

## Deliver Us from Evil

### Mark 10.32-34

Scripture Reading: Romans 8.31-39

Have you noticed how one word can have multiple meanings? Sometimes this can lead to humorous misunderstandings – especially with kids. For example:

A little boy told his pastor, “When I grow up, I’m going to give you some money.”

“Why would you do that?” The pastor was curious.

“Because my dad keeps saying you are the poorest preacher he knows.”

The word “poor” and the word “preacher” have more than one meaning. The dad meant one thing, but the boy understood something entirely different.

Here’s another example.

A Sunday school teacher invited her students to draw a picture about Jesus as a little boy. When she looked over Johnny’s shoulder and saw that he had drawn an aeroplane with four passengers, she was puzzled.

“Johnny, what Bible story did you draw?”

Without hesitating, Johnny replied, “The Flight to Egypt”.

“But who are the passengers?”

Johnny seemed surprised that the teacher would have to ask. “Mary, Joseph, Baby Jesus and Pontius-the pilot,” he replied.

Multiple meanings – flight can mean flee away or it can mean a mode of transportation. Johnny confused the historical context of Jesus’ day with his own contemporary context.

Another word that has multiple meanings is “deliver”. We can deliver a pizza but that doesn’t make us competent to deliver a baby. Looking at it from another angle – would we deliver bad news in the same way as we would deliver a birthday present? Oddly enough, the word “deliver” can be used in ways that are even contradictory. It can mean save – as in she delivered the child from the circling shark – or it can mean to destroy – as in he delivered the tax cheat to the ATO.

The word “delivered” features prominently in Mark 10.32-34. But what does it mean? Is being delivered a good thing? Or a bad thing? As we will see in Mark 10, it is both at the same time.

**Sermon in a Sentence:** Jesus was delivered over to bring deliverance down.

[Pray]

I am reading the text from the English Standard Version today for the sake of clarity. Listen for the word “deliver” or “delivered”.

Mark 10:32-34 (ESV)

<sup>32</sup>And they were on the road, going up to Jerusalem, and Jesus was walking ahead of them. And they were amazed, and those who followed were afraid. And taking the twelve again, he began to tell them what was to happen to him, <sup>33</sup>saying, “See, we are going up to Jerusalem, and the Son of Man will be **delivered** over to the chief priests and the scribes, and they will condemn him to death and **deliver** him over to the Gentiles. <sup>34</sup>And they will mock him and spit on him, and flog him and kill him. And after three days he will rise.”

Two times the word “deliver” is used in this passage. Beyond this, the word is implied a third time by what Jesus does and by what He says – He is both the person delivered and the person who delivers. Put together, we see that **Jesus was delivered over to bring deliverance down**. Please contemplate with me the three uses of the word “deliver” – two explicit and one implicit – in these verses.

## 1. Delivered to selfish ambition

<sup>33</sup>saying, “See, we are going up to Jerusalem, and the Son of Man will be **delivered** over to the chief priests and the scribes,

Jesus is speaking about Judas. Judas will deliver Him to the chief priests and the scribes – Jesus’ enemies. Why would Judas betray his Lord in this way? I think the answer is selfish ambition. He wanted money and he wanted power and he wanted it all for himself. If he couldn’t force Jesus into delivering the kingdom now, at least he could get on the good side of those who would remain in power later.

The Greek word translated “delivered” could mean ripened fruit, or it could mean giving something to someone, or it could mean betrayal and treachery. In Jesus’ case, the full range of definitions for this word merges into one. He was given into the hands of another (the chief priests and scribes) . . . by treachery (Judas’ kiss) . . . but not before the time was ripe.

This is how Jesus brings deliverance down. Despite the evil intentions of Judas to deliver Jesus over out of selfish ambition, Jesus would accomplish His mission to deliver His people up to God on time and on His terms.

I love the record of Jesus’ arrest that is found in John 18:4-6 (NKJV)

<sup>4</sup>Jesus therefore, knowing all things that would come upon Him, went forward and said to them, “Whom are you seeking?” <sup>5</sup>They answered Him, “Jesus of Nazareth.” Jesus said to them, “I am He.” And Judas, who betrayed Him, also stood with them. <sup>6</sup>Now when He said to them, “I am He,” they drew back and fell to the ground.

Judas betrayed Jesus, but he couldn’t control Jesus. Jesus did the will of the Father precisely as it had been planned. He did that because of His love for you and me.

Galatians 4:4-5 (NKJV)

<sup>4</sup>But when the fulness of the time had come (ripened fruit), God sent forth His Son, born of a woman, born under the law, <sup>5</sup>to redeem (deliver by payment) those who were under the law, that we might receive the adoption as sons.

Today the name Judas is synonymous with all that is despicable. He is the crown prince of traitors and cowards. His name is an insult to anyone upon whom it is applied. No-one in their right mind gives the name Judas to their newborn baby.

But if we spit on Judas, we better spare some for ourselves because we, too, are susceptible to selfish ambition. Do we fancy ourselves to be followers of Jesus? Then let's not forget that Judas was more – an apostle. Learn a lesson from Judas. It is indeed possible – and a great many do it – to follow Jesus with our feet when our heart is absent from Him.

Judas sold Jesus out. Have you sold Jesus out? You might ask, "How could I sell Jesus out?" Whenever you say one thing, but live another, you deliver His reputation over for ridicule by unbelievers.

Judas did that for thirty pieces of silver. We might actually do it for less. We might do it because we enjoy our sin too much to renounce it. We might do it because we would rather be accepted by people here and now than accepted by God then and there. We might even do it because we expect more from Jesus than we're getting.

That's the way it was with Bob. When he heard that believing in Jesus would give him eternal life and peace and power and healing – he took it. His favourite verse was John 14.14, "Ask anything in my name and I will do it." So he asked – for money, for revenge on people, for good luck with ladies – and when Jesus didn't deliver, he went from being a Christian to being an anti-Christian quicker than you could spell Judas.

By the way, Bob heard the wrong gospel. The good news about Jesus has nothing to do with Him following me around to deliver on all my desires. It has everything to do with me following Him – and delivering to Him grateful surrender, service and worship.

Judas delivered Jesus to selfish ambition. Don't be a Judas.

In contrast, Jesus, who was never out of control of the situation, permitted Himself to be delivered over so that He might bring deliverance down.

Consider now the second instance of the word "deliver" in our text.

## 2. Delivered to self preservation

... the Son of Man will be **delivered** over to the chief priests and the scribes, and they will condemn him to death and **deliver** him over to the Gentiles.

We see now that Judas is not the only betrayer. The chief priests and scribes are guilty, too.

Let's ask and answer three questions about the chief priests and scribes. This will help us to grasp how despicable they are.

### a. Who are the chief priests and scribes?

The priests are descendants of Aaron – Moses' brother, whom God appointed the first high priest. These men are responsible to represent God to the people, and the people

to God. They are paid to serve in the temple. They carry out the sacrifices. They are stewards of the Word of God.

The scribes are the scholars of their day – scholars in the Scriptures. Because they are experts at reading and writing, they are employed to copy the Scriptures and to teach the people.

Of all people, the chief priests and the scribes should be the first to recognise and welcome Jesus. But they deliver Him to death instead.

#### **b. How do they betray Jesus?**

There was no love lost between the Roman occupiers of Palestine and the Jewish leaders. Let me give you a biblical example. Pontius Pilate – good man or bad? If you think that Pilate is good because he washed his hands of wrongdoing when he sentenced Jesus to die – saying Jesus was innocent – think again. Not only did Pilate on that occasion knowingly and freely pronounce an injustice against Jesus, but he also proved on at least one prior occasion that he hated Jewish people and delighted in their deaths.

Luke 13:1 (ESV)

<sup>1</sup>There were some present at that very time who told him about the Galileans whose blood Pilate had mingled with their sacrifices.

What happened is that Pilate ordered Jewish worshippers slaughtered in cold blood at the temple. Don't you think actions like that would be remembered and resented by Jewish chief priests and scribes? Pilate desecrated their domain.

Yet Jesus predicts – accurately – that they will form an unholy alliance with this and other ruthless Gentile pagans. They hate Jesus – their own brother – more than they hate Rome.

Let me put this in our context. Australia is at war in Afghanistan. What would you think of an Australian lieutenant if he took a digger he didn't particularly like and purposely handed him over to the Taliban – knowing he would be publicly beheaded for being an Australian? Unthinkable, isn't it? What a betrayal!

That's what the chief priests and scribes do.

#### **c. Why do they betray Jesus?**

The answer is as simple as it is banal. Self preservation. They would not surrender their seat of authority. Not even to the Messiah.

Earlier this week, Living Waters Ministry released a documentary titled "180". The film compares abortion to the horrors of the holocaust in trying to persuade people to stand against the murder of unborn babies. At one point in the movie, people are asked if they would participate in killing innocent Jews if it was the only way they could survive.

It was chilling to hear person after person say, “Yes, I would” and justify it with the rationale that the Jews are going to die anyway.

Kind of sounds like what Caiaphas, the High Priest over the chief priests, said about Jesus:

John 11:50 (ESV)

<sup>50</sup> Nor do you understand that it is better for you that one man should die for the people, not that the whole nation should perish.”

Self preservation. What makes the chief priests and scribes even more petty and pathetic that it was their social status that they sacrificed Jesus to preserve – not their actual lives (not that that would be excusable).

As we draw application to our own lives, we must understand that this is an issue for which there is no middle ground. You either sell out for Jesus, or you sell Jesus out. If there is anything, or anyone, in your life for which you would relinquish Jesus, you are not worthy of being His follower.

On the flip side, aren't you glad Jesus didn't relinquish you? As the old gospel song puts it, “He could have called 10,000 angels, to destroy the world and set Him free . . . but He died alone for you and me.”

Jesus was delivered over to bring deliverance down.

We now come to the third use of the concept “deliver”. I say “concept” because this one is not stated outright in the text . . . but it is definitely implied.

### 3. Delivered by selfless sacrifice

Jesus is the third and ultimate person in these verses who is doing a delivery job. Whereas Judas delivered Jesus to the chief priests and scribes who would unjustly try Him, and the chief priests and scribes delivered Jesus to the Gentiles who would ruthlessly kill Him, the real story of these verses is the third delivery. Jesus, who was unjustly tried and ruthlessly killed, delivered by those very means those who would be saved to a holy God.

We see the resolve of Jesus first in His actions, and then in His words.

#### a. His actions: He went up

Mark 10:32 (ESV)

<sup>32</sup> And they were on the road, **going up** to Jerusalem, and Jesus was walking ahead of them. And they were amazed, and those who followed were afraid. And taking the twelve again, he began to tell them what was to happen to him,

No-one would take a leisurely walk from Penrith to Katoomba. Not only is the distance significant -- 33 kilometres, but the change in elevation is significant. It is a strenuous walk.

Verse 32 says that Jesus went up to Jerusalem. This is literally what happened. Jericho is at 350 metres below sea level elevation; Jerusalem is at 750 metres above sea level elevation. It was roughly equal in distance and elevation change to a walk from Penrith to Katoomba.

This alone would be reason enough to cancel the trip – or at least delay it. But Jesus shows His resolve in going up. In actual fact, there were many others on the road as well – pilgrims heading to Jerusalem for the Passover.

There is, however, a more profound sense to “going up”, and in this Jesus was alone. From verses 33-34, we know Jesus is aware that going up will result in Him being raised up on a cross to die. Therefore, figuratively speaking, Jesus is embarking on a journey that will terminate in a place where no traveller from Jericho to Jerusalem had ever gone.

Notice that Jesus’ actions draw two distinct reactions from those who accompany him on the uphill journey. His disciples are amazed. The crowd is afraid.

This is not the first time in chapter 10 that the disciples have been amazed. The other occasion is found in verse 24:

Mark 10:24 (ESV)

<sup>24</sup> And the disciples were amazed at his words. But Jesus said to them again, “Children, how difficult it is to enter the kingdom of God!

What are they amazed at? I think they are amazed at Jesus’ resolve. I think they are also amazed at Jesus’ control. Whether it is Pharisees confronting Him out of envy, or a rich young ruler trying to manipulate an assurance from Him, or a blind Bartimaeus begging for mercy, Jesus is powerful and unflappable.

While the disciples are amazed, however, the crowd is afraid. Why are they afraid? I think they perceive how dangerous it is for Jesus to go to Jerusalem – a place where an attempt was made on His life previously.

What we don’t want to miss from verse 32 is that Jesus is in front. He walks ahead of both the amazed and the afraid. He is putting Himself forward for their protection. He is stepping up to deliver them – we see this in what He does.

## **b. His words: He gave up**

This brings us to His words. We also hear deliverance in what He says.

Verse 34 is an outline for the remainder of the book of Mark. This is the third and final time that Jesus predicts His suffering – and He doesn’t leave any details out.

Mark 10:33-34 (ESV)

<sup>33</sup> saying, “See, we are going up to Jerusalem, and the Son of Man will be delivered over to the chief priests and the scribes, and they will condemn him to death and deliver him over to the Gentiles. <sup>34</sup> And they will mock him and spit on him, and flog him and kill him. And after three days he will rise.”

This is holy ground. Rather than disturb it with my words and commentary. I want to let Scripture speak for itself. As you hear and see these verses, be aware that the underlined words are the same Greek word that was translated “deliver” in Mark.

Romans 8:32 (ESV)

<sup>32</sup> He who did not spare his own Son but gave him up for us all, how will he not also with him graciously give us all things?

Galatians 2:20 (ESV)

<sup>20</sup> I have been crucified with Christ. It is no longer I who live, but Christ who lives in me. And the life I now live in the flesh I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave himself for me.

Ephesians 5:2 (ESV)

<sup>2</sup> And walk in love, as Christ loved us and gave himself up for us, a fragrant offering and sacrifice to God.

Ephesians 5:25 (ESV)

<sup>25</sup> Husbands, love your wives, as Christ loved the church and gave himself up for her,

Jesus was delivered over to bring deliverance down.

In conclusion, I want to point out that all three deliverances in Mark 10 are undeserved. Jesus did not deserve to be delivered up to accusation and trial. Jesus did not deserve to be delivered up to abuse and death on a cross. And we do not deserve to be delivered from sin to righteousness, from darkness to light, from death to life.

Aren't you glad that Jesus permitted Himself to be undeservedly delivered so that we might be undeservedly delivered?

We turn our attention now to remember Jesus by participating in the communion table. Here again is that word “delivered”.

1 Corinthians 11:23-24 (ESV)

<sup>23</sup> For I received from the Lord what I also delivered to you, that the Lord Jesus on the night when he was betrayed took bread, <sup>24</sup> and when he had given thanks, he broke it, and said, “**This is my body which is for you. Do this in remembrance of me.**”