Gospel of Mark
Lesson 61 “The Spirit Versus the Flesh”

I. Introduction - We are continuing our series on “The Gospel of Mark” this morning.

A. Review - This series comes from **Galatians 2:20**. It’s now Christ living in us so in order for us to understand how He lives in us, it’s helpful to study how He lived on earth.

B. Today, as we look at Jesus’s arrest in the garden of Gethsemane, we are going to talk about “The Spirit Versus the Flesh.”

1. I don't know about y'all, but sometimes keeping my flesh in check is like WWE Battle Royal. My spirit's willing, but my flesh is coming off the top rope.
2. Today we are going to see a contrast between Peter who didn’t pray and trusted his flesh to obey and failed, while Jesus prayed three times to bring His flesh in line so He could fulfill the will of the Father.

II. The Spirit Versus the Flesh

A. **Mark 14:27-31 - A Picture of Living in the Flesh**

1. Jesus quotes ***Zechariah 13:7*** about the sheep scattering. This is a prophecy the disciples would scatter when He was arrested.
2. Peter’s response is classic flesh (man’s ways apart from God). “If everyone else stumbles, I will not deny you!” Whats the focus? I will (flesh - trusting self).
3. After Jesus predicts Peter’s betrayal, Peter says will die with Jesus. Lest you think he wasn’t sincere, he took a sword with him to the garden. He was sincere, but sincerely wrong because the flesh isn’t that strong.
4. The problem wasn’t commitment. **It was trusting his determination.**
5. Jesus begins to prepare for His restoration prior to His failure. **John 13:37 - John 14:3. Because Jesus was a man of the spirit, He was prepared for Peter’s failure in advance and carried Peter through so He could be restored.**

B. **Mark 14:32-52 A Picture of Living in the Spirit**

1. Gethsemane means “oil press”—a place where olives were put under pressure to release the oil. This is a picture of yielding the flesh under pressure so the power of the Spirit can flow. This is a picture of what we will see in Jesus’s life in this story.
2. In ***verses 33-41*** We see a powerful contrast of living in the flesh versus living in the spirit. Jesus goes and prays three times to bring His flesh into subjection to the Father while Peter (the one who said He would die with Him slept).
3. Look at what Jesus prayed, “Take this cup from me?” Did He want to go the cross? NO. Was He in sin to not want to go to the cross? NO! Some people think Jesus was

never tempted becaue He was God, but the truth is He was also a man and tempted in all points like we are yet without sin becaue He prayed. **Hebrews 4:15-16.**

a. This is huge. Simply wanting something different than God wants for our life, doesn't mean we are in sin. This is the only time in scripture we see Jesus's will be different from the Father's. \

b. Satan loves to tempt us with bad thought and then accuse us because we have them. Just because we have bad thoughts, it doesn't mean we've sinned.

c. We need to know this truth that we can be righteous and have bad thoughts because this will cause us to feel safe to draw close to the Father and get the help we need. Ex: My temptation story

d. Why? ***Verse 38 The spirit is willing, but the flesh is weak!*** In the garden, Jesus never told Peter to try harder, He told Him to "Watch and pray" - depend on the Holy Spirit.

e. Jesus had to pray 3 times to get His will in line with the Father's. This is a picture of the oil press (the war between flesh and spirit). He sweat drops of blood. **Luke 22:44.**

f. In ***Verse 42***, He arose and said "Let us be going." The war was won! Why? **He was saturated with the spirit because He was saturated in prayer.**

4. ***Verses 43-52*** In this passage a multitide of Jewish temple officers, Roman soldiers, and Judas arrive to arrest Jesus. Can you imagine the pain Jesus is going through as He looks in the eyes of His friend who is also His betrayer.

a. Have you ever been betrayed by someone close? It's crushing. It can bring you to tears, rage, and injustice all out once so that you can barely breathe.

b. In the midst of this, Jesus remained calm because He'd already won in the spirit. Peter reacted in the flesh, drew his sword, and cut off the servant's ear.

c. Then we see another contrast. Peter (flesh) reacts in fear, wrath, and violence, while Jesus is so saturated with the spirit that He heals Malchus - **Luke 22:51.**

DO WE SEE THE CONTRAST BETWEEN FLESH AND SPIRIT?

d. ***Verses 48-52*** Here's the final contrast. Jesus had the power to call twelve legions of angels and walk away—but He stayed, because He was yielded to the Spirit and committed to fulfilling the will of God. The others all ran. **The flesh runs from the pressure. The Spirit remains to fulfill the purpose.**

III. Conclusion - Same pressure. Different power. **Peter drew from the flesh. Jesus drew from the Spirit.** Peter reacted. Jesus responded. Peter cut. Jesus healed. Peter ran. Jesus remained.

The key to fulfilling God's will for our lives isn't trying harder; it's trusting deeper through prayer.

A. Pray Closing Prayer