

Title: BOLD PREDICTIONS, BOLDER WITNESSES, MARK 8:31 – 38
(Chatham, NJ; 03/04/18, AM) [Pc – Topical]

Theme: Though Jesus predicted his death and resurrection, his words fell on deaf ears until his disciples experienced it for themselves and couldn't contain their enthusiasm.

Purpose: To examine Jesus' predictions, to present good reasons why they were fulfilled, and to inspire the audience with visions of their own resurrected bodies.

Introduction:

1. Strange people see strange things.
2. We dismiss those who perceive things that appear beyond reality. Maybe they really are crazy.
3. I don't know what the disciples were thinking when Jesus predicted his resurrection.
4. But now we speak of our own resurrection as if it will be a certainty.
5. Could we have spoken in this way before Jesus came back from the dead?

Jesus Predicts His Resurrection

- A. Destroy this temple, John 2
 1. The cleansing is out of chronological sequence
 2. Yet John wants his readers to know early on what is happening
 3. Destroy this temple: cryptic to his listeners
 4. Yet a prediction of things to come
 5. His disciples had to use hindsight
 6. His resurrection will be evidence of his authority
- B. Suffer, die, and come back, Mark 8:31-38
 1. Jesus' "end of life" discussion
 2. A discussion we tend to avoid: will, disposition of property, etc.
 3. Yet Jesus wants the disciples to be prepared
 4. They cannot fathom the resurrection
 5. He will try to tell them several times
- C. The sign of Jonah, Matthew 12:38-40
 1. A mystery hidden from some
 2. Jesus will not play their game
 3. He offers a sign he knows they will deny
 4. An odd event foreshadowing another odd event: Jonah was as true as his resurrection will be

Standing the Test of Skepticism

- A. Muslims begin by believing Christ never even died, p. 166
 1. Sometimes called the "swoon theory"
 2. Jesus allegedly only appeared to die
 3. Yet they make this claim without any proof, merely an assertion of their beliefs
 4. If they accepted this, then they would have to accept the possibility of his resurrection
 5. If they accepted the resurrection, they would have to accept the possibility of his claims: his claim to be God is abhorrent to their conception of God
 6. So they claim that he never really died
- B. Reasons to believe it, 163ff.
 1. His death: even soldiers believed it
 2. Testimony by Roman historians tell us that his followers believed this
 3. The empty tomb: even the Jewish leaders had to make up a lie to explain the empty tomb
 4. Testimonies – Acts 2, Thomas, 1 Cor. 15

5. Why shouldn't we believe these bold claims?
- C. The boldness of the witnesses
1. Nothing else accounts for their boldness and the existence of the church
 2. They preached the resurrection in spite of opposition: much of it came from their own religious leaders and fellow Jews
 3. The Romans caught on later when Christianity's beliefs threatened pagan merchants and Roman officials
 4. Most of the original twelve lost their lives defending their testimony: "Liars make poor martyrs"

Reasons for Hope

- A. Saved from evil and judgment, 1 Peter 3
1. We discussed Peter's message last week
 2. As the flood waters saved Noah from God's judgment, baptism saves us
 3. It saves us by the resurrection, 21
 4. God's triumph over death is our salvation over judgment
 5. When we are caught up into the air at Christ's Second Coming we will triumph simply because we are with him in the resurrected life
- B. Saved from the curse of death, Hebrews 2, 1 Corinthians 15
1. The power of death has been destroyed, Hebrews 2:14-15
 2. Satan has held that power over us for too long
 3. Empowerment is a popular word nowadays
 4. Real empowerment is realizing that we don't have to give in to the greatest fear of all: death
 5. With certainty we will see the day when "Death has been swallowed up in victory," 1 Cor. 15:54
- C. The imperishable: a new body, a forever life
1. We will live even though we die, John 11:25
 2. We will be raised to an imperishable life, 1 Cor. 15:52
 3. What can sometimes seem like a dim, future hope is really an empowering source of hope

Conclusions:

1. Jesus saw and predicted his future life: a resurrected one.
2. His disciples couldn't have maintained their own hope and zeal had it not been true.
3. In the midst of our day-to-day pursuits, remember the hope of the resurrection.