

Online Easter 2020 Holy Week of Devotionals

Good Friday, April 10th

Betrayal and Arrest in Gethsemane – John 18:1-27

When Jesus had spoken these words, He went out with His disciples over the Brook Kidron, where there was a garden, which He and His disciples entered. And Judas, who betrayed Him, also knew the place; for Jesus often met there with His disciples. Then Judas, having received a detachment *of troops*, and officers from the chief priests and Pharisees, came there with lanterns, torches, and weapons. Jesus therefore, knowing all things that would come upon Him, went forward and said to them, **"Whom are you seeking?"** They answered Him, "Jesus ^[a]of Nazareth." Jesus said to them, "I am *He*." And Judas, who betrayed Him, also stood with them. Now when He said to them, "I am *He*," they drew back and fell to the ground. Then He asked them again, **"Whom are you seeking?"** And they said, "Jesus of Nazareth." Jesus answered, "I have told you that I am *He*. Therefore, if you seek Me, let these go their way," that the saying might be fulfilled which He spoke, "Of those whom You gave Me I have lost none." Then Simon Peter, having a sword, drew it and struck the high priest's servant, and cut off his right ear. The servant's name was Malchus. So Jesus said to Peter, "Put your sword into the sheath. Shall I not drink the cup which My Father has given Me?" Then the detachment *of troops* and the captain and the officers of the Jews arrested Jesus and bound Him. And they led Him away to Annas first, for he was the father-in-law of Caiaphas who was high priest that year. Now it was Caiaphas who advised the Jews that it was expedient that one man should die for the people. And Simon Peter followed Jesus, and so *did* another^[c] disciple. Now that disciple was known to the high priest and went with Jesus into the courtyard of the high priest. ¹⁶ But Peter stood at the door outside. Then the other disciple, who was known to the high priest, went out and spoke to her who kept the door, and brought Peter in. ¹⁷ Then the servant girl who kept the door said to Peter, "You are not also *one* of this Man's disciples, are you?" He said, "I am not."

Now the servants and officers who had made a fire of coals stood there, for it was cold, and they warmed themselves. And Peter stood with them and warmed himself. The high priest then asked Jesus about His disciples and His doctrine. Jesus answered him, "I spoke openly to the world. I always taught in synagogues and in the temple, where the Jews always meet, and in secret I have said nothing. Why do you ask Me? Ask those who have heard Me what I said to them. Indeed, they know what I said." And when He had said these things, one of the officers who stood by struck Jesus with the palm of his hand, saying, "Do You answer the high priest like that?" Jesus answered him, "If I have spoken evil, bear witness of the evil; but if well, why do you strike Me?" Then Annas sent Him bound to Caiaphas the high priest. Now Simon Peter stood and warmed himself. Therefore, they said to him, "You are not also *one* of His disciples, are you?" He denied *it* and said, "I am not!" One of the servants of the high priest, a relative *of him* whose ear Peter cut off, said, "Did I not see you in the garden with Him?" Peter then denied again; and immediately a rooster crowed.

Reflection – Who are you seeking?

Today during Holy Week, we reflect on and remember this day was when Jesus was crucified and died for you and me. In our scripture for today, I am captivated by the question Jesus asked the mob when they came to arrest him. He asked them, *"Whom are you seeking?"* That may be a good question to ask ourselves as we come to Jesus.

We learn that Judas was seeking a Jesus that did not meet his expectations, so in the end he betrayed him. The story of Judas haunts me because I am convinced sometimes the "*Jesus I am seeking*" is not living up to my expectations either. It seems that Judas committed to follow Jesus because he thought Jesus had come to overthrow the Romans. What he thought was not accurate. It seems sometimes as I have followed Jesus, I have projected my own views of who I want Jesus to be. Then there is Peter. Peter had his ideas of what it meant to follow Jesus too. In this passage, we read of Peter's denial of His lord. Not just once but three times. Peter went from a passionate commitment to never betray Jesus (John 13:36-38) to denying he knew him three times in one night! Have you ever experienced turning away from the Lord? It's really not that hard to understand. When our Lord does not come through for us in the way we think He will, it is not hard to think in terms of denying we even know Him. I suggest that's what happened to Peter that night. When Peter pulled out his sword to fight till death with Jesus, Jesus did the totally unexpected and incomprehensible. He rebukes Peter (as he often does) and actually restores and heals the "enemy's" ear! (John 18:10-11) How can that be? This is not what they expected. Peter knew that when Jesus determined to go to Jerusalem, it would mean his death and death for anyone associated with him (Matthew 16:21-23). So, Peter determined to follow him even to death. But when Peter began to fight for his Lord, Jesus stopped him. The same Jesus that would cause the whole crowd to fall to the ground by just the announcing His Presence, is now being bound and dragged off like a common criminal. As the bewildered Peter followed at a distance that night, the abuse of His Lord grew darker. First at the hands of Annas, then Caiaphas the high priest and then the soldiers. Peter kept searching for answers. What did Jesus mean, "*Shall I not drink the cup which My Father has given Me?*" What happened to Jesus on this day was in God's plan for our redemption and salvation. But we struggle to understand. Peter is not even mentioned being at the crucifixion with John (John 19:25-27). As we consider the horrible death of Jesus on a cross, let us remember His undying love for us. As we consider the question, "*whom are you seeking?*"; let us confess and repent of any notions of seeking a Jesus of our own making. I am so thankful that after the resurrection Jesus would come and restore Peter and call him again to follow him. This time Peter with a humble acknowledgement cries out to the Lord... "*Lord, you know all things, you know I love you*" (John 21:17) And we know Peter did humbly follow the Lord.

PRAYER

Lord, as we bow before you today, we come seeking Jesus. We confess that we want to know you as you truly are. We pray the prayer Paul prayed in Philippians 3:10, "*I want to know Christ and the power of his resurrection and the fellowship of sharing in his sufferings, becoming like him in his death and so somehow to attain the resurrection from the dead.*" Help us remember that your ways are not like what we might imagine. We cannot imagine the way of the cross for our Savior. *You said, "Anyone who loves their life will lose it, while anyone who hates their life in this world will keep it for eternal life. Whoever serves me must follow me..."* Lord lead us to a humble acknowledgement that you know all things, and like Peter, confess our love for you in following you wherever you lead. In Jesus Name, Amen