to him, “Follow Me! [Matt. 10:38; Jn. 13:36-37]” (Jn 21:18–19)

4. When we look at the content of Peter’s writing inspired by the Holy Spirit (both emphasis in Mark and 1 & 2 Peter), we see that he humbled himself unto the way of the cross and sought to model and accent it to his audience. His zeal was reoriented to follow the Crucified in His way.

21For you have been called for this purpose, since Christ also suffered for you, leaving you an example for you to follow in His steps, 22who committed no sin, nor was any deceit found in His mouth; 23and while being reviled, He did not revile in return; while suffering, He uttered no threats, but kept entrusting Himself to Him who judges righteously; 24and He Himself bore our sins in His body on the cross, so that we might die to sin and live to righteousness; for by His wounds you were healed. 25For you were continually straying like sheep, but now you have returned to the Shepherd and Guardian of your souls. (1 Pe 2:21–25)

13Who is there to harm you if you prove zealous for what is good? 14But even if you should suffer for the sake of righteousness, you are blessed. And do not fear their intimidation, and do not be troubled, (1 Pe 3:13–14)

1Therefore, since Christ has suffered in the flesh, arm yourselves also with the same purpose, because he who has suffered in the flesh has ceased from sin, 2so as to live the rest of the time in the flesh no longer for the lusts of men, but for the will of God. (1 Pe 4:1–2)

12Beloved, do not be surprised at the fiery ordeal among you, which comes upon you for your testing, as though some strange thing were happening to you; 13but to the degree that you share the sufferings of Christ, keep on rejoicing, so that also at the revelation of His glory you may rejoice with exultation. 14If you are reviled for the name of Christ, you are blessed, because the Spirit of glory and of God rests on you. 15Make sure that none of you suffers as a murderer, or thief, or evildoer, or a troublesome meddler; 16but if anyone suffers as a Christian, he is not to be ashamed, but is to glorify God in this name. (1 Pe 4:12–16)

1Therefore, I exhort the elders among you, as your fellow elder and witness of the sufferings of Christ, and a partaker also of the glory that is to be revealed, 2shepherd the flock of God among you, exercising oversight not under compulsion, but voluntarily, according to the will of God; and not for sordid gain, but with eagerness; 3nor yet as lording it over those allotted to your charge, but proving to

be examples to the flock. ⁴And when the Chief Shepherd appears, you will receive the unfading crown of glory. (1 Pe 5:1–4)

III. THE WITNESS OF THE CROSS IN THE OLIVET DISCOURSE - COMPARING TEXTS

Mark 13:9-13	Matthew 24:9-14	Luke 21:12-19
<p>⁹“But be on your guard; for they will deliver you to the courts, and you will be flogged in the synagogues, and you will stand before governors and kings for My sake, as a testimony to them. ¹⁰“The gospel must first be preached to all the nations. ¹¹“When they arrest you and hand you over, do not worry beforehand about what you are to say, but say whatever is given you in that hour; for it is not you who speak, but it is the Holy Spirit. ¹²“Brother will betray brother to death, and a father his child; and children will rise up against parents and have them put to death. ¹³“You will be hated by all because of My name, but the one who endures to the end, he will be saved.</p>	<p>⁹“Then they will deliver you to tribulation, and will kill you, and you will be hated by all nations because of My name. ¹⁰“At that time many will fall away and will betray one another and hate one another. ¹¹“Many false prophets will arise and will mislead many. ¹²“Because lawlessness is increased, most people’s love will grow cold. ¹³“But the one who endures to the end, he will be saved. ¹⁴“This gospel of the kingdom shall be preached in the whole world as a testimony to all the nations, and then the end will come.</p>	<p>¹²“But before all these things, they will lay their hands on you and will persecute you, delivering you to the synagogues and prisons, bringing you before kings and governors for My name’s sake. ¹³“It will lead to an opportunity for your testimony. ¹⁴“So make up your minds not to prepare beforehand to defend yourselves; ¹⁵for I will give you utterance and wisdom which none of your opponents will be able to resist or refute. ¹⁶“But you will be betrayed even by parents and brothers and relatives and friends, and they will put some of you to death, ¹⁷and you will be hated by all because of My name. ¹⁸“Yet not a hair of your head will perish. ¹⁹“By your endurance you will gain your lives.</p>

“Mark’s whole understanding of the gospel, what it does for believers, and what believers must do in response, points to an eschatology understood in mission, not in withdrawal. The Son of Man who is to come recognizes as his own those who through proclamation and suffering have identified with his redemptive activity in the world.” ¹⁵

IV. WATCHFULNESS WITHOUT AND WITHIN

A. First Imperative

1. Jesus begins this section in Mark’s discourse with a command for His disciples to “watch” or “see” that no one misleads them.

⁵And Jesus began to say to them, “See to it that no one misleads you. ⁶“Many will come in My name, saying, ‘I am He!’ and will mislead many. (Mk 13:5–6)

2. The ones who mislead many are ones claiming messianic status as the promised Messiah of Israel, the son of David destined to crush all the enemies of the Jewish people and sit on the throne in Jerusalem.

¹⁵ Charles B. Cousar. “Eschatology and Mark’s Theologia Crucis. A Critical Analysis of Mark 13.” *Interpretation* 24 (1970): 321

- a) This finds context rooted within the heightened Messianic expectancy of Judaism in Jesus' day.

²¹“And then if anyone says to you, ‘Behold, here is the Christ’; or, ‘Behold, He is there’; do not believe him; ²²for false Christs and false prophets will arise, and will show signs and wonders, in order to lead astray, if possible, the elect. (Mk 13:21–22)

B. Second Command to Watch

⁹“But be on your guard (lit. ‘Look to yourselves’); for they will deliver you to the courts, and you will be flogged in the synagogues, and you will stand before governors and kings for My sake, as a testimony to them. (Mk 13:9)

⁹“You must watch out for yourselves. You will be handed over to councils and beaten in the synagogues. You will stand before governors and kings because of me, as a witness to them. (Mk 13:9 ^{NET})

1. Earlier in verse 5, disciples of Jesus are called to watch or *look towards others*, that they would not be deceived by messianic claims and movements boasting of provision for salvation based upon the strength of man. Here, disciples are commanded to watch or *look to themselves*, lest they lose heart in the midst of pressures and stray from the faith and the suffering witness contained within.

“The particular danger at the heart of this effort to seduce segments of the community was the implication that discipleship had to do with something other than the faithful following of the suffering Son of Man, a following which invariably would prove to be both difficult and dangerous. Therefore the second set of warnings was directed to the community itself in the form of a description of what its life must inevitably be. It is not a matter of suffering for suffering’s sake, but of distress and persecution brought on by the community’s determination to bear witness to Jesus in any and all circumstances.” ¹⁶

2. This section of Mark (vss. 9-13) is bookended with this command to watch themselves and its result for those who endure to the end: salvation.

V. THEY WILL DELIVER YOU

A. Handed Over

1. Gk. *paradidomi* – is translated various ways within this section and the larger context of the passion narrative in the book of Mark. This word is used three times within this section of Mark 13:9-13.

⁹“But be on your guard; for they will deliver you (*paradidomi*) to the courts, and you will be flogged in the synagogues, and you will stand before governors and kings for

¹⁶ Charles B. Cousar. “Eschatology and Mark’s Theologia Crucis. A Critical Analysis of Mark 13.” *Interpretation* 24 (1970): 332

My sake, as a testimony to them. (Mk 13:9)

¹¹*“When they arrest you and hand you over (paradidomi), do not worry beforehand about what you are to say, but say whatever is given you in that hour; for it is not you who speak, but it is the Holy Spirit. ¹²“Brother will betray (paradidomi) brother to death, and a father his child; and children will rise up against parents and have them put to death. (Mk 13:11–12)*

2. It is also striking that this word is used no less than ten times within the broader context of Mark’s narrative leading to the crucifixion.

¹⁰*Then Judas Iscariot, who was one of the twelve, went off to the chief priests in order to betray Him to them. (Mk 14:10)*

¹¹*They were glad when they heard this, and promised to give him money. And he began seeking how to betray Him at an opportune time. (Mk 14:11)*

¹⁸*As they were reclining at the table and eating, Jesus said, “Truly I say to you that one of you will betray Me—one who is eating with Me.” (Mk 14:18)*

²¹*“For the Son of Man is to go just as it is written of Him; but woe to that man by whom the Son of Man is betrayed! It would have been good for that man if he had not been born.” (Mk 14:21)*

⁴¹*And He came the third time, and said to them, “Are you still sleeping and resting? It is enough; the hour has come; behold, the Son of Man is being betrayed into the hands of sinners. (Mk 14:41)*

⁴²*“Get up, let us be going; behold, the one who betrays Me is at hand!” (Mk 14:42)*

⁴⁴*Now he who was betraying Him had given them a signal, saying, “Whomever I kiss, He is the one; seize Him and lead Him away under guard.” (Mk 14:44)*

¹*Early in the morning the chief priests with the elders and scribes and the whole Council, immediately held a consultation; and binding Jesus, they led Him away and delivered Him to Pilate. (Mk 15:1)*

¹⁰*For he was aware that the chief priests had handed Him over because of envy. (Mk 15:10)*

¹⁵*Wishing to satisfy the crowd, Pilate released Barabbas for them, and after having Jesus scourged, he handed Him over to be crucified. (Mk 15:15)*

- a) This same wording is used within confessional statements concerning Jesus’ death in Paul’s epistles as well.

²⁵He who was delivered over because of our transgressions, and was raised because of our justification. (Ro 4:25)

³²He who did not spare His own Son, but delivered Him over for us all, how will He not also with Him freely give us all things? (Ro 8:32)

3. The significance of this word being used multiple times for Jesus and His disciples conveys a *shared destiny* between the way of disciples and their teacher.

³¹For He was teaching His disciples and telling them, “The Son of Man is to be delivered into the hands of men, and they will kill Him; and when He has been killed, He will rise three days later.” (Mk 9:31)

²¹“Brother will betray brother to death, and a father his child; and children will rise up against parents and cause them to be put to death. ²²“You will be hated by all because of My name, but it is the one who has endured to the end who will be saved. ²³“But whenever they persecute you in one city, flee to the next; for truly I say to you, you will not finish going through the cities of Israel until the Son of Man comes. ²⁴“A disciple is not above his teacher, nor a slave above his master. ²⁵“It is enough for the disciple that he become like his teacher, and the slave like his master. If they have called the head of the house Beelzebul, how much more will they malign the members of his household! (Mt 10:21–25)

“...Mark wished to parallel the fate of the disciples at the hands of hostile people – by permission of God – with that of Jesus in his passion.” ¹⁷

“We are inevitably reminded of the sayings regarding discipleship in 8:34-38: to follow the Lord who advances to Golgotha calls for willingness to shoulder a cross after him and courage to confess him before people, whatever the consequences.” ¹⁸

Behind and before the delivering over of the community into the hands of its persecutors stands the suffering Lord of the community, falsely accused before councils, hated, beaten, yet through endurance to the end bringing salvation. In the way of discipleship he leaves to his followers a no less difficult road to travel than he himself walked. ¹⁹

4. We see this same word further used to describe Paul and Barnabas (as well as Judas and Silas) in the letter written to “those among the Gentiles”:

²⁵it seemed good to us, having become of one mind, to select men to send to you with our beloved Barnabas and Paul, ²⁶men who have risked [Gk. paradidomi] their lives for the name of our Lord Jesus Christ. (Ac 15:25–26)

¹⁷ George R. Beasley-Murray. *Jesus and the Last Days* (Regent College Publishing, 2005) p. 399.

¹⁸ George R. Beasley-Murray. *Jesus and the Last Days* (Regent College Publishing, 2005) p. 399.

¹⁹ Charles B. Cousar. “Eschatology and Mark’s Theologia Crucis. A Critical Analysis of Mark 13.” *Interpretation* 24 (1970): 329

The Greek verb is in the perfect and active tense, meaning that these exemplary missionaries have themselves actively and decisively ‘handed over’ their lives in a commitment to God and this action constantly characterizes their lives both in the present and future. They’ve chosen, by their commitment to follow the Crucified, to place themselves at risk to give witness to Him among men.

B. As a Witness

and you will stand before governors and kings for My sake, as a testimony to them.

1. Betrayal becomes the method for testimony to kings and authorities. The way of weakness opens the door for the witness of the gospel.

¹⁵But the Lord said to him, “Go, for he [Paul] is a chosen instrument of Mine, to bear My name before the Gentiles and kings and the sons of Israel; ¹⁶for I will show him how much he must suffer for My name’s sake.” (Ac 9:15–16)

The eschatological climax of the divine witness spoken through his saints and prophets is outlined in the Olivet Discourse (esp. Matt. 24:9–14 and parallels). In accord with Daniel 7:21–25, the saints will be handed over and “hated by all nations” (Matt. 24:9). The ultimate reason for this persecution, however, will be “to bear witness before them” (Mark 13:9) so that “this gospel of the kingdom will be proclaimed throughout the whole world as a testimony to all nations, and then the end will come” (Matt. 24:14). Though commonly interpreted as a positive testimony, context suggests that this gospel is an indictment upon the “all nations” (v. 9) who are hating and persecuting the saints. Akin to John the Baptist’s preaching of “the gospel” (Luke 3:18, nasb), the proclamation of the kingdom of God is often characterized by the punishment of the wicked (cf. Matt. 13:42; 1 Cor. 15:24; Rev. 11:15–18), which of course is good news to the poor, broken, and persecuted (cf. Matt. 5:10; Luke 6:20; 2 Thess. 1:5; James 2:5).²⁰

*“There are yet further implications for the context in which vv. 9-13 [Mark 13] are set. But placing the *thilipsis* [Gk. ‘tribulation’ – cf. Mat. 24:21] of the church in the conjunction with that of the world (vv. 7-8) and of Israel (vv. 14-20). Mark shows the church as bound with humankind in its trails; and it suffers not only with them but for them. In so doing it treads in the footsteps of its Lord. In suffering for the name of Jesus the church shares his sufferings on behalf of the world. More particularly, the sufferings of Christians, when set in this context, are viewed as among the signs of the *kairoi* [Gk. ‘times’ or ‘appointed times’] which lead to the end. They are provoked by confession of Christ in Christian witness and lead to further occasions on witness in law courts.”²¹*

C. Positive and Negative Commands

²⁰ John P. Harrigan, *The Gospel of Christ Crucified: A Theology of Suffering Before Glory* (Paroikos Publishing, Kansas City, MO 2015).

²¹ George R. Beasley-Murray, *Jesus and the Last Days* (Regent College Publishing, 2005) p. 400.

11“When they arrest you and hand you over, do not worry beforehand about what you are to say, but say whatever is given you in that hour; for it is not you who speak, but it is the Holy Spirit. (Mk 13:11)

1. Negative Command

- a) “Do not worry” is an active imperative command for the disciple of Jesus in context to being handed over and the mission to give faithful witness.

14“So make up your minds not to prepare beforehand to defend yourselves; (Lk 21:14)

2. Positive Command

“Say” or speak – disciples are commanded to voice the things the Holy Spirit will burden them with in these moments.

D. Family Betrayal

12“Brother will betray brother to death, and a father his child; and children will rise up against parents and have them put to death. (Mk 13:12)

35“For I came to set a man against his father, and a daughter against her mother, and a daughter-in-law against her mother-in-law; (Mt 10:35)

53“They will be divided, father against son and son against father, mother against daughter and daughter against mother, mother-in-law against daughter-in-law and daughter-in-law against mother-in-law.” (Lk 12:53)

1. This quote from Micah 7:6 and is mostly based upon the Targumic version²². Various Jewish sources interpreted this passage apocalyptically, applying it to the time of distress before Messiah’s kingdom arrives.

6. For in that time son shall spurn father, a daughter shall quarrel with her mother, a daughter-in-law shall treat her mother-in-law with contempt; a man’s own household shall be his enemies. 7. But I will rejoice in the Memra {Word} of the Lord, I will exult in the God who accomplishes my salvation; my God will hear my prayer.²³

“it appears to be integral to the ministry which moved to its climax in rejection and death,

²² The Targums (lit. meaning “translation”) are Aramaic translations of the Hebrew Scriptures that developed from the time of Ezra (see Neh. 8:8 – translation and ‘giving the sense’) due to the diminishing fluency of spoken Hebrew among the exiled generations. This oral transmission of the Scriptures took place within the synagogue systems of Second Temple Judaism and, though never placed in the same primacy as the Hebrew text, often were highly respected among large portions of the population who primarily spoke Aramaic. There are many witnesses to NT authors directly quoting or alluding to Targumic “versions” of the OT rather than the Hebrew rendering itself.

²³ Kevin J. Cathcart, Martin McNamara, and Michael Maher, “Editors’ Foreword,” in *The Aramaic Bible: The Targum of the Minor Prophets*, ed. Kevin J. Cathcart, Michael Maher, and Martin McNamara, trans. Kevin J. Cathcart and Robert P. Gordon, vol. 14 (Collegeville, MN: The Liturgical Press, 1990), Mic 7:6–7.

and which warned that whoever followed such a Leader and shared in his proclamation must expect to experience treatment comparable with that meted out to him.”²⁴

E. Endurance unto Life

13“You will be hated by all because of My name, but the one who endures to the end, he will be saved. (Mk 13:13)

“The last sentence of the paragraph, Mark 13:13b, following as it does the citation of Mic 7:6, could conceivably be a conscious echo of Mic 7:7: “As for me I will look to the Lord, I will wait for the God of my salvation”...There are various echoes of the thought in words of Jesus. Luke’s version of v. 13b, “By standing firm [...literally ‘by your endurance’] you will win true life for yourselves,” emphasizes that the salvation of Mark 13:13b denotes life in the kingdom of God, not simply survival of the tribulations to their limit.”²⁵

“When disciples of Jesus becomes proclaimers of his message of the kingdom of God, and still more when, after his death, they proclaimed the crucified and risen Jesus as the Messiah and Lord of the kingdom, it was impossible for them to avoid sharing his passion.”²⁶

“The endurance which wins life in the kingdom of God is that which does not fear those who can kill the body but fears rather him who has power over both body and soul at the judgment (Matt 10:28/ Luke 12:4-5). It is endurance in the way of Jesus, bearing the weight and the shame of his cross, emulating his fearless witness, even in trials, and looking to the day of his appearing.”²⁷

²⁴ George R. Beasley-Murray. *Jesus and the Last Days* (Regent College Publishing, 2005) p. 405-406.

²⁵ *Ibid* p. 406.

²⁶ *Ibid* p. 368.

²⁷ *Ibid* p. 406-407