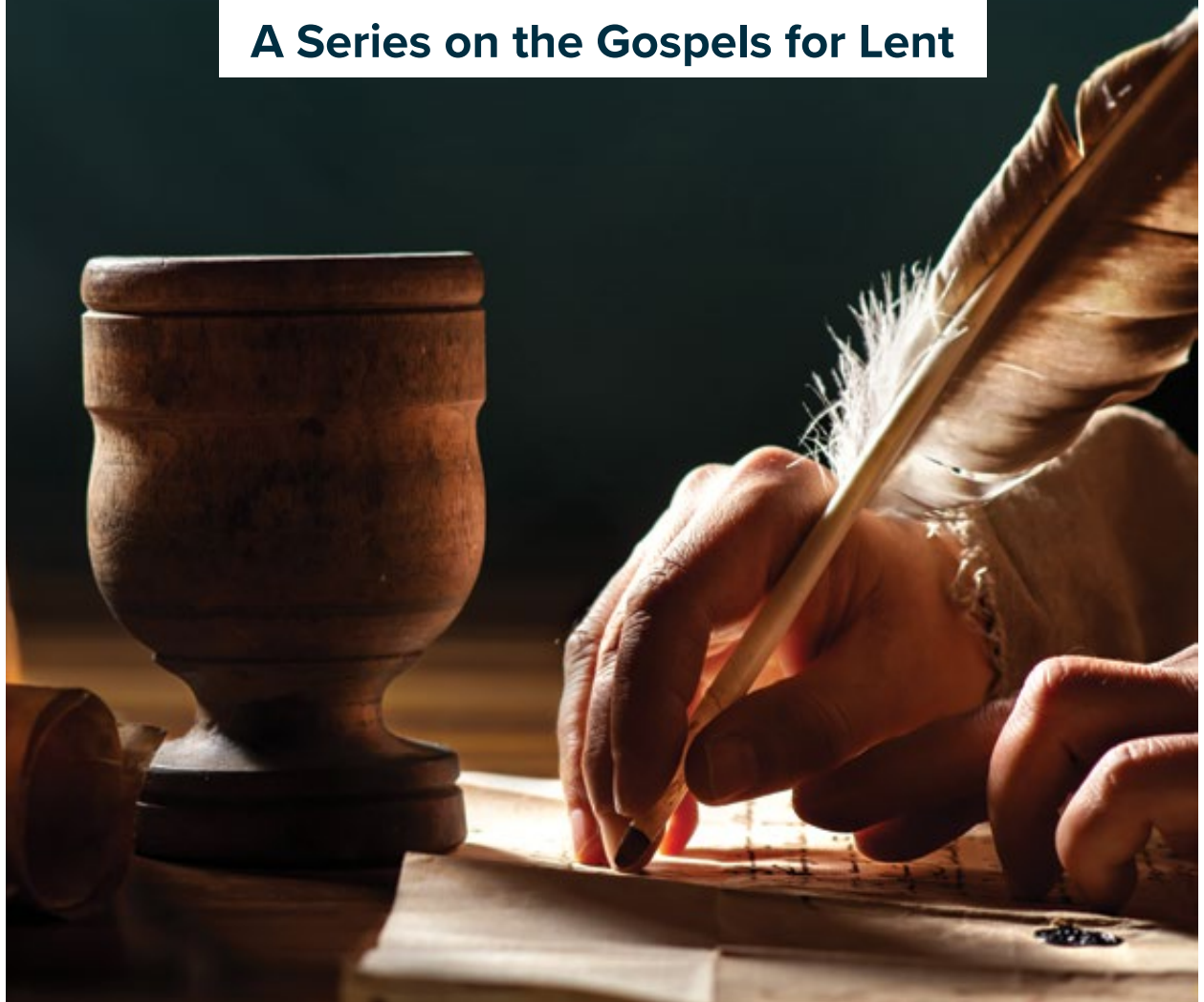


THUS IT IS

written

A Series on the Gospels for Lent



THUS IT IS *written*

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About Thus It Is Written

By means of first-person monologue sermons (which may be offered by three different speakers, each presenting for two weeks at a time, or by the same speaker each week), the six services in this series for Lent allow Mark, Luke and John to tell why they wrote about the Lord's Passion the way they did.

These six complete worship services include everything you need with the text of the sermons and orders of service in .rtf (rich text format), newsletter/bulletin notices, hymns and PowerPoint documents of all the services, with images and text (along with a copyright release) for use on screens.

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SERVICE 1: THY WILL BE DONE

NEWSLETTER NOTICE

Join us for Thus It Is Written, a special service for Week 1 of Lent, as we listen to Mark tell about what he wrote in his gospel about Jesus in the Garden of Gethsemane.

BULLETIN NOTICE

In this service for Week 1 of Lent, we listen to Mark tell about what he wrote in his gospel about Jesus in the Garden of Gethsemane.

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Service One: Thy Will Be Done

Complete Script for Worship Leaders

- This **Opening Hymn** is sung by the congregation to the melody Jesu Kreuz, Leiden Und Pein 76 76 D:

Jesus, I will ponder now on your holy passion;
With your Spirit me endow for such meditation.
Grant that I in love and faith may the image cherish
Of your suff'ring, pain, and death that I may not perish.

Make me see your great distress, anguish, and affliction,
Bonds and stripes and wretchedness and your crucifixion;
Make me see how scourge and rod, spear and nails did wound you,
How for them you died, O God, who with thorns had crowned you.

Yet, O Lord, not thus alone make me see your passion,
But its cause to me make known and its termination.
Ah! I also and my sin wrought your deep affliction;
This indeed the cause has been of your crucifixion.

Grant that I your passion view with repentant grieving;
Let me not bring shame to you by unholy living.
How could I refuse to shun ev'ry sinful pleasure
Since for me God's only Son suffered without measure?

If my sins give me alarm and my conscience grieve me,
Let your cross my fear disarm, peace of conscience give me.
Help me see forgiveness won by your holy passion.
If for me he slays his Son, God must have compassion!

Graciously my faith renew; help me bear my crosses,
Learning humbleness from you, peace mid pain and losses.
May I give you love for love! Hear me, O my Savior,
That I may in heav'n above sing your praise forever.

- This **Responsive Dialogue** from the Gospel of Mark is spoken responsively by the pastor and the congregation:
 - Ⓟ In the beginning of the Gospel of Jesus Christ, the Son of God. As it is written in the prophets,
 - Ⓒ **“Behold, I send my messenger before thy face, to prepare the way before thee.”**
 - Ⓟ Jesus came, preaching the gospel of God:
 - Ⓒ **“The time is fulfilled, and the kingdom of God is at hand, repent and believe in the gospel.”**
 - Ⓟ “Have you not read this scripture? ‘The very stone which the builders rejected has become the head of the corner.
 - Ⓒ **This is the Lord’s doing, and it is marvelous in our eyes.”**
 - Ⓟ “Go into all the world and preach the gospel to the whole creation.
 - Ⓒ **Those who believe and are baptized will be saved; but those who do not believe will be condemned.”**
 - Ⓟ And they went forth and preached everywhere,
 - Ⓒ **while the Lord worked with them and confirmed the message by the signs that attended it.**

- This **Prayer of the Day** is spoken responsively by the pastor and the congregation:

Ⓟ Let us pray: Almighty God, you have enriched your Church with Mark's proclamation of the Gospel.

Ⓞ **Give us grace to believe firmly in the good news of salvation and to walk daily in accord with it;**

Ⓟ through your Son, Jesus Christ our Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

Ⓞ **Amen.**

- The **Imposition of Ashes** takes place at this time, according to local custom.

- The **Scripture Lesson**, Hebrews 12:1-11, is read by the pastor:

Ⓟ Therefore, since we are surrounded by so great a cloud of witnesses, let us also lay aside every weight, and sin which clings so closely, and let us run with endurance the race that is set before us, looking to Jesus, the founder and perfecter of our faith, who for the joy that was set before him endured the cross, despising the shame, and is seated at the right hand of the throne of God. Consider him who endured from sinners such hostility against himself, so that you may not grow weary or fainthearted. In your struggle against sin you have not yet resisted to the point of shedding your blood. And have you forgotten the exhortation that addresses you as sons? "My son, do not regard lightly the discipline of the Lord, nor be weary when reproved by him. For the Lord disciplines the one he loves, and chastises every son whom he receives." It is for discipline that you have to endure. God is treating you as sons. For what son is there whom his father does not discipline? If you are left without discipline, in which all have participated, then you are illegitimate children and not sons. Besides this, we have had earthly fathers who disciplined us and we respected them. Shall we not much more be subject to the Father of spirits and live? For they disciplined us for a short time as it seemed best to them, but he disciplines us for our good, that we may share his holiness. For the moment all discipline seems painful rather than pleasant, but later it yields the peaceful fruit of righteousness to those who have been trained by it.

- This **Psalm** from Psalm 119:145-152, 25-32 is spoken by the pastor and the congregation:

P With my whole heart I cry; answer me, O LORD! I will keep your statutes.

C **I call to you, save me, that I may observe your testimonies.**

P I rise before dawn and cry for help; I hope in your words.

C **My eyes are awake before the watches of the night, that I may meditate upon your promise.**

P Hear my voice in your steadfast love; O LORD, in your justice give me my life.

C **They draw near who persecute me with evil purpose; they are far from your law.**

P But you are near, O LORD, and all your commandments are true.

C **Long have I known from your testimonies that you have founded them forever.**

P My soul clings to the dust; give me life according to your word!

C **When I told of my ways, you answered me; teach me your statutes!**

P Make me understand the way of your precepts, and I will meditate on your wondrous works.

C **My soul melts away for sorrow; strengthen me according to your word!**

P Put false ways far from me and graciously teach me your law!

C **I have chosen the way of faithfulness; I set your rules before me.**

P I cling to your testimonies, O LORD; let me not be put to shame!

C **I will run in the way of your commandments when you enlarge my heart!**

- **The Announcement of the Gospel** is read responsively by the pastor and the congregation:

P The holy Gospel according to St. Mark, the fourteenth chapter.

C **Glory to you, O Lord!**

- **The Reading of the Gospel**, Mark 14:26-52, is spoken by the pastor:

P And when they had sung a hymn, they went out to the Mount of Olives. And Jesus said to them, “You will all fall away, for it is written, ‘I will strike the shepherd, and the sheep will be scattered.’ But after I am raised up, I will go before you to Galilee.” Peter said to him, “Even though they all fall away, I will not.” And Jesus said to him, “Truly, I tell you, this very night, before the rooster crows twice, you will deny me three times.” But he said emphatically, “If I must die with you, I will

not deny you.” And they all said the same. And they went to a place called Gethsemane. And he said to his disciples, “Sit here while I pray.” And he took with him Peter and James and John, and began to be greatly distressed and troubled. And he said to them, “My soul is very sorrowful, even to death. Remain here and watch.” And going a little farther, he fell on the ground and prayed that, if it were possible, the hour might pass from him. And he said, “Abba, Father, all things are possible for you. Remove this cup from me. Yet not what I will, but what you will.” And he came and found them sleeping, and he said to Peter, “Simon, are you asleep? Could you not watch one hour? Watch and pray that you may not enter into temptation. The spirit indeed is willing, but the flesh is weak.” And again he went away and prayed, saying the same words. And again he came and found them sleeping, for their eyes were very heavy, and they did not know what to answer him. And he came the third time and said to them, “Are you still sleeping and taking your rest? It is enough; the hour has come. The Son of Man is betrayed into the hands of sinners. Rise, let us be going; see, my betrayer is at hand.” And immediately, while he was still speaking, Judas came, one of the twelve, and with him a crowd with swords and clubs, from the chief priests and the scribes and the elders. Now the betrayer had given them a sign, saying, “The one I will kiss is the man. Seize him and lead him away under guard.” And when he came, he went up to him at once and said, “Rabbi!” And he kissed him. And they laid hands on him and seized him. But one of those who stood by drew his sword and struck the servant of the high priest and cut off his ear. And Jesus said to them, “Have you come out as against a robber, with swords and clubs to capture me? Day after day I was with you in the temple teaching, and you did not seize me. But let the Scriptures be fulfilled.” And they all left him and fled. And a young man followed him, with nothing but a linen cloth about his body. And they seized him, but he left the linen cloth and ran away naked.

- This **Theme Hymn** is sung by the congregation to the melody Munich 76 76 D:

O Word of God incarnate, O Wisdom from on high,
O Truth unchanged, unchanging, O Light of our dark sky:
We praise you for the radiance that from the hallowed page,
A lantern to our footsteps, shines on from age to age.

For Mark, once faint and fearful but strengthened by your might,
Whose witness to your suff'ring fills darkened hours with light,
Receive our thanks, Lord Jesus, and, when we feel alone,
Assure us of your presence, and let your will be done.

Preserve your Word, O Savior, to us this latter day.
And let your kingdom flourish; enlarge your Church, we pray.
Preserve your Word and preaching, the truth that makes us whole,
The mirror of your glory, the pow'r that saves the soul.

- The **Sermon** is delivered by the pastor:

Ⓟ My name is Mark. I am the author of the shortest of your four gospels, the one that has been placed second in your New Testament. Many Christians who have read my gospel often wonder who I am. Perhaps you are one of them. You should be aware that Mark was a very popular Roman name, kind of like Bob or Jim in your world; so there were lots of us “Marks” around.

The name “Mark” is mentioned only eight times in the entire New Testament—and never in any of the four gospels. It's mentioned once in the Book of Acts and several times in the epistles:

- In Acts, a certain “John Mark” is associated with Paul and Peter and Barnabas on their missionary journeys.
- In the epistles, a “Mark” sends greetings to Philemon and to the Christians in the Greek city of Colossae.
- And later on in the New Testament, in a letter whose author is identified as Peter, there is a “Mark” who is called “my son” (1 Peter 5:13).

The truth is, it doesn't matter if I am any of those “Marks”—or none of them—or if we're all the same person. What does matter, is what I have written about Jesus Christ.

Some people have called my gospel stark or harsh, sometimes gloomy or depressing. But I like to think of it as a realistic gospel. I want everyone who reads it to see that no one can understand Jesus without understanding his intense suffering.

So, nobody in my gospel (you can read it through—and sometimes I wish in your church services you would read it through, from beginning to end instead of just

in bits and pieces)—nobody in my gospel really understands Jesus before he suffers—not his family, not even his disciples—not even after he tells them three times about his upcoming passion and violent death.

Today I would like you to examine how I described Jesus' experience in the Garden of Gethsemane in my gospel, starting with verse 26 of chapter 14, which was just read. (By the way, I didn't put the chapter and verse numbers in the account; they were added long after the gospels were written, but they may be helpful for us in referring to certain parts of the story.)

It was just after the last supper on Thursday night. Jesus and the disciples were going out to the Mount of Olives when Jesus said—and this is crucial—“You will all fall away” (v. 27). I want you to hear that statement. I want you to hear it loud and clear, because it sets the tone for the whole Gethsemane scene and Jesus' whole experience there. It tells us that Jesus' agony is his alone, that he will have no support, not even from those who had been closest to him.

Peter, of course, objected (in v. 29) by saying, “No, not me; I won't fall away.” Jesus kind of shook his head and said, “Peter, not only will you deny me, but you'll do it three times—tonight!!” Peter responded by saying, “Lord, I'll suffer and die with you if I have to.” They all said the same things. I think you know who was telling the truth.

When they got to Gethsemane, Jesus told the disciples to sit down while he went to pray. I was trying to tell you that he separated himself from them, but he took with him Peter and James and John. And then right away (at the end of v. 33), I wrote that Jesus was greatly distressed and troubled. He told his three closest advisors, “My soul is sorrowful, even unto death. I'm troubled to death!” He said, “Stay here and watch.”

He then separated himself even from them—even from his three closest disciples; he knew he couldn't even depend on them. And then (v. 35), after he knew that he was totally alone, he fell on the ground and prayed that the hour might pass. “Abba Father; Dear Father; you can do it. Everything is possible with you. Do it—take this cup away. Yet, not what I want—but what you want.” My intention was to show that Jesus was really struggling here; he was in tremendous anguish. His suffering was very real, and very profound, and very intense.

When he had finished his urgent prayer (v. 37), he came back to Peter and James and John for some moral support, and he found them sleeping. Just when he needed them most. What a disappointment!

He then went away again and prayed the same thing (v. 39): “Father, you can do it—do it, please!”... He came back again and found them sleeping ... And he came back a third time.

By now he knew what the Father had answered. He knew what must happen. He had resolved himself to his fate. So when he came back to the disciples that last time he said, “Let’s go, my betrayer is at hand.” When Judas came, and the crowd with the swords and clubs from the chief priests and the scribes and the elders, he offered no resistance to his arrest, no fighting back, even when the disciples tried to. (You see, they still didn’t understand him.) Jesus simply said (v. 49), “Let the scriptures be fulfilled.”

Then in verses 50 to 52 I wrote about what Jesus had said earlier, “You will all fall away.” It happened: they all forsook him and fled; even the young man who had followed him dressed only in a linen cloth—he even left that behind and ran away naked. Earlier in my gospel I wrote that the disciples had left their nets and that they had even left their father, Zebedee, in the fishing boat so that they could follow Jesus (1:18, 20). Now—at the end of the gospel—I want you to see that they left everything, even their clothes, to get away from him. Jesus was completely alone. For us, who had forsaken him, Jesus was facing the realm of Satan—the realm of death...alone!

I want you to know that he didn’t go into that battle without trepidation; this was a frightful prospect. But I also want you to know that he went into the battle trusting. There is another book in your New Testament called the Book of Hebrews. There these words are written, “In the days of his flesh, Jesus offered up prayers and supplications, with loud cries and tears, to him who was able to save him from death, and he was heard for his godly fear. Although he was a Son, he learned obedience through what he suffered” (Hebrews 5:7-8). Jesus went into the battle trusting in God. He went into that battle setting an example for us in our great struggles and in our great battles with evil and temptation and even death. And the example he set was not only a courageous one, it’s one that gives us inspiration.

Let me go back for a moment to Jesus' prayer in verse 36. Jesus taught us to pray. You know the prayer; you can say it from memory. And you have, probably for many years. Although my gospel does not include the Lord's Prayer as such, there are elements of it right here in my description of Gethsemane, for Jesus practiced what he preached:

- When you pray, say, "Abba Father." Remember that. Call him that...because that is what he truly is, your Father.
- And when you pray, say as he did, "Thy will be done."
- And if trial comes your way, as it came his way, pray, "Save us in the time of trial. And lead us from temptation."

I'm glad you have my gospel. I hope you read it often. It's the shortest one. Maybe sometime soon, maybe even this week, you'll read it from beginning to end and see what I'm telling you.

For I want you to know that it is not possible to understand Jesus—unless you know and understand how great his suffering was. For in his suffering, he taught us trust, and obedience, and the way to live. Amen.

- The **Offering** is gathered, during which time special music or a hymn of your choosing may be offered.
- These **Prayers** are offered:

P O God who sent us Jesus to affect the story of our lives, help us to listen and pay attention to your words this Lenten season. Give us hearts that are eager to do what you say and are ready for your salvation to enter into our world. O God, who guides and keeps us,

C **Thy will be done.**

P Through your Son, O Lord, you open our eyes to opportunities to separate ourselves from others that we might pray to you in earnest for everything that is on our minds and in our souls. May our petitions be in line with your mission and purpose for us. O God, who guides and keeps us,

C **Thy will be done.**

P O kind Father, thank you for returning to us again and again when we have wandered. Help us never to abandon you and your Son anymore, but always to follow in the footsteps our Savior took. O God, who guides and keeps us,

C **Thy will be done.**

P Give us faith, good Lord, to trust in you all of our days. Rid us of any doubt and fear, and help us to cling to you when times are tough as well as when they are good. O God, who guides and keeps us,

C **Thy will be done.**

P Dear God, let us stand firm with our Savior Jesus as we remember his death and resurrection for us. Provide us with the strength to stand up for him and to hold fast to our belief in him for salvation. O God, who guides and keeps us,

C **Thy will be done.**

P Amen.

- The **Lord's Prayer** is offered. Or, if **Holy Communion** is celebrated, it may take place here according to local custom.

- This **Benediction** is offered by the pastor:

P The Lord bless you and keep you. The Lord make his face to shine on you and be gracious unto you. The Lord make his will be done in you. The Lord look upon you with favor and grant you peace.

C **Amen.**

- The **Closing Hymn** is sung by the congregation to the melody Was Gott Tut 87 87 4477:

What God ordains is always good; his will is just and holy.
As he directs my life for me, I follow meek and lowly.
My God indeed in ev'ry need
Knows well how he will shield me; to him, then, I will yield me.

What God ordains is always good; he never will deceive me.
He leads me in his righteous way, and never will he leave me.
I take, content, what he has sent;
His hand that sends me sadness will turn my tears to gladness.

What God ordains is always good; his loving thought attends me;
No poison can be in the cup that my Physician sends me.
My God is true; each morning new
I trust his grace unending, my life to him commending.

What God ordains is always good; he is my Friend and Father.
He suffers naught to do me harm tho' many storms may gather.
Now I may know both joy and woe;
Someday I shall see clearly that he has loved me dearly.

What God ordains is always good; tho' I the cup am drinking
Which savors now of bitterness, I take it without shrinking.
For after grief God gives relief,
My heart with comfort filling and all my sorrow stilling.