

## A Timely Message For All

Luke 18:31-34

Have you ever been called into a meeting with several others by someone where you were told some very important and urgent news?

Maybe it was a boss who called you into the office to talk about something that was going to be happening at the company that he or she wanted you to be aware of before the news became public.

Maybe it was a family member who wanted to share some important news about something that would be happening.

The news in meetings like that can be good or bad.

Termination of employment

The sale of the company

A promotion

A pregnancy

A terminal diagnosis

An engagement

A divorce

The news is meant in some way to prepare us for something that is coming. I recall two such family meetings.

The first occurred in 1969. My brother and I were 11 and nearing the end of fifth grade. Mom and Dad called us along with our younger brother and sister who were 8 and 4 respectively into their bedroom. We sat on the edge of the bed while they told us the news that we would be moving to Camp Barakel. I don't honestly remember at 11 how I really felt deep inside about that news. I suppose it was an exciting time that would bring some great adventures. Dad was going to be the Camp mechanic.

The second meeting occurred in 1975. The bedroom I shared with my twin brother was down in the basement. Dad came down the steps with our three other siblings. We kids all sat on the steps

while Dad stood near our desk. He told us the news that Mom had cancer. I was a pretty naïve kid. I didn't really know much about cancer. I don't recall ever knowing or hearing about anyone else who had it, so it was all new. I'm sure he told us about her upcoming surgery and radiation treatments that would follow, but the news was all a bit surreal.

We have been following Jesus during His final trek to Jerusalem. Crowds of people have followed Him. He has interacted with the multitudes, with the Pharisees, with children and with the disciples. Our passage is about a meeting Jesus is going to have only with His disciples. No one else would be present for what He is about to tell them. With your Bibles turned to our passage in Luke 18:31-34 would you stand to honor God's Word while I read these few verses of our text.

There are four truths I want us to consider this morning from our text.

His message was pressing

His message was prophetic

His message was problematic

His message was promising

## I. HIS MESSAGE WAS PRESSING – v. 31a

“Jesus took the Twelve aside and told them...”

I would like to consider first that the message is private.

## A. His Message Was Private

“Jesus took the twelve aside.” This was to be a private meeting between Master and student. He, the Teacher, had important news to convey to His disciples – alone. He didn't want the news to be spread or rumored by others. It was instruction time. There were things they needed to know as His students. It was not unusual for a teacher to take time for private instruction.

Early in His ministry after calling the Twelve to follow Him, He gathered them together and gave them authority over evil spirits and power to heal disease and sickness. He sent them out to preach the kingdom of heaven.

After feeding the five thousand Jesus talked with His disciples alone. He asked them who others thought He was and then asked for their own opinion of Him. It was on this occasion that Peter proclaimed Jesus to be the Son of the living God. No greater confession could be made about Jesus.

From that time on Jesus began to explain to them that He must go to Jerusalem and suffer many things at the hands of the religious leaders, be killed but on the third day raised to life (Matthew 16:21)

On another occasion He called Peter, James, and John to accompany Him up to a mountain where He revealed to them His glory as He was transfigured before them.

And we cannot forget the time His disciples requested that He teach them to pray. Those were all occasions of private instruction.

Jesus took to heart the instruction of Deuteronomy 6:7 to instruct as they sat or walked along the road. He availed Himself of every opportunity to guide them and teach them in the truth, even when the truth was difficult to hear.

Jesus took the Twelve disciples aside because there was important news they needed to hear. His message was private. His message was preparatory.

## B. His Message Was Preparatory

“Jesus took the Twelve aside and told them...”

I have been teaching David how to mow this summer. I put him in the way back where there

aren't any trees or obstacles. I mow around the bushes, trees and mom's gardens and along the edges. He mows the middle. His first time mowing he was learning how to steer a 0 turn mower. Instead of a steering wheel you have two handles that need to be coordinated to keep a straight line. When he was done it looked like some of those unexplained crop circles people think were created by aliens. I think they are from kids learning to mow.

The second time he did much better and he got to the point when he came to the end and needed to turn that he would zip it around sharply and on down to the end. When he did that he left skids marks in the grass.

After each time of mowing I take him aside and give him some more instruction on how he can do a better job the next time. Sometimes he comes up with excuses but I remind him that he is to listen, watch, and do and then I remind him this is his first year mowing and he'll get the hang of it.

Jesus pulled the disciples aside. They have been with Him for three years, watching, listening, following, doing. What He is about to tell them isn't knew, but it is in more detail. As a matter of fact this is the most detail He will give them about what is soon to take place to Him. It's all preparatory, informative.

Told or said, depending on your translation, is a word that conveys the idea of instruction or exhortation. What He is about to say to them is important stuff, stuff that is meant for them to know to prepare them so that they won't be taken off guard when it does happen.

His message is private. His message is preparatory meant to convey something pressing.

Now comes the heart of the message. This is the meat and potatoes of what He wants them to hear

and know. His message is prophetic, prophetic in the sense that He reminds them of what has already been said about Him or what would happen to Him.

## II. HIS MESSAGE WAS PROPHETIC – v. 31b-32

If you have ever taken a class on public speaking or a communications course or an English course emphasizing writing you know how difficult it is to convey just the right message. For that reason many politicians, especially in offices like the president or presidential candidates have a person or a team who write the speeches that are given. They pour over words and word meanings to ensure that what is said conveys the exact message they want to get across. Often times I use a thesaurus to get just the right word, because specific words have specific meanings. If you aren't careful, the message can convey an entirely different meaning.

Listen to a couple excuse notes sent in to school by parents and you'll see what I mean about how changing one word conveys an entirely different meaning.

- 1) My son is under a doctor's care and should not take P.E. today. Please execute him.
- 2) Please excuse Jimmy for being. It was his father's fault.

Communicating the right message can be difficult and even some of Scripture can be obscure and ambiguous, but not this passage. There is nothing secretive about what Jesus is going to say. He plainly tells them why He is going to Jerusalem and provides some details.

Remember for a couple chapters now in Luke they have been on their way to Jerusalem. After all it was near the Passover and the expectation was that they attend. His message is first about a place.

### A. His Message Was About a Place – v. 31b

He tells them something they probably already knew, but just to be clear they were headed up to Jerusalem. Now they were in the region of Perea headed south so wouldn't it be better said that they were headed down to Jerusalem?

Let's remember several facts about Jerusalem. The first is that Jerusalem is the capital city. It had an important political position. It was there that King David set up his reign and established the kingdom.

Second, in terms of elevation, Jerusalem may have not been the highest point in Palestine, but as you approached the city, you had to travel uphill to get there. Being elevated gave the sense of traveling up to Jerusalem.

But perhaps most important is that it was the holy city, the place where worship of Jehovah was central. It was there that the Temple was located. It was there that worshippers traveled to celebrate the various feasts and festivals, most importantly the Passover, the remembrance of Israel's deliverance from Egyptian bondage. It was also at this time that Israelites believed Messiah would come. In the sense that it was a holy city, it was an elevated city in respect to other cities in their borders in the minds of worshippers. It was a place exalted by its holiness because of the Temple's presence.

The place is also important because it is there that the King, the Messiah would establish His kingdom. As both priest and king it would be in Jerusalem that the Messiah would establish both a political and religious kingdom, but that wasn't His purpose now. The place they were headed was Jerusalem. He wanted them to be clear about that. His message is about a place, but in His message and more importantly He spoke about His purpose for going.

### B. His Message Was About a Purpose – v. 31c-32

In plain Aramaic Jesus told them that the purpose

for going to Jerusalem was so everything the Old Testament prophets said concerning Him, as the Messiah, would take place. It's all going to be fulfilled. Everything was going to be carried out. So that they know what to expect Jesus detailed what was going to happen, everything just the way the prophets said. I've given you a list of prophetic events surrounding Jesus' death and then the fulfillment. My intention isn't to go through each one today, but to give you some homework. The prophecy and its fulfillment confirm the authenticity and the truthfulness of God's Word. It tells us that the Word of God can be trusted. It tells us more importantly that through the fulfillment in Jesus He is the Messiah, the Son of God, the One who would die for our sin to give us eternal life by faith in Him.

But before we look at some of the specific events, let's be reminded of why Jesus had to go to Jerusalem. We will look at it more closely in a few weeks when we get into chapter 19, but Jesus stated specifically and emphatically that He came to seek and to save the lost. He didn't come just to fulfill prophecy, but to redeem mankind from sin. But to make certain that people then and now would understand that He was or is the Messiah prophets gave detail about Him so that when the events occurred we could look at the two together and know for certain He is the promised Messiah, there would be no misunderstanding about Him and neither then could we excuse it away claiming we didn't know or the signs were unclear.

Let's look at some of the prophecies.

1. The Messiah would be betrayed.  
Psalm 41:9  
Psalm 55:11-12

Fulfilled:  
Mark 14:10-11 "Then Judas Iscariot, one of the Twelve, went to the chief priests to betray Jesus to them. They were delighted to hear this and promised to give him money. So he watched for an

opportunity to hand Him over."

John 13:18-30

Matthew 26:47-50

2. The Messiah would be sold for 30 pieces of silver.

Zechariah 11:12

Fulfilled:

Matthew 26:14-16

3. The Messiah would be forsaken by all.

Zechariah 13:7

Fulfilled:

Mark 14:27

Matthew 26:55-56

4. The Messiah would be falsely accused.

Psalm 109:2-5

Fulfilled:

Matthew 26:59-60a

5. The Messiah would remain silent.

Psalm 38:13-14

Isaiah 53:7

Fulfilled:

Matthew 27:12, 14

I Peter 2:23

6. The Messiah would be mocked and beaten.

Micah 5:1

Isaiah 52:14

German Biblical scholar Delitzsch wrote "Just as many as were astonished at Him, for so disfigured was He that His appearance was not human, and His form was not like that of the children of men."

O sacred Head, now wounded,  
with grief and shame weighed down,  
now scornfully surrounded  
with thorns, thine only crown:

how pale thou art with anguish,  
with sore abuse and scorn!  
How does that visage languish  
which once was bright as morn!

Fulfilled:

Matthew 26:67

Luke 22:63-65

7. The Messiah would be spit on.

Isaiah 50:6

Fulfilled:

Matthew 26:67-68

Matthew 27:30-31

8. The Messiah would have hands and feet pierced  
by crucifixion.

Psalm 22:16 (1,000 years before His death,  
centuries before crucifixion was invented)

Fulfilled:

John 20:25-29

9. The Messiah would be crucified with thieves.

Isaiah 53:9, 12

Fulfilled:

Mark 15:27

Luke 22:37

Luke 23:39-43

10. The Messiah would pray for His adversaries.

Isaiah 53:12

Psalm 109:4

Fulfilled:

Luke 23:34

11. The Messiah would be the object of ridicule.

Psalm 109:25

Psalm 22:7-8, 13

Isaiah 52:13-14

Fulfilled:

Matthew 27:39

Luke 23:35

12. The Messiah's garments would be gambled for.

Psalm 22:18

Fulfilled:

John 19:23-24

13. The Messiah would be forsaken by God.

Psalm 22:1

Because of Christ we will never know divine  
desertion.

Hebrews 13:5 "I will never leave you or forsake  
you."

Fulfilled:

Matthew 27:46

14. The Messiah would thirst.

Psalm 22:15

Psalm 69:3, 21

Fulfilled:

Matthew 27:34, 48

John 19:28

15. The Messiah would commit Himself to God.

Psalm 31:5

Fulfilled:

Matthew 27:13

Luke 23:46

16. The Messiah's friends would stand afar off.

Psalm 38:11

Psalm 88:8

Fulfilled:

Luke 23:49

17. The Messiah would have no bones broken.

Exodus 12:46 (Numbers 9:12)

Psalm 34:20

Fulfilled:  
John 19:36

18. The Messiah would be surrounded by darkness.  
Amos 8:9

*Halley's Bible Handbook* has a very unique perspective on this event. "Inanimate nature hid her face in shame at the unspeakable wickedness of man, and was, perhaps, trying to express her sympathies with the Son of God in His final grapple with the dark powers of Hell. God may have meant the darkness to be Creation's symbolic mourning for Jesus while He was suffering the expiatory pains of the lost."

Fulfilled:  
Matthew 27:45

19. The Messiah would be buried with the rich.  
Isaiah 53:9

Fulfilled:  
Matthew 27:57-61

20. The Messiah would voluntarily become the substitute for death.  
Isaiah 50:6  
Isaiah 53:12

Fulfilled:  
John 10:11, 18  
Mark 10:45  
Hebrews 1:3  
I Peter 2:24 (1:18-19; 3:18)  
Revelation 1:5

And those are just the prophecies surrounding His death. Christ carefully conveyed the truth about what awaited Him in Jerusalem to His disciples. He unveiled the purpose for going. He even spoke of being handed over to the Gentiles who would kill Him.

His message was pressing.  
His message was prophetic.

His message was problematic.

### III. HIS MESSAGE WAS PROBLEMATIC – v. 34

It wasn't a problem for Him. He was going to Jerusalem to fulfill the purpose for which He came, to die for the sins of the world, to demonstrate God's great love for mankind by willingly going to the cross to be our substitute and sacrifice for sin. He did not retreat from the events He knew were going to happen, events that were planned before the foundation of the world. It was not a problem for Him, but it was a problem for the disciples.

The disciples, though, didn't understand what He was saying. To them it was a problem. It didn't make any sense to them. In their minds that wasn't the plan. As the Messiah He was to go and set up His earthly kingdom. On one occasion when Jesus talked about His death Thomas was ready to go to Jerusalem to die as well. In the garden of Gethsemane when Jesus was betrayed by Judas Peter was ready to defend Him to the death. He drew his sword and wacked off the ear of Malchus, servant to the High Priest.

They all thought that Jesus was marching to Jerusalem to lay claim to the throne by declaring Himself king and set up His earthly kingdom. Acts 1:6 tells us that even after Jesus' resurrection just before His ascension they still thought He was going to bring in the kingdom. They didn't really get it until Pentecost when the promised Holy Spirit empowered and emboldened them.

What's interesting is that even though the religious leaders didn't believe He was the Messiah, they still remembered the prophecies Jesus spoke about during His ministry and planned to thwart any possible claim of a supposed resurrection.

Let's pause and ask the obvious question at this point: Do we understand the connection between

the prophecies laid out in the Old Testament and their fulfillment in Jesus Christ, the Messiah or are we like the disciples and just don't get it? They wanted the kingdom without the cross, but Jesus came to offer the kingdom only through the cross. That's the only way. But isn't that the point? To those who are perishing, to the unbeliever, the cross is foolishness. The unbeliever thinks that the cross isn't necessary. To the disciples, the pressing message Jesus told them, which had been revealed in prophecy, was a problem. They hadn't yet made the connection, that the Messiah had to die. The Old Testament sacrificial system symbolized it. The Old Testament prophets spoke it. Jesus was the fulfillment of it. And the disciples didn't get why He had to die. For them it was a problem. And were we to stop right there it would be a problem for us as well. As Paul Harvey would say we need the rest of the story.

So here's what I left out. Let's go back to verse 33. In this verse we see His message was promising.

#### IV. HIS MESSAGE WAS PROMISING – v. 33

Let's face it. If we had been one of the disciples hearing this news about Jesus' death when they reached Jerusalem we would be thinking about what options we had.

We could go and die too.

We could leave the group and get out of dodge and hope for the best.

We could go with Jesus and see if those things were really going to happen.

Why didn't they get the cross? I Corinthians 1:23 reminds us that the cross is a stumbling block to the Jews. The Old Testament said that anyone who was hung on a tree was cursed. And Gentiles believed that no reputable person would ever be crucified so they didn't believe that any Savior would die that way.

What they failed to see was the promise Jesus gave regarding His resurrection. Without the resurrection there is no hope. Paul makes that abundantly clear in his letter to the Corinthians. He explains the simplicity of the gospel in the opening verses of chapter 15.

I Corinthians 15:1-4

But he continues by emphasizing the importance of the resurrection. It wasn't enough for Christ to die for sin; He also had to have victory over death and the grave.

I Corinthians 15:13-19

He further expresses the importance of the resurrection with regard to salvation as he writes to the Romans.

Romans 10:9 "That if you will confess with your mouth, 'Jesus is Lord,' and believe in your heart that God raised Him from the dead, you will be saved."

Jesus is the Messiah whose coming was foretold beginning in the Garden of Eden (Genesis 3:15) and delicately woven throughout the fabric of the Old Testament. The truth of His message comes from One who does not lie, because He cannot lie. And the promise He made to the disciples that day of His resurrection was just as certain as if it had happened that day.

II Corinthians 1:20 "The promises of God in Him are yea, and in Him Amen, unto the glory of God by us."

If Jesus did not rise up from the dead then our faith is vain, we are to be pitied for believing such a fabricated ruse and we are without any hope in this life for joy and satisfaction from an otherwise empty life and in the life to come where we will receive God's full and eternal wrath.

So, today, rest in the promise of His resurrection, not that it will yet happen, but that it has. And so because He lives, we too shall live. His victory over death and the grave is our victory as well.

That is the confidence we have not only in the future, but today to stand firm in that promise so that nothing can move us. It is the motivation to continue working for the Lord knowing that all our labor for Him is not in vain. Jesus told the disciples that He would rise again the third day so that they wouldn't become distraught but remain strong during the trying days that were ahead for them. Yes, at the crucifixion they deserted Him, but at Pentecost the power of the Holy empowered them and with strong conviction they proclaimed the risen, living Christ.

That is our hope today.

That is our promise today.

That is our power today, power from the same indwelling Spirit of God to proclaim the risen Christ.

Jesus spoke of some horrific events He would endure, but gave the promise of His resurrection.

#### Dallas Holm – Rise Again Lyrics

Go ahead, drive the nails in My hands;  
Laugh at me, where you stand.  
Go ahead, and say it isn't Me;  
The day will come, when you will see.

'Cause I'll rise, again,  
Ain't no power on earth can keep Me down!  
Yes, I'll rise, again,  
Death can't keep Me in the ground.

Go ahead, mock My name;  
My love for you is still the same.  
Go ahead, and bury Me;  
But very soon, I will be free!

'Cause I'll rise, again;  
Ain't no power on earth can keep Me down!  
Yes, I'll rise, again;  
Death can't keep Me in the ground.  
Go ahead, and say I'm dead and gone,

But you will see that you were wrong.  
Go ahead, try to hide the Son;  
But all will see that I'm the One!

'Cause I'll come again!  
Ain't no power on earth can keep me back!  
Yes, I'll come again;  
Come to take My people back.

CLLI: 1292471

Do you believe the prophecies about Christ?  
Do you believe the promises about Christ?  
If so, what difference does it make to you?  
Does the promise of His resurrection and the truth of His Word that it did happen encourage you during your trials and embolden you to proclaim that Jesus rose again just as the prophets said and just as He promised?

That promise is just as much for us today, even though it has already occurred, as it was for the disciples.

Remain steadfast in His promises.

1 Corinthians 15:58

“Therefore, my dear brothers and sisters, stand firm. Let nothing move you. Always give yourselves fully to the work of the Lord, because you know that your labor in the Lord is not in vain.” (NIV)  
“With all this going for us, my dear, dear friends, stand your ground. And don't hold back. Throw yourselves into the work of the Master, confident that nothing you do for him is a waste of time or effort.” (The Message)