



READING PLAN FOR WEEK OF OCTOBER 25, 2020

DAY 1

READ ► Mark 14:27-31

The disciples were so certain that they would never fall away and would always have Jesus' back. Peter dug his heels in the most, but Jesus doubled down (paraphrase): "even you will deny knowing Me three times!" Peter and the rest deny the very possibility—they can't imagine betraying Him.

Before we are tempted to look shamefully upon Peter and the others for their inevitable cowardice, we should consider how often we are tempted to abandon our allegiance to Jesus under pressure.

The good news is that although we fail Jesus all the time, He never fails us.

In what areas of life can you be a witness to the gospel rather than abandoning your allegiance to Jesus?



DAY 2

READ ► Mark 14:32-42

There is a jarring contrast in Jesus' disposition between these verses and the ones that came before. Up to this point, Jesus has shown a remarkable sense of controlled confidence. In fact, His calm dignity stirred up awe and amazement among those He encountered. Even when predicting His own death, there wasn't the slightest hint of dread or trepidation.

In the Garden of Gethsemane, something changed. The mighty Messiah is suddenly found calling out to the Father, pleading to be spared from the cup of His wrath. Jesus was so gripped by the horror of this looming suffering that the weight of it dropped Him to His knees. Luke tells us that this sudden weakness was so fierce that the God the Father was moved to send an angel to assist Jesus (22:43). Jesus is the Lord over all the heavens and its creatures, yet one of those creatures is dispatched to strengthen and sustain Him. This remarkable display of humility reveals the great lengths the Messiah went through to save sinners like you and me.

What does the weight of Jesus' agony say about the weight of God's wrath against our sin?



DAY 3

READ ► Mark 14:43-52

The gravity of Judas' betrayal cannot be missed. He was one of the inner twelve, a chosen disciple of Jesus. Imagine how the other disciples must have felt when one of their own, a teammate and fellow soldier in the trenches of ministry, just does the unthinkable and betrays Jesus for a lump of extra cash. Jesus is in the Garden of Gethsemane, a quiet place of prayer, and this is the place that Judas leads a mob to arrest him. Imagine a pastor of your church going in for his regularly scheduled quiet time of prayer, and one of His staff members decides to betray him. Knowing exactly when and where the pastor would be for his private prayer time, he leads a mob there. It's the most tragic level of treachery. And for what? A few pieces of silver and the respect of the hypocrites in power. Judas was more driven by his horizontal consequences than he was by his vertical ones.

In what ways are you tempted to be more concerned by your relationships with others than by our relationship with God?



DAY 4

READ ► Mark 14:53-65

The main prosecuting charge here is that Jesus threatened to destroy the temple, which, of course, would be an act of vandalism and blasphemy. However, Jesus never actually said that. He predicted the temple would be destroyed, but He never actually called for it to be destroyed. It becomes clear that Jesus' enemies have to come up with an intricate web of lies to try and make their case against Him; even still, they can't seem to keep their stories straight. It's a mockery of the justice system.

The irony lays on thick as they continue to judge the one who is the righteous Judge of all men. Although He is the very embodiment of Truth, they condemn Him on false charges. Why would Jesus submit Himself to such shameful indignity at the hands of His sinful creatures? Because He was motivated by His love for the Father and for sinners like you and me.

Jesus warned us in John 15:20 that we should not expect better treatment than He. Describe the last time you were ridiculed or mocked for your faith in Christ.



DAY 5

READ ► Mark 14:66-15:5

The events of these verses take place in the courtyard below (v. 54). Peter was a man who walked with Jesus for three years. He spent almost every waking hour with Jesus from the moment he was called by Him. He learned the Scriptures by sitting at Jesus' feet. He witnessed the kingdom of God by standing next to Jesus as He performed miracle after miracle. He was invited into the inner circle of Jesus; in fact, he was one of only three men invited by Jesus to pray with Him in Gethsemane. It was there that he told Jesus, "even if others deny you, I never will." This Peter denies Jesus three times in these verses. Upstairs, Jesus declared who He truly is; although He's losing His life over it, he is winning the pleasure of the Father. Peter cowardly and shamefully denies his own relationship with Jesus; he is in danger of losing everything because of it. The good news for Peter is there is grace for sinners (even momentary betrayers) in Jesus Christ. Peter went from denying Jesus at His death to preaching at Pentecost after Jesus' ascension.

Have you ever felt unworthy of God's grace because of the ways you've sinned against him? How does Peter's story comfort you?

