

## 08.01.10 / Mark 14:12-25

**Passage Insight**

Similar to the passage in Mark where Jesus predicts that there will be a donkey tied up and ready to be used for His entry into the city of Jerusalem, Jesus here predicts that a room will be made ready for He and His disciples to celebrate the Passover meal together. He is proven correct, and in this we again see evidence of two things: 1) His foreknowledge of the events to come, and 2) His preparation, acceptance, and choosing of these events. Also, the Passover meal (a meal that celebrated God's passing over all those who had blood of sacrificial lambs on their doorposts when the angel of death was sent to take the lives of the firstborn in Egypt) was typically celebrated with family, which tells us of the intimacy of the relationship between Jesus and His disciples.

The Lord has seen fit to give humans free will, as we see in Genesis when Adam and Eve are instructed in what to eat and what not to eat, yet given the capacity to choose whether they will serve God's desires or their own. Just as Satan tempts Adam and Eve to serve themselves rather than God, He does so with Judas as well (seen in Luke's account of this same story in Luke 22), and Judas chooses to betray Jesus to the religious authorities who want to see Him contained. In other words, he chooses to serve his own interests rather than the interests of God, and there were drastic consequences for him, just as there are for any who ultimately choose themselves over the Christ. The Father has given us free will to make our own decisions, and because He knows all, He is well aware of what we will decide long before we are ourselves.

The significance of the Passover meal as the setting for this story is great, as Jesus is the means by which we accept God's invitation to take part in the ultimate Passover. By believing that Jesus is the Son of God and that His sacrifice on the cross removes our sin, we are effectively "eating His body and drinking His blood", meaning that the Lord will completely pass over our sin just as the Lord passed over those who had the blood of the lamb on their doorposts. The significance of the meal deepens when we consider that an actual trade was made possible by Jesus' sacrifice. Jesus became like us so that we could become like Him. Jesus, our Immanuel, or "God with us", came to be like us in human form, and then He went the extra step to also quite literally *become* our sin so that we could quite literally *become* the righteousness of God (2 Corinthians 5:21) and be transformed into His likeness (2 Corinthians 3:18). This is truly what it means to "take His body", as it's quite a literal trade, only because of Jesus' power over death, while He became our sin, He doesn't remain trapped in sin as we are, but rather conquers it and reigns as the pure, perfect, and conquering King of kings forever with those who trust Him as His adopted family.

Consider how Jesus dealt with Judas, even with the knowledge that he would betray Him. Jesus still engaged with him, shared a meal with him, and had in fact spent the last three years doing the same. The communion table was attended by a traitor, and Jesus still extends the cup to all and desires that all would come to know the Father through Him, even to the final hour of betrayal. Jesus' pursuit of us is deep, rich, and full, as is our betrayal of Him before we accept His grace. The communion table is indeed a table not of merit, but of pure grace, a table meant for those who are unable to save themselves, which is all of us.

It's worth noting that most of us shudder when we think of Judas and what he did, but we would be wise to consider his motivations. He coveted what others had (wealth, power, and control), he was jealous of others, and he was driven by and exercised ambition to serve his own desires. When we're honest, we are no different. In other words,

no one needs the grace of Jesus more than me, more than you, more than Judas. We are all equally undeserving of the cross of grace.

Finally, we should remember that Jesus was not defeated by this death. He ultimately rose again, having conquered sin and death once for all. Death didn't sneak up on Him and catch Him by surprise. He entered into it willingly and with intent, the intent to serve His Heavenly Father and to do His will. It was something for which He prepared. It was something He chose. It was an act of obedience to the Father whom He loved in order to save the people He loved.

### Application Questions

#### Allegiance

- 1) Baptism and communion were signs of a change in allegiance away from allegiance to Rome and toward allegiance to God. Where was your allegiance before you began following Christ? For those who don't follow Christ, what are you most loyal to at all costs?
- 2) For those who follow Christ, where in your life do you currently see vestiges of your former allegiance to something other than Christ?
- 3) For those who aren't sure they're willing to trust and follow Jesus, what's holding you back from transferring your loyalty from where it is now to Jesus instead? What are you afraid you will lose if you do this?

#### The Heart of Judas

- 1) What drove Judas is what drives us before we are saved by Christ. Where do you currently covet?
- 2) Where do you seek control?
- 3) Where do you think you have a better plan than God?
- 4) Where do you exercise your ambition for selfish gain?

#### Jesus' Invitation

- 1) Consider how Jesus dealt with Judas, reclining at table with him even as he was about to betray Him. How do you experience Jesus' constant invitation to accept His gift of grace?
- 2) What does Jesus offer you in the face of your sin?

#### Sources

- Prayer
- Sailhamer
- Pillar
- Barclay