



## The Promise of Paradox in Mark's Gospel



SEPTEMBER 15-18, 2016

OUR LADY OF THE SNOWS, BELLEVILLE, ILL.





### The Promise of Paradox

God's Word is loaded with the language of paradox. Even more, God's Word is laced with lavish promises of grace. We will look at biblical evidence of how the Holy Spirit works for the good of humans. Especially in the midst of life's worst absurdities, biggest ambiguities and deepest mysteries.



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### Paradoxical Themes

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- 1. Messianic secret.

  Missional savior.
- 2. By whom Jesus is known... by whom not known.

3. Redemptive suffering.

4. Son of God. Son of Man.



Baby Jesus at bath time.







### Main Point:

Things will get worse before they get better.





## 42times

"immediately"





## 410/678 "And..."





## bible.oremus.org

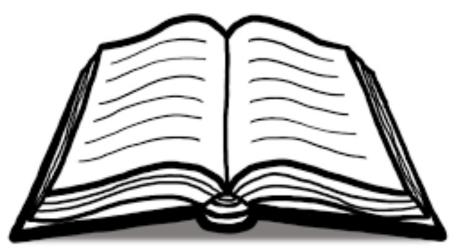
New Revised Standard Version





Jesus "did not speak to them except in parables."

Mark 4:34





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# THIS







"The beginning of the good news of Jesus Christ, the Son of God."



Mark 1:1



"Then he began to teach them that the Son of Man must undergo great suffering..."



Mark 8:31



- 1:41 "Moved with pity,"

  Jesus healed a begging leper.
- 1:43 "After sternly warning him, he sent him away" at once.
- 6:6 "And he was amazed at their unbelief."
- 8:12 "And he sighed deeply in his spirit."
- 10:14 "When Jesus saw this, he was indignant."
- 10:21 "Jesus looking at him loved him."







Johannes Kepler 1571-1630



- physical & metaphysical
- individual & structural
- prayed about& worked against
- done & left undone
- an event & cumulative
- forgivable but ineradicable



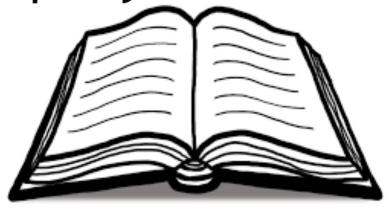
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certainty of need: vv. 17-22

fragility of faith: vv. 23-24

"I believe; help my unbelief."



Mark 9













~ Derek Walcott



Break a vase, and the love that reassembles the fragments is stronger than that love which took its symmetry for granted when it was whole. **Derek Walcott** 



### The work of re-creation and rebuilding is greater than the work of creation and building.

Martin Chemnitz, Loci Theologici. Translated by J.A.O. Preus. (St. Louis: Concordia, 1989): 154.



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begins with the recognition
that our world has
departed devastatingly
from God's divine design;
all things are not right
between our selves and:

CREATION

CREATOR

OUR OWN SELVES

ONE ANOTHER.



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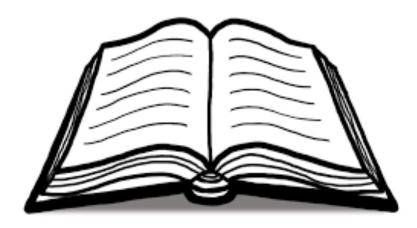
## The turning point:

Mark 8:27-30



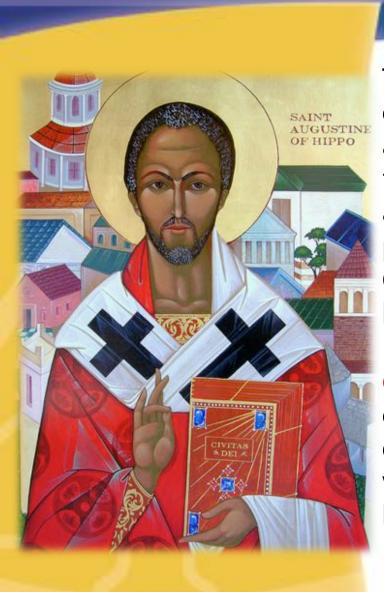


"Then he began to teach them that the Son of Man must undergo great suffering..."



Mark 8:31





There are two major (and regrettably common) mistakes Augustine wants us to avoid. One is the lure of utopianism. This is the mistake of thinking that we can produce a human society that will solve our problems and bring about the kingdom of God on earth. This was the basic error of both Marxism and 19th-century liberalism.

The other error, equally disastrous, is cynicism. This creeps up on us as we see ever-present evil. We withdraw into our own self-contained circle of contentment, which can just as well be a pious holy huddle as a secular skeptics club.

~Timothy George

Humans cannot be justified before God by their own powers, merits, or works. Augustana IV





Jesus "also said, 'The kingdom of God is as if someone would scatter seed on the ground, <sup>27</sup>and would sleep and rise night and day, and the seed would sprout and grow, he does not know how. <sup>28</sup>The earth produces

of itself, first the stalk, then the head, then the full grain

in the head."

Mark 4:26-28



"As for yourselves, beware: for they will hand you over to councils, and you will be beaten in synagogues; and you will stand

before governors and kings

because of me,

as a testimony to them."

Mark 13:9



We, as Christians, cannot tolerate a bad situation and keep quiet.

It is our duty to act, to speak and even risk our life.



Gudina Tumsa

Born: 1929

Martyred: July 28, 1979



Ethiopian
Evangelical
Church
Mekane Yesus
EECMY.org

1959 65,000 1999 2.5m 2009 5.1m 2015 6.5m





#### chaos

## creative disruption

complacency



### ANHEUSER BUSCH

Chief Officer for Disruptive Growth



mission-focused not self-indulgent surgical not random scalpel-like not sledgehammer managed not untended careful not reckless prayerful not self-sufficient systemic not atomistic pruning not cutting generative not destructive oxygenizing not suffocating life-giving not death-dealing patient not instantaneous

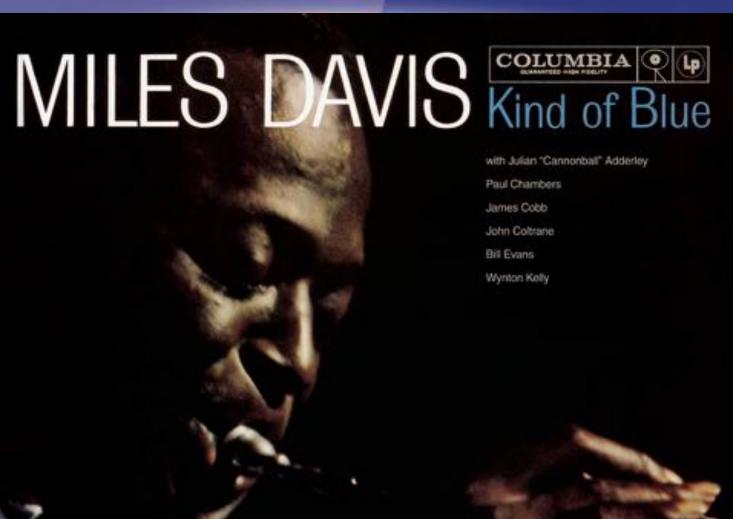


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#### Accompaniment

is all about a four-letter preposition:

WITH.

WITH-ness as our witness.



"We should not boast or get puffed up. Nor should we despise or triumph over our neighbors as if we were their god or equal to God."

Martin Luther, "Two Kinds of Righteousness" Luther's Works, vol. 31, p. 302



# mago

#### analogia entis

analogia relationis



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"This last commandment, therefore, is not addressed to those whom the world considers wicked rogues, but precisely to the most upright—to people who wish to be commended as honest and virtuous because they have not offended against the preceding commandments."

- "Everyone tries to accumulate as much as he or she can, and lets others look out for themselves."
- "clever tricks and shrewd tactics"
- "devised daily—under the guise of justice"
- "appearance of legality"
- "sharpest and shrewdest"
- "practice bribery through friendly connections"

ML, LC 9/10<sup>th</sup> command; 425/426



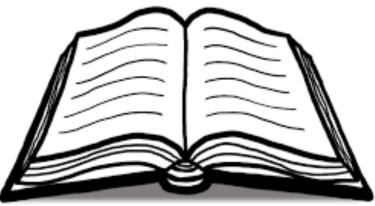
- Main Character: Jesus Christ
- Key Figures: insiders/outsiders





- Temple curtain torn in two top to bottom. v. 38
- "stood nearby opposite of him"
   παρεστηκώς ἐκ ἐναντίας ν. 39

"Truly this man was God's Son."



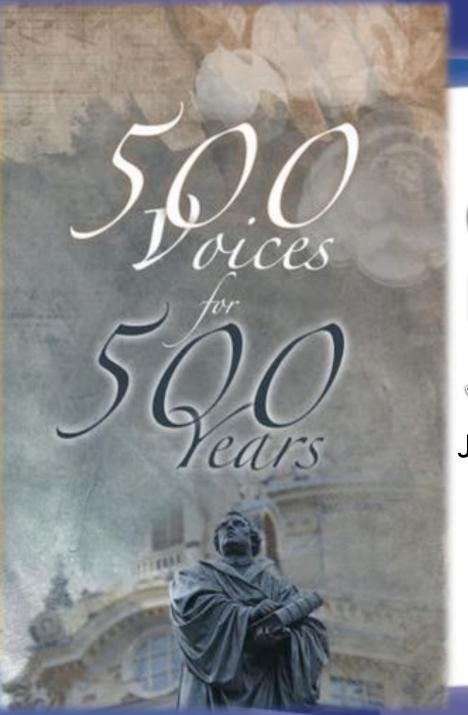
Mark 15





Nothing worth doing is completed in our lifetime, Therefore, we are saved by hope. Nothing true or beautiful or good makes complete sense in any immediate context of history; Therefore, we are saved by faith. Nothing we do, however virtuous, can be accomplished alone. Therefore, we are saved by love. Reinhold Niebuhr







#### Carnegie Hall New York City June 23-25

Jason.Thoms@concordia-NY.edu

**SOMETIMES THE BEST EVANGELISM** IS SIMPLY TELLING **PEOPLE YOU'RE A CHRISTIAN AND** THEN NOT BEING A COMPLETE JERK.





In the day-to-day trenches of adult life, there is actually no such thing as atheism.

There is no such thing as not worshiping.

Everybody worships.

Kenyon College Commencement 2005 "This is Water,"

David Foster Wallace (1962-2008)





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