

January 20, 2008

The Strong and the Weak
Mark 14:17-31, 66-72

The most beautiful story is the one God has written for your life.

My observation – The Church has long been under the illusion that strength is found in moral and spiritual perfection – many are disheartened with the Church as a result – because they know who they are – and others hide behind facades of self-righteousness.

Judas – his sin was that he didn't trust Jesus with his true self – **Matthew 26:25**

But Jesus knew his secret – **Matthew 25:26**

Peter was a proud fool – he actually believed that if anyone needed protecting, it was Jesus, not him.

John 13:23 – “Ask him which one he means” while everyone else... ‘Surely not I?’

He could be compared to someone who lives a neat, packaged Christian life... Always about helping/counseling/giving – showing no chinks in their own armor.

What this Reveals:

1. It is your Story that Exposes your Weakness

I have learned over many years of ministry experience that there are really no strong Christians – we tend to go by what we observe – but everyone has a heart – and those hearts struggle with all kinds of things:

- Doubt
- Fear
- Lust
- Anger
- Bitterness
- Skeletons of sin and actions past & present

- Insecurity
- Shame & Sorrow

Everyone has a story – The chapters of these stories determine how we live out our lives before the watching world.

- Some are tender because in their stories they have been brutal
- Some appear to be moral... puritanical proportions – in their stories... wildly immoral
- Some... strong... stories... weak, alone & afraid
- Some... controlling... completely out of control

We only see the surface – so we really don't see those dark things everyone lives with.

2. It is your Story that Welcomes God's Grace

Ironically, the Gospel teaches that God's Grace only slips in through the cracks of our imperfections.

2 Corinthians 12:8 – “My grace is sufficient for you, for my power is made perfect... weakness.”

Even though I don't know my own heart/limits/future, Christ does – and His Love and Grace aren't predicated on my ability to be strong – **Peter** – **Luke 22:31-32**

The Gospel – It is Jesus who makes you Strong. His true strength was an inner one – a deeper strength and one that allowed Him to be weak for you and for me – both a supernatural strength and a supernatural weakness.

So embrace your Story – find that in your weakness God's strength looms and speaks and heals...

The larger story in this is that Jesus had to be betrayed and He had to die alone – no one else could bear our penalty and pay for our sin. It was never meant for anyone to die with Jesus.

2 Corinthians 13:4 – “For to be sure, he was crucified in weakness, yet he lives by God's power. Likewise, we are weak in him, yet by God's power we will live with him to serve you.”