

Sermon: “The Diary of a Great Man”
Guest Preacher: Rev. Brandon T. Crowley, Ph.D.
Biblical Passage: Mark 15:20-21

Passage

20 After mocking him, they stripped him of the purple cloak and put his own clothes on him. Then they led him out to crucify him.

21 They compelled a passer-by, who was coming in from the country, to carry his cross; it was Simon of Cyrene, the father of Alexander and Rufus.

Background and Summary

In the text we find Jesus beaten, tortured and condemned to death. He has endured public humiliation and brutal treatment. His mission of unconditional love and liberation has made him a target of the crowd and the State. His humanity is finally at its lowest disadvantage; He is being delivered weak, broken and bloodied, carrying his own cross, to his own death. The preacher tells us that in this passage of Scripture, we and Simon of Cyrene encounter Jesus, “walking down death row to be wrongfully executed for crimes he did not commit.”

Simon, the man in the crowd, is the man about whom today’s “diary” is written. Mark tells us that “they” mocked, stripped and led Jesus out to be crucified. He also tells us that this same “they” compelled Simon to carry the cross of the condemned man named Jesus. It is the diary of Simon we are reading in Mark 20:21.

Consider these three thoughts as suggested takeaways from today’s sermon

1. Everyone’s strength fades. It is particularly important on this Men’s Day 2022 to see that Jesus is showing us it is okay to be weak sometimes.
2. God provides help when we are weak. We are never alone in our weakness. God provided Simon to help Jesus carry his cross, and when we are at our weakest, God will provide a “Simon” to help us carry our cross in our distress.
3. God compels more from us than anonymous goodness. The preacher tells us that Simon was a family man and a good man, but there was more God wanted out of his life. There is more that God requires of our lives. In other words, God compels us to bear one another’s crosses. This is the Diary of Greatness. The diary of your life is being written daily. It’s a privilege to be used by God to help others. The preacher said that when God calls upon us to help somebody, we are being given the opportunity for greatness and don’t even have a choice!

Reflection Questions

1. In what way(s) was Jesus weak? What help did He need?
2. List one or two (or more) of your weaknesses. What help do you need?
3. List one or two (or more) of your strengths. Who are the “others” who need your strengths?
4. In the Diary of YOUR Greatness, how does God compel you to help bear the crosses in the lives of others?
5. Would you say that you have been a faithful or unfaithful as a cross bearer?