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| **The Way Out of This Mess**  *Promise: Christ died for us to redeem us from the mess of sin* Pastor Timothy A. Duesenberg Gen 17:1-7, 15-16; Psalm 22:23-31; Rom 5:1-11; Mark 8:27-38 (Second Sunday in Lent), 2/25/24)  *For whoever would save his life will lose it, but whoever loses his life for my sake and the gospel's will save it.* – Mark 8:35  **Lead In –** Some might say that this world is in a mell of a hess. With war in Eastern Europe and in the Middle East, not to mention all the rancor and polarization at home, we are acutely aware of the mess. With around the clock news we are reminded of all the messes incessantly. The problems are overwhelming! But when in the world has it been any different? In the words of Billy Joel, “We didn’t start the fire // It was always burning, since the world’s been turning.” Only, Billy Joel doesn’t have it quite right. It hasn’t always been burning, though it has been for a long time. It began burning when our first parents took a bite out of the forbidden fruit. And although you and I may not have started it, we have each contributed to the flame. The question is: Is there a way out of this mess? … The answer is YES, and the Gospel Lesson shows us the way…   1. **It Has to Do with Being Shown Jesus’ Identity**    1. Knowing who Jesus is evidently matters…    2. Finally, the first time the disciples correctly ID Jesus…    3. Because of who He is Jesus can say He is the way… 2. **It Has To Do With What Jesus Has Done For Us**    1. First of 3xs Jesus speaks of His upcoming Passion…    2. This does not fit the common expectations…    3. Refusal to accept God’s plan is devilish, Satanic… 3. **It Has To Do With the Implications For Us In This Age**    1. Being drawn by the Spirit to follow Jesus…    2. The way involves suffering with Christ…    3. Mystery of His sufferings turns everything upside down!   **Final Word –** Friends in Christ, we can’t dig ourselves out of the hole we are in. When we try, we only dig ourselves in deeper. And we can’t put out the fire. That’s because everywhere we go our thoughts, words, and deeds spark a new fire. And we can’t clean up the mess we have made because we have become by nature mess-makers. But there is one, not in a hole Himself, who pulls us out of the hole. There is one who has enough water so that He douses our flames and washes us of the ashes. And there is one who creates with beauty and so that He recreates and restores us and erases the chaos with His order. Our response to all of this must be to lay down arms, surrender, and yield to His amazing grace, the grace in which He died for us while we were still sinners.  **Mk 1:1** The beginning of the gospel of Jesus Christ, the Son of God.  **Mk 1:11** And a voice came from heaven, “You are my beloved Son; with you I am well pleased.” (cf. Mk 3:11; 5:7; 15:39)  **Jn 14:6** “I am the way, and the truth, and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me.”  **Mk 10:45** “For even the Son of Man came not to be served but to serve, and to give his life as a ransom for many.” | **Mark 8:27-38 ESV**  *Peter Confesses Jesus as the Christ*  27And Jesus went on with his disciples to the villages of Caesarea Philippi. And on the way he asked his disciples, “Who do people say that I am?” 28And they told him, “John the Baptist; and others say, Elijah; and others, one of the prophets.” 29And he asked them, “But who do you say that I am?” Peter answered him, “You are the Christ.” 30And he strictly charged them to tell no one about him.  31And he began to teach them that the Son of Man must suffer many things and be rejected by the elders and the chief priests and the scribes and be killed, and after three days rise again. 32And he said this plainly. And Peter took him aside and began to rebuke him. 33But turning and seeing his disciples, he rebuked Peter and said, “Get behind me, Satan! For you are not setting your mind on the things of God, but on the things of man.”  34And calling the crowd to him with his disciples, he said to them, “If anyone would come after me, let him deny himself and take up his cross and follow me. 35For whoever would save his life will lose it, but whoever loses his life for my sake and the gospel's will save it. 36For what does it profit a man to gain the whole world and forfeit his soul? 37For what can a man give in return for his soul? 38For whoever is ashamed of me and of my words in this adulterous and sinful generation, of him will the Son of Man also be ashamed when he comes in the glory of his Father with the holy angels.”  **Ro 5:6** For while we were still weak, at the right time Christ died for the ungodly.  **Ro 5:8-9** but God shows his love for us in that while we were still sinners, Christ died for us. Since, therefore, we have now been justified by his blood, much more shall we be saved by him from the wrath of God.  **Ro 5:10** For if while we were enemies we were reconciled to God by the death of his Son, much more, now that we are reconciled, shall we be saved by his life.  **Jn 6:43** “No one can come to me unless the Father who sent me draws him. And I will raise him up on the last day.”  **Jn 12:32** “And I, when I am lifted up from the earth, will draw all people to myself.”  **Jn 15:20** “Remember the word that I said to you: ‘A servant is not greater than his master.’ If they persecuted me, they will also persecute you. If they kept my word, they will also keep yours.” |