Working Preacher Lectionary Study

Sundays of Pentecost 19 through Christ the King
Lectionary 27 through Lectionary 34
October 4 through November 22, 2015
Resources: Preaching the Year of Mark

“Mark” in enterthebible.org (see “Passages”)

Working Preacher: workingpreacher.org

Text Week: textweek.com

Study Bibles: Oxford, Harpers, Lutheran Study Bible

Handouts:

This PowerPoint
People of the Word: First Things
Outline of Mark
Themes in Mark for Pentecost, Part 3
Pentecost, Part 3: List
Pentecost, Part 3: Texts
Year of Mark Readings: 2014-2015
Mark: Key Narrative Selections, Parts 1 & 2
# The Gospel of Mark

## I. Introduction (1:1-13)
“Beginning” … in the wilderness; John the Baptist, Jesus’ Baptism; Temptation

## II. Jesus’ Ministry in Galilee (and beyond) (1:14-8:21)

**Transitional Summary:** “Kingdom of God is at hand” 1:14 - 15

A. Jesus Son of God: Authority in Word and Deed 1:16-3:6
- Call of Disciples, Healings, Teaching, Conflict Stories

**Transitional Summary:** Multitudes follow from everywhere 3:7 - 12

B. Jesus Son of God: Rejected by his own people 3:13-6:6
- Parables (ch. 4); Miracles (ch. 4-5); Rejection at Nazareth 6:1-6

**Transitional Summary:** Teaching among the Villages 6:6b

C. Jesus Son of God: Misunderstood by his own disciples 6:7 – 8:21
- Mission of the 12
- Feeding 5000 (6:30-44)-------Feeding 4000 (8:1-10)
- Crossing Sea (6:45-52)--------Crossing Sea (8:11-20)

**Transitional Summary:** Do you not understand? (8:21)

## III. Jesus on the Way to Jerusalem (8:22-1:52)
Jesus the Messiah who Suffers – Discipleship in light of the Passion

**GIVING OF SIGHT STORY 8:22-26**

**Peter’s Confession 8:27-30**

A. Passion Prediction # 1 8:31
- Misunderstanding 8:32-33
- Teaching on Discipleship 8:34-9:1

B. Transfiguration 9:2-8
- Disciples puzzled 9:9-13
- Teaching to Disciples 9:14-29

C. Passion Prediction # 2 9:30-31
- Misunderstanding 9:32-34
- Teaching on Discipleship 9:35-37

Collection of Teaching Materials: First, last; Last, First 9:38-10:31

D. Passion Prediction # 3 10:33-34
- Misunderstanding 10:35-41
- Teaching on Discipleship 10:42-45

**GIVING OF SIGHT STORY 10:46-52**

## IV. Jesus in Jerusalem (11:1-16:8)
Ministry before the Passion (ch. 11-13)
- Triumphal Entry; Cleansing of the Temple; Conflicts with Leaders
- Apocalyptic Discourse: Watch! (ch. 13)

**Passion Narrative** (14:1-15:47)
**Resurrection** (16:1-8)
**Mark’s Story:**
This story constantly unfolds in mystery, hiddenness, surprise, in secrecy and irony (greatest is one who serves)
(c.f. Donald Juel, *Master of Surprise*; Roy Harrisville, *Miracle of Mark*)

**Beginnings:**
Beginning of the good news…Salvation comes in the wilderness (1:1)

**In the Middle:**
The Kingdom of God is at Hand; Repent and Believe the Good news (1:14-15)
Call to Discipleship
Teaching in Parables
Healing
Rejection (Do you not understand?) 8:21

Passion: Messiah is one who suffers/serves
Follow - Take up the Cross

**Endings:**
Passion (Philippians 2:5-13 in narrative form)
Resurrection

**Urgency**

**Secrecy** (commands to silence; hiddenness of kingdom)

**Apocalyptic Community Waits** in the meantime of radical call to obedience

**Christology:** Jesus as the suffering servant

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**Focus and Themes For Pentecost 3**

**Continuing Focus by Fore-telling of Passion**
Identity and Way of God’s Messiah
Son of Man came to serve and give life for the many

**Discipleship modeled by this Call to Servanthood**
Salvation and Reversal Belong Together
Jesus’ Kingdom Not of this world: Receive it with Humility of Children
Promise: With God All Things are Possible
The Great Commandment: Love God and Love the Neighbor
Following this Jesus on the Way to the Cross Calls for Healing and New Vision
Nineteenth Sunday Pentecost – October 4 (Lectionary 27)

Looking Ahead: Readings from Hebrews
Seven Sundays (October 4 through November 15)

Based in a world-view supported by Platonic philosophy which contrasts the earthly from true heavenly reality, the fading from eternal, Hebrews proclaims God’s gift of the Son from heaven to earth as the eternal high priest who offers himself as the true and complete mediator and sacrifice for sin, and calls us to endurance and hope as we await his coming return.

Hebrews in Pentecost 2015 – A Seven Session Series

1) Pentecost 19: October 4 – Hebrews 1:1-4; 2:5-12
God’s Final Word in the Son in whose Name Salvation for All

2) Pentecost 20: October 11 – Hebrews 4:12-16
God’s Word is Living and Active; Jesus suffers along with us so that we may receive God’s mercy and grace in every need

3) Pentecost 21: October 18 – Hebrews 5:1-10
Jesus is the model of God’s perfect high priest chosen to offer himself for the life of God’s chosen people

Jesus is a new high priest like no other: without sin he offered himself once for all as God’s perfect Son

5) Pentecost 23: November 1 – Hebrews 9:11-14
Christ as Mediator between God & People has purchased our Redemption through shedding of his innocent blood

6) Pentecost 24: November 8 – Hebrews 9:24-28
Christ intercedes in heaven itself for all the saints, and will come again to save those who eagerly await his return

Continuing vision of Christ’s perfect sacrifice for sin; Encouragement to hold fast to our Confession, because the One who has promised is faithful!
Overall Themes:

Naming: Creation & Salvation belong to God’s restoration of identity as God’s children
Relationship: Unity in creation, and as brothers & sisters in Jesus
Called to be leaders in God’s new creation
Law: not to bring division but to promote thriving creation
Promises restoration of kingdom as those who receive it humbly as children without divisions & hardness of heart
1) 2\textsuperscript{nd} Creation account: more personal; humans in garden
2) Search for a helper/partner requires new creation
3) Naming: (ish-ishah) calls attention to closeness of partners (flesh of flesh at last!)
4) Closeness calls for oneness of harmony/unity
5) Image of creation: from separation back to unity
Hebrews 1:1-4; 2:5-12 (Begins 7 Sunday Reading) Message of Hebrews in a Nutshell. God’s Creative Word of Promise finally focused in the Son. Called to a New Unity in the Spirit

1) God’s creative Word: Now at last through a Son

2) Reflection of God’s glory; sustains all creation; made purification from sins; now seated in glory

3) A Name: It’s all about Jesus and a name (NRSV misreads)

4) This Jesus now crowned as victorious through suffering and death

5) By grace of God he tasted death on behalf of all

6) Through death Jesus has become leader of salvation

7) Through his death we are called and sanctified as brothers and sisters
Mark 10:2-16 Receiving the kingdom involves humble living in context of promise of the Torah

1) Setting: Jesus just called for seriousness of following & entering kingdom; in being salty and living at peace
2) Crowds gather and Jesus teaches again
3) About the Law (Torah): A test. Is the law from God or Moses? By whose authority?
4) Moses interpreted “because of hardness of hearts”
5) A matter of creation: Not about marriage per se, but about fulfillment of wholeness of God’s creation
6) Disciples: Need further instruction; quoting scriptures not enough; Jesus moves to even harsher interpretation
7) Solution: It will take ones with hearts like humble children to receive the kingdom
8) Places “children” versus those who seek to divide over application of laws because of hardness of heart
9) Frustrating: invites reflection on interpretation of law, scriptures, in light of context and experience, and in light of tough decisions because of human brokenness
Overall Themes:

Addresses questions of justice and God’s favoring presence
Call for faithfulness to God
Central question: Who can be saved?
God’s possibility meets human impossibility
Following is done with fear and trembling
Trusting in promise, with hope of Jesus return
Amos 5:6-15: In midst of prosperity, prophet reminds of God’s call for human accountability for justice

1) Setting: prosperity in Israel, but threats on the Horizon
2) Repeated Call: Seek the Lord and live
3) Justice (righteousness) at risk in divisions between rich & poor
4) Words and actions need to conform
5) Just maybe God will still be gracious? – the question is left open
6) Links justice with God’s presence and a promising future
7) Facing the truth & implications of our actions
8) Safest is to not say anything, but Amos is not prudent
Hebrews 4:12-16: (Continues sequential reading, #2 of 7)

1) Word of God (logos) is Living and Active
2) Word continues to hold all creation accountable
3) Therefore: we have another Word: Jesus the Son who has already journeyed through the heavens
4) Hold on to our confessions
5) Because Jesus our high priest has suffered with and like us
6) Therefore: we can approach God’s throne of grace with confidence
7) So that: there we know that we receive timely (eukairon) grace and mercy to meet our every need
Twentieth Sunday Pentecost – October 11 (Lectionary 28)

Mark 10:17-31 – Interpreting the Law (reprise). How will disciples read the tradition?

1) Jesus continues “on the way” to the cross
2) The Big Question: What does one do to inherit eternal life (= enter the kingdom; = be saved)
3) Good Jesus?: Good has to do with God!
4) You already know the answer: keep the law (Torah)
5) Been there, done that!!
6) So only one thing lacking: Sell all, and FOLLOW me!
7) This “Word” brings only sadness
8) Disciples upset (like Jesus in garden): Need Special teaching and further counsel
9) How can anyone be saved?
10) Impossible for humans, but with God all things are possible
11) Peter: Doesn’t following count for anything? We’ve left everything!
12) Jesus: yes, For the sake of gospel you will receive a new community and the promise of eternal life
13) It is a gift: the Last will be First
14) We follow with fear and trembling, and sustained in the end only by the promise
Overall Themes:

A rehearsing of images of the great depths of God’s Love:
God’s Servant suffers for us and for our sins; through his suffering we are healed
Son of Man is God’s servant who gives his life as redemption for all
Jesus as our High Priest offers himself on behalf of our sins
Jesus learned obedience through suffering for us and for our salvation
As Savior, he continues to intercede for us
Isaiah 53:4-12: Classic Text for Christians for Understanding and Imagining Jesus the Messiah as God’s Suffering Servant

1) In original context: about Israel’s suffering, but now seen through the events of Jesus suffering and death
2) For us he was wounded, and by his wounds we are healed
3) We went astray and he bore our punishment
4) In silence he bore our punishment, in a perversion of justice he was crushed by the will of Lord
5) The righteous one is God’s servant chosen to bear our sins
6) Therefore he is rewarded with the life of those for whom he suffered
7) God’s suffering servant pours out his life for the sins of all according to the will of God
8) Therefore he is rewarded with a position of glory and honor (cf. similar themes in the hymn in Philippians 2:5-11)
Jesus is the model of God’s perfect high priest chosen to offer himself for the life of God’s chosen people

1) Duties of a High priest: to deal with the things of God
2) A duty an honor named (a calling) by God: to offer sacrifices for sins
3) So Christ is called by God, appointed as God’s chosen high priest (“You are my Son, my chosen” cf. Mark 1:8f)
4) As priest in the flesh, Jesus prayers were heard by the one able to save him
5) As a Son, he learned obedience through his suffering
6) Having finished the course of his calling (perfected); he became the basis of salvation for all who are obedient to him and follow his lead
Mark 10:35-45 (Jesus Third Passion Prediction) Son of Man came not to be served but to serve and give his life as a ransom (redemption) for all

1) Key Omission: verses 32-34: 3rd Passion prediction
2) Reminder: Jesus leads disciples “on the way” to Jerusalem; they “follow” in fear, while he begins to teach them of his future suffering and death
3) Mark’s Pattern Again: Prediction: Disciple Confusion (not knowing): Jesus Teaching

4) James and John’s request: Whatever we wish? (a question of the training of the will (cf. Jesus in Garden; “not my will but yours”; Lord’s prayer: “thy will be done”) knowing how to pray
5) Are you able? Answer: “Yes!” You do not “know”
6) It is a matter of “baptism” and death
7) A request granted: for the disciple to suffer like the master
8) Teaching on discipleship: not like Gentiles; but greatest = servant, and first = slave of all
9) BECAUSE: Son of Man came not to be served but to serve and give his life as a redemption for all
Overall Themes:

The Lord teaches (directs) our prayer: “Save your people and bring them home”

God’s word of promise has established Jesus as high priest to intercede on our behalf; Jesus life is the model of proper prayer

Jesus work is perfect (teleios; cf. Jesus’ words in John: “it is finished”)

On the way to the cross: an event of healing blindness occasions a new beginning of discipleship (following)
Jeremiah 31:7-9 – Jeremiah, God’s prophet, is taught how to pray for the people with the mind of God

1) Thus says the Lord: This is how to pray (with singing, shouting, and praise)
2) Here are the words: “Save your people, O Lord”
3) Because: that’s what the Lord already intends
4) Prayer needs to conform to what God already intends
5) To gather a people, to bring a remnant home
6) Like a loving parent for children who are at risk
7) It is the Lord’s intention rescue and restore a people who are at risk
Hebrews 7:23-28 – (Continues sequential reading, #4 of 7) Jesus is a new high priest like no other: without sin he offered himself once for all as God’s perfect Son

1) Reflection continues on Jesus as God’s perfect high priest chosen to serve forever
2) Jesus a new high priest, not temporary, but singular, and forever
3) Living for all time to intercede for those who come to God through him
4) Fitting for us: holy, blameless, and separated from sin
5) His offering not in need of repetition
6) Once for all, he offered himself
7) God’s Word of promise has appointed not an earthly priest, but a Son, who has been made perfect and complete (teleios) forever
Mark 10:46-52 – A key Markan Narrative: Healing of the Blind Bartimaeus is transforming instance of salvation and the beginning of discipleship

1) 1 of 2: cf. Mark 8:22-26: Just before Jesus first passion prediction (omitted in lectionary)
2) These stories are a frame around 3 passion predictions
3) To this point “on the road”; now they arrive at Jericho, just before Jerusalem
4) Once again Jesus, large crowd, disciples
5) AND blind Bartimaeus, sitting, not following “on the way”; NAMED

6) He heard! (cf. Jesus: “Listen!”
7) He has the words: Jesus, Son of David, and the correct language of prayer: Have mercy; not like disciples who ask for greatness
8) His request is rebuked: (but this time not Jesus commands the silence cf. Peter in 8:32-33)
9) He repeats the cry
10) Jesus calls, (“have courage, arise!, he is calling)
11) He leaps up (healing in passing by the way)
12) What do you wish? (cf. the same in Mark 10:35-45); To regain my sight (to see!)
13) Go faith has saved you; salvation has happened!
14) He saw (aorist of event); and he continued to follow (imperfect of ongoing life) Jesus on the way
15) Jesus’ healing is a transforming event that is the beginning of new life of discipleship
Overall Themes:

True Knowing of God is a Matter of the Heart
A New Heart is created and given in the Forgiving love of God
(cf. Psalm 51: Create in me a clean heart O God, and renew in me a new and right Spirit)
True Freedom comes in the Son of God
The Son of God, Jesus, has set us free, and now abides in God’s house forever
Jeremiah 31:31-34 – God’s Covenant Promise: I will put my Law in their hearts, they will know me, and I will remember their sin no more.

1) God’s promise is sure
2) Even better than the old one, which they broke; Still God takes the initiative
3) This new covenant: my Torah will be written on their hearts; I will be their God; they will be my people
   (Be “to them” God; Be “to me” People) Words of closeness
4) An intimate knowing: No more need to teach
5) Because: I will forgive their sins, and I will remember them no more.
Romans 3:19-28 – An image of a new “law” (Torah) and the new life of faith constituted in the forgiveness of sins in Christ

1) About this “old” law: through law comes knowledge of sin
2) But NOW: a new “Torah” established in the righteousness (the right action) of God through faith in Christ
3) This right relation comes as a gift by grace through the redemption in Christ
4) God passed over sins (cf. Jeremiah: “remember no more”)
5) Know this God: he righteous, and he makes righteous those who put their trust in Jesus
6) Nothing to boast about, because boasting assumes works well done, but this righteousness is a matter of faith
7) To sum it all up: a person is made right with God (justified) by faith, quite apart from works of the law
John 8:31-36 – Faith has to do with Abiding in the Word of God which is the mark of True Freedom

1) Faith and Abiding belong together as two images of true life in Christ
2) True discipleship = Abiding in Jesus’ Word (NRSV “continue in” misses the key Johanine word “abide”)
3) Such abiding leads to knowledge of the truth
4) And truth has the power to set ones free
5) What of Abe? (old order, old ID, old relationships)
6) The old is marked by sins, by slavery, by division
7) But the Son “abides!” (again NRSV misses key word) forever
8) SO hear the promise!: if the Son sets you free, then you are really free!
Overall Themes:

The Lord is our God
A God who dwells so Near
God cares for creation through Promise and the Torah
The First & Greatest Command: Love God with all your heart (the “heart” of the Law)
The Second: Love Your Neighbor as yourself
We have been purified and forgiven through the Power of Christ’s Blood & set free to serve the Living God
Deuteronomy 6:1-9 – Call to Remember God’s Promise of Blessing to the People as they Enter the Land

1) Moses teaches the people as they enter the land
2) Call to observe the Torah
3) SO THAT You and descendants may live long in the land
4) Reminder of God’s promise: Land, People, Blessing; summarized and renewed
5) Shemah: Basic Covenant confession is sounded: Hear, O Israel the Lord is our God, The Lord Alone
6) Heart of the Law: Love God with you whole being
7) Need for ever present reminders: written in hearts, taught to children, but also in visible places of daily life
Hebrews 9:11-14 – Christ as Mediator between God and People has purchased our redemption through shedding of his own innocent blood

1) Christ has come as high priest
2) Mediates on our behalf
3) Offers his own blood as sacrifice for sin
4) With His own blood has purchased eternal redemption
5) Argument by degree:
   If blood of animals could accomplish so much in old covenant
   How much more the innocent blood of Christ offered through the Spirit
6) The old priests offered the blood of animals
   Christ offers himself
7) In order to purify our consciences, because we are now free from works which lead only to death, and freed to worship (serve) the living God
Mark 12:28-34: Jesus Teaches in Jerusalem Before his Passion & Death: Questions of the heart of God’s Torah

1) **Setting:** Jerusalem; place of temple, Law (Torah)
**Backdrop:** Temple & Traditions; Ahead: Jesus’ Suffering and Death

2) Curses fig tree for no fruit (11:12-14); cleanses temple (11:15-19); withered fig (11:20-25); Call to forgive (11:25); Jesus’ Authority questioned (11:27-35)

Parable of Wicked Tenants/Vineyard (12:1-12); Taxes to Caesar? (12:13-17); The Resurrection? (12:18-27)

3) And Now: What about the Torah (Law)?

4) Scribe comes and hears the questions; and hears the “good answers” of Jesus

5) So: how about a real zinger!: Which commandment is the greatest?

6) Jesus himself answers in Mark!

7) **First:** Hear: Lord our God; Lord is One;(Shemah) Love Lord with all your Heart

8) **Second:** Love your neighbor as yourself

9) Scribe responds: Right on! Observing this law is greater than all the sacrifices

10) Jesus: he answered wisely!

11) Not far from the kingdom of God:

   In answer: affirmation of the Torah’s call to love God and neighbor

   In events: on the way to the cross

12) In sum: it’s all about the kingdom: the true rule of God among us
Overall Themes:

In Christ the Lord’s Promise of Victory over Death has been renewed
Jesus is the beginning, and the last word
In him all things have been made new
Isaiah 25:6-9: Vision of God’s Promised Future, in which death will be swallowed up in victory

1) The vision is rehearsed:
2) A feast for all peoples
3) The shroud of death for all peoples is removed
4) Death is swallowed up forever
5) A new future: no more tears
6) No more disgrace
7) Lord has spoken his promise
8) On that day: the surety of the promise underscored through double confession:
9) We waited for him (encourages faithful waiting)
10) We waited for salvation, and salvation has come
11) Our waiting for the Lord’s salvation is not disappointed
12) Calls for us to rejoice
Revelation 21:1-6: Culmination of the Vision: The Lord’s victory and salvation in Christ

1) A new creation from the ground up (new heaven and a new earth)
2) Old is gone: all things are made new (a new Jerusalem)
3) Coming down from God (heaven is not about going up – getting the directions straight)
4) Behold (Lo) (3, 5)! This is important stuff; the dwelling of God is with God’s people (cf. John 1:14: the Word became flesh and dwelled with us) They are God’s people and God dwells with them (Immanuel!)
5) No tears; no death; no weeping; no pain: the old is gone
6) Promise: all things new
7) The words are faithful and true
8) It is as good as done! (6)
9) Jesus is everything: Alpha and Omega; beginning and end
10) The last word and the water of life is Jesus!

1) Setting: Part of the longer story; Confession of Jesus as Resurrection and Life
2) Jesus weeps at the death of Lazarus
3) Questions of Jesus’ effectiveness and power: Why was he not here? Why couldn’t he have healed him/ prevented his death?
4) Jesus promise: if you believe you will see the glory of God
5) Jesus prays for faith in those who hear and see
6) Commands Lazarus to come out of the grave; and Lazarus comes out still bound in the grave cloths
7) The power of death has been conquered: Unbind him!
8) Continuing context: 45f:
   Some believe and some doubt
9) This is a sign: but even raising from death is not sure and certain basis for faith
10) The issue is still trusting in the promise of Jesus
Overall Themes:

The Promise (Word) of Lord surrounds and sustains life even in harsh times

Christ as true/ everlasting high priest: enters heaven itself to intercede on our behalf

Christ has appeared for our salvation – sin has already been removed
1 Kings 17:8-16 – The prophet Elijah interprets events in light of God’s Word and Promise

1) Context: Book of Kings belongs to the stories of the prophets such as Samuel, Elijah, etc.

2) Function of Prophecy: Reminder- prophets interpret current events in light of God’s Word: Thus says the Lord.

3) Elijah: in time of wicked Ahab and worship of Phoenician Baal

4) In time of famine Elijah has nourished by ravens and a nearby brook

5) Now Lord commands to go to Sidon (foreign territory N. of Israel

6) There widow shares meager meal at Elijah’s request

7) Do not be afraid, the meal will not fail!

8) The Lord’s promise of care in midst of famine

9) And it happened in accordance with the Word and Promise of the Lord

10) Word of Lord: Frames the story (8 & 16) Word of Lord came; it happened according to the Word of the Lord.

11) The Promise of God frames events in the same way that God’s Word surrounds and sustains all of life
Hebrews 9:24-28 – (Continues sequential reading, #6 of 7) Christ intercedes in heaven itself for all the saints, and will come again to save those who eagerly await his return

1) Key summary of the Hebrews argument
2) Christ, not as earthly copy, but heavenly true high priest, has entered not a human temple, but heaven itself
3) There he intercedes on our behalf in the very presence of God
4) Offering for us, not a second-rate repeating sacrifice
5) But offers once for all himself as a sacrifice for sin

6) So just as we mortals are appointed to die
7) So Christ who has born our sins once for all
8) Will appear again, not to deal with sin (that has already been done)
9) But to Save those who are eagerly waiting for his return

10) Important here to hear the Complete gospel promise, not just a half, but the whole completed sentence: just as death is real, so is the promise of Christ’s coming to save those who eagerly await his return
Mark 12:38-44 – A Woman contributes who whole livelihood as an example of disciple obedience and dedication

1) Setting: Jesus continues to teach in Jerusalem before the Passion
2) Story presents contrast of the leaders (scribes) and this poor widow
3) Jesus lists excesses of leaders who desire honor and prestige
4) They devour widows houses and parade their long prayers
5) They will receive their judgment in kind
6) In contrast: a widow puts in the treasury “more than all”
7) They out of their abundance (overflow)
8) She out her lacking (emptiness);
9) Still she put in “everything she had” to support her life (bios)
10) By extravagant gift of her whole “life” she demonstrates in her being the life lived according to the Torah:
   Loving God with her whole heart
   Loving her neighbor as herself
11) This is “discipleship” to the Nth degree
12) It is a preview or presage of the Messiah who will give his whole life for us in the coming Passion and Death (Like Master, so the disciple)
13) If we follow this One, Jesus gives us power that our lives will imitate the one whom we are called to follow
Overall Themes:

Reflection on the end times
In the midst of anguish and suffering that will come before the “end”
Promise of deliverance that will sustain God’s faithful disciples
Christ has offered sacrifice for sins once for all
There is no need to live in fear
The One who has promised will be faithful to the end
Twenty-fifth Sunday Pentecost – November 15 (Lectionary 33)

Daniel 12:1-3 – A vision of the anguish of the end times, but the promise of deliverance and everlasting life for God’s faithful elect

1) “At that time” events point with both certainty and uncertainty
2) Uncertainty about “when”
3) Certainty that it will come with anguish and suffering
4) But Promise: God’s faithful people will be delivered (“your people”)
5) Vision of resurrection and separation: some to everlasting life; some to everlasting punishment
6) God’s faithful, the “wise” = “righteous” (note parallelism) Will shine forever, as sure as the sun in the day, and like the stars at night
7) A vision of the Lord’s faithfulness to the faithful elect, even in the midst of expected anguish of the end times
Hebrews 10:11-14 [15-18] 19-25 – (Continues sequential reading, #7 of 7) Continuing vision of Christ’s perfect sacrifice for sin; Encouragement to hold fast to our Confession; The One who has promised is faithful!

1) Vision of Christ as the ultimate high priest continues: the key word is “fulfilled” (complete, perfect)
2) Christ offered a single “complete” (perfect) sacrifice for sin
3) Christ’s perfect offering has perfected all those who have been sanctified (made holy) through his gift
4) [omitted 15-18]: This offering takes place just as the Lord promised; e.g. Jeremiah 31:31f.): Where there is forgiveness (I will remember their sin no more) there is no more need for offerings; it’s all done and complete
5) Verse 19: the big “Therefore” We have confidence/ boldness/ freedom in the blood of Jesus to enter the presence of God
6) This entrance created new by Christ’s offering for sin
7) So: Let us approach with true heart (God’s gift) with hearts sprinkled clean (baptism) in Christ’s blood (cf. Psalm 51: Create in me a clean heart)
8) Let us Hold fast: to confession that we have hope
9) Because: The One who has Promised is Faithful
10) Meanwhile: An interesting image of Christian hopeful life in the meantime: Let us keep pondering and plotting how to stir up one another (provoking, prodding), irritating them to actions of love and good works
Mark 13:1-8 – Jesus teaches about the end times before the nearer end time of his imminent Passion and Death

1) Setting in the midst of beauty of Jerusalem and the Temple
2) Jesus teaches: Don’t be mislead by appearances; not one stone will be left
3) Disciples fear of not knowing: Tell us! When will this be? What are the signs?

4) Caution for “wise” disciples: don’t be led astray by false prophets who pretend to know the Word of the Lord
5) Many will say “I am he” pretending to speak “in my name”
6) Test the speakers
7) Wars and rumors of wars: don’t be alarmed; the end is not yet

8) This (Jesus Passion? ) is just he beginning of new birth, a new creation
9) They are part of the signs that will accompany the coming end

10) Calls for disciples to be alert, but not to be led astray; things will be bad; but the end is still not yet here;
11) Finally, there is only one word; be ready, because you will never know!
Overall Themes:

On last Sunday of Year, in midst of reflection on end times, we celebrate in hope that Christ is Victorious King

Salvation is complete/finished; the end time is sealed

Vision: Restoration of God’s reign (kingdom) will come with exalted servant king

Christ is only the first born of many

Because our Victorious king holds all creation; all time and eternity in his power
Daniel 7:9-10 [11-12] 13-14 – Another vision from Daniel: a Son of Man to whom belongs everlasting dominion as our king

1) Daniel’s vision: One who is seated on the throne (kingdom) surrounded by images of glory and dominion and a cast of thousands who serve him as ones whose names are written in the “book of life”

2) One like the Son of Man: (NRSV’s “human being” misses the point) this is one who is “more than human; perhaps “human to a super degree

3) To this Son of Man; God (the Ancient One) assigns all dominion and power of the kingdom

4) In this kingdom: all peoples, all nations, all languages will serve him

5) His dominion is everlasting

6) And his kingdom will never be destroyed (note Hebrew emphatic parallelism)
Revelation 1:4-8 – Last Sunday, the end, and now the Beginning of John’s Vision

1) The Vision belongs to 7 (note perfect number) churches
2) Blessing: Grace and Peace from God Creator
Is, Was, and Is to come: past, present, future bound together
3) Jesus Christ: many names: martyr, faithful one, first born, resurrected, ruler over all kingdoms, one who continues to love
4) This One free us from sins by his blood
5) Made us (created us) as a kingdom of priests (i.e. a priesthood of all believers) who have direct access to God
6) Thus: to him be all glory and power forever
7) Lo (Behold) Pay attention: He is going to come again on the clouds of heaven, and all peoples will honor him as king
8) AMEN: yes it is true!
9) God speaks in affirmation: I am alpha and omega, who is, who was, and who is to come

Note the frame of the whole: verses 4 & 8; this affirmation of God as One who was, is, and is to come.
He is pantokrator: universal ruler of all creation, the almighty one who holds all the universe together by his power
John 18: 33–37 – Jesus, as the suffering and victorious savior proclaims that his is a kingdom that transcends the kingdoms of this world

1) Setting: in the midst of Jesus trial before Pilate in Jerusalem
2) Pilate asks the Big Question: Are You the King?
3) The question is for all who hear/gather: Is Jesus really OUR King?
4) For Jesus, and for us, it is a matter of life and death
5) Is this our question? (Pilate) or are we just imitating the words (rumors, insults) of others?
6) Will we own the seriousness of the question?
7) 2x he is handed over (betrayed); can he then really be a king?
8) Pilate asks in irony: what have you ever done? Only one thing: he gave his life as a ransom for all
9) Then what kind of kingdom? Not “whose” but “what kind” the question misses the point
10) It is “my kingdom” 3x in verse 36: it belongs to Jesus and needs no earthly defenders
11) Then you are really a king! You say so! (You’ve hit the nail on the head!) Pilate doesn’t know the truth of what he’s saying
12) For this reason and purpose:
13) I was born for this (the Word became flesh) and came into the world
14) To bear witness to the truth
15) All who belong to the truth Hear my voice (I am the good shepherd)
16) That Jesus is enfleshed and dwelled among us is part of the purpose of God, and his death bears witness to the truth to which all who listen to his voice give assent
17) In the end, ironically, Pilate answers his own question with his unrealized confession: (verse 33, 37) Are you a king? Then you are a king?