

The Fifth Sunday in Lent (2021)  
**Mark 10**

**Holy Spirit, Light Divine, shine upon this heart of mine; chase the shades of night away; turn the darkness into day.**

**Let me see my Savior's face. Let me all His beauties trace. Show those glorious truths to me which are only known to Thee.**

**Mark 10:32–45** 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, 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. And they will mock him and spit on him, and flog him and kill him. And after three days he will rise.”

And James and John, the sons of Zebedee, came up to [Jesus] and said to him, “Teacher, we want you to do for us whatever we ask of you.” And he said to them, “What do you want me to do for you?” And they said to him, “Grant us to sit, one at your right hand and one at your left, in your glory.” Jesus said to them, “You do not know what you are asking. Are you able to drink the cup that I drink, or to be baptized with the baptism with which I am baptized?” And they said to him, “We are able.” And Jesus said to them, **“The cup that I drink you will drink, and with the baptism with which I am baptized, you will be baptized, but to sit at my right hand or at my left is not mine to grant, but it is for those for whom it has been prepared.”** And when the ten heard it, they began to be indignant at James and John. And Jesus called them to him and said to them, “You know that those who are considered rulers of the Gentiles lord it over them, and their great ones exercise authority over them. But it shall not be so among you. But whoever would be great among you must be your servant, and whoever would be first among you must be slave of all. For even the Son of Man came not to be served but to serve, and to give

his life as a ransom for many.”

In the Name of Jesus.

And He gave them the cup to drink: His Blood. And He gave them Holy Baptism: for the world, for forgiveness, life and salvation. He gave them Himself! James and John, and the offended other apostles; and you and me.

GIVES us Himself, really: still. Even here and today where you and I are gathered by His Spirit; at this time.

How often, my dear ones, do you read along in the Good Book and run across verses that you think were just added yesterday? Happens to your poor pastor all the time. The beginning of the Gospel lesson today is one of those that struck me later in life, though I grew up in the Divine Service:

**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.**

Since I have been going in weekly for ‘feelings injections’ the past few years, I have been going back and forth between what is from below and what is from above; what is psychology—can be good stuff!—and what is our religion. The two are confused daily and much in the world.

Work on your feelings is just that: work; even love. And like all whatever else we are, that deserves its place.

But there is a wonder and fear that is something other than animal, instinct. And when Jesus was going to Jerusalem He was going to the O...N...L...Y...

P...L...A...C...E... in the world where Real God meets men being real, confessing their sins. This fear may have parts in it that are worth venting and expressing and so on. But your God is not your therapist. He's the One 'over there,' 'way beyond us all,' 'up there.' And the way HE sums us up is preached loud and clear in every man's life and when every man dies.

When He kills us, our God is not 'working through His feelings.' At least that's not ALL He is doing. He is taking the wild conjecturings—the philosophies and dreams of men—the boasts and battles and one-up-mans-ship that makes up this whole world, and putting a period at the end of it and saying, 'Have what you have been asking for daily and much, all along in this 'LIFE' you have been running.'

AT LEAST...in Jerusalem, you can approach God the Killer and have Him kill something else besides you. But how many of those do you hafta go through—what a nightmare!—before you wish for all the blood to stop running and the killing to stop.

So, at that time, when Jesus headed to that place, people trailing Him knew that SOMETHING of finality was going to go on. And James and John—with Him the longest—spoke for us all when they basically asked to shine with at least Jesus' reflected glory, when it came to the day of battle, the crisis, the finality.

Glory be to God the Father! Glory be to God the Son!  
Glory be to God the Spirit, Great Jehovah, Three in One!

HIS way out of spilt blood and death is NOT our ways.  
Nor are our thoughts His thoughts.

Real God does NOT ask for props and fans and supporters  
and well-wishers.

Real God came as a Real Man. And He headed to the  
temple, to Jerusalem—to GOD!—as One of us. He SO has  
scooped up death and blood and distance from God, He  
even tells us that we TOO may carry our cross, and be  
baptized with the baptism with which He was baptized; and  
drink His cup.

Yeah. Couldn't do it WITHOUT us, could HE?!

That's all He CAN get out of us. And not even THAT  
turns around any man from saved to not-saved.

My dear ones, your God, your Savior, the Holy Spirit Who  
makes His home with you now and forever:

REAL God N...E...V...E...R... places ANY weight on  
what you and I bring to HIM from below. So much so, that  
He bears with the worst thing we do, daily and much:  
we're SAVED by Christ, Christ's Baptism, Christ's Body  
and Blood; but we ACT as if WE have put OUR fingers in  
the pot and added OUR secret herbs and spices—and that  
THAT'S why WE are...

What ARE we, my dear ones?

Jesus frees us from what we—in fear, dying—dream to be.  
'God! I'm for YOU!'

Jesus frees us to pray: ‘Jesus, remember now. You’re only to do what our Father bids us, bids you, bids the world!’

Since He is our servant.

Since He did not come to hire us, or enslave us.

And when He comes again, He is coming to save the world; even you and me.

Oh, my dear ones. The rottenest thing I do—maybe you too—is to take some sick sort of satisfaction that the world CAN...ACT... as wicked as I’M SURE IT IS!

Forgetting—utterly forgetting—that I am over here and God is over there—I am down here and God is totally beyond—and the dirt in which all men rest is my destination too....PERIOD...

Except for the time when GOD turned MAN and swallowed up our blood and death so much, that the period’s been erased from OUR final judgments, OUR despair—

And when Jesus comes again, He’s not even going to hold it against ME—or again YOU!—for rehearsing until everyone is sick of you, the wrongs other men do you. Other men, who, praise the Lord, look JUST...LIKE...GOD in the Name of Jesus.