

# Marks

## of Discipleship

Daily Prayer ■ Weekly Worship ■ Bible Reading  
Giving Time, Talents & Resources  
Spiritual Friendships ■ Service In & Beyond the

September 3, 2023

Day 1: Mark 14:17-18

***When it was evening, he came with the twelve. And when they had taken their places and were eating, Jesus said, 'Truly I tell you, one of you will betray me, one who is eating with me.'***

This account begins the last days of Jesus' life. The account of the Last Supper draws us into a drama where Jesus' closest friend will betray Him and the disciples are too frightened to suffer with Him.

**Question:** Why was this supper special, besides what we now call it?

**Challenge:** Think of three acts of betrayal in history. What happened to the betrayer?

**Scripture:** Zechariah 13:2-14:3

Day 2: Mark 14:19-20

***They began to be distressed and to say to him one after another, 'Surely, not I?' He said to them, 'It is one of the twelve, one who is dipping bread into the bowl with me.'***

Dipping into a common bowl was the most intimate form of table fellowship. Judas, who has plotted to deliver Jesus to the High Priest, is not told to leave the table nor does Jesus point out that it is him. They all dipped into a common dish. Even though Judas was the one who betrayed Jesus to the Temple guards so they could arrest Him, all of the disciples fled from Jesus when He was arrested. If Judas was not excluded from the table who are we today to exclude anyone?

**Question:** What was the table like or was there more than one table?

**Challenge:** Why do we have an open communion in the United Methodist Church?

**Scripture:** Psalm 41:9

Day 3: Mark 14:21

***For the Son of Man goes as it is written of him, but woe to that one by whom the Son of Man is betrayed! It would have been better for that one not to have been born.'***

Jesus' suffering and death are part of God's plan for the redemption of the world. Judas, by betraying Jesus, becomes part of that plan. He is an unfortunate person because though he believes he is doing the right thing it turns out that he will suffer greatly for his act of betrayal. Judas assumed that Jesus would not be killed, however, he was wrong. Before we decide that the end justifies the means we better know for sure what the end will be.

**Question:** Do you think Judas thought his act was a betrayal?

**Challenge:** Come up with four reasons why Judas did what he did. Which one seems most likely to you?

**Scripture:** Matthew 27:1-10

Day 4: Mark 14:22-24

***While they were eating, he took a loaf of bread, and after blessing it he broke it, gave it to them, and said, 'Take; this is my body.' Then he took a cup, and after giving thanks he gave it to them, and all of them drank from it. He said to them, 'This is my blood of the covenant, which is poured out for many.'***

When we hear the words at the altar rail, "the body of Christ given for you," we are both reminded of the 2,000 year old event and the current event of knowing God's forgiveness. We eat the bread as a way of saying, "yes Lord, I know it is from you that I have eternal life." We drink the cup as a way of showing we will now live in a new relationship with God - one not written on tablets of stone but on the tablet of our heart.

**Question:** As you read verse 22 above what words are missing from Mark that are usually said?

**Challenge:** Listen next week to the prayer of thanksgiving. We are giving thanks for three things, what are they?

**Scripture:** I Corinthians 11:17-26 (the earliest account of the Last Supper),  
Matthew 26:17-29, Luke 22:7-20

Day 5: Mark 14:25

***Truly I tell you, I will never again drink of the fruit of the vine until that day when I drink it new in the kingdom of God.'***

Although the Last Supper looks forward to the heavenly banquet it remains focused on the sacrificial death of Jesus. Jesus always offered an image of hope whenever He spoke of His death. People believed His word of hope because He was always honest in His speaking. It is always a mistake to offer hope by denying the reality of the situation. Even in the most grim situations hope can come when we are honest with what a possible outcome could be. One does not have to be brutal in sharing bad news but it is a mistake not to be honest.

**Question:** What would you imagine the twelve heard when Jesus spoke these words?

**Challenge:** Think about what a heavenly banquet might look like.

**Scripture:** John 14:14-24

Day 6: Mark 14:26

***When they had sung the hymn, they went out to the Mount of Olives.***

Singing a hymn was the way the Passover meal ended along with the words, "next year in Jerusalem." To leave with singing was a way to take into the world the story of God's redemption from slavery. We often close the worship service with a hymn for the same reason. In worship we have spent some time, in a manner of speaking, in the Kingdom of God. We are filled with the love of God and filled with that love we go into the world to share that love with all we meet.

**Question:** What do you think they sang?

**Challenge:** After re-reading the scripture for Day 4 try to write down the events of Jesus' last week from memory.

**Scripture:** Psalm 96