

Pastor Brian's  
Midweek Message  
April 13, 2022

**"RISKY BUSINESS"**

*"You don't realize that it's better for you that one man should die for the people than for the whole nation to be destroyed."* (John 11:50)

I have a question for you this Wednesday of the week of Christ's passion. What did Jesus spend the most time doing from the time He entered Jerusalem on that first Palm Sunday to the time of his death in the late afternoon Friday? It seems to me that the answer to that is TEACHING. The Gospel accounts Matthew 21:12-26:5, Mark 11:15-14:2, Luke 19:45-22:6, and John 12:20-50 Chronicle Jesus going daily to the Temple in the Holy City to teach the people. This was an opportunity to proclaim his message before vast crowds of devout Jews who were in the city for the Passover celebration. The temple was also the seat of power for their religious leaders, the chief priests, scribes, the parties of the Pharisees and the Sadducees. They were none to pleased with this threat to their power and authority, along with their status and wealth, so the Temple proved to be a dangerous place for our Lord to bear witness to himself before the crowds. *Now the Feast of Unleavened Bread drew near, which is called the Passover. And the chief priests and the scribes were seeking how to put him to death, for they feared the people.* (Luke 22:1-2) On Thursday of Holy Week, the teaching of Jesus turned more personal, toward the twelve disciples. He may have gone to the Temple that day too, as Peter and John were assigned to prepare the room and the meal for the evening, but that's unclear. What's crystal clear is the lessons that Jesus laid out before his closest companions and students that evening centered around the Passover Seder which He redefined to be The Sacrament of His Body and Blood, the Lord's Supper. John's Gospel gives us the most detailed accounts, although John leaves out the details of institution of The Supper. He completely centers on Christ's teaching. From John 13 all the way through the chapter 17 Jesus is laser focused on the lessons that He wanted to leave with his disciples. He begins with the object lesson of washing the feet of the twelve, spurred on by their argument amongst themselves over which of them would be the greatest in the kingdom. Jesus takes on the role of the humblest of servants to teach them that greatness in the kingdom comes through humility and service to all others. The class concludes with Jesus' "High Priestly Prayer" in chapter 17 where He prays before them for his mission of glorifying the Father through his obedience unto death, for the mission of the Church that He is establishing, and for those who would carry out that mission through the end of the age.

From there the well documented events of the Passion of the Christ unfold, and they're also sprinkled with teaching. In the Garden of Gethsemane Jesus displays the importance of prayer and what our prayers should be grounded in. *"Not my will but Thy will be done."* In the process of his arrest Jesus offers the lesson of nonviolence and healing amongst his people. He displays patience and self-restraint through the mock trials, and a willingness to endure the grossest of injustices for the mission that He is given. He bears witness to who He truly is before the governor, Pontius Pilate, not demanding royal treatment but revealing himself as the embodiment of all that is true. He demonstrates a willingness to forgive those who carry out the most heinous treatment of him from the cross. Finally, He fulfills the 4<sup>th</sup> Commandment; "Honor your father and your mother" in commending his mother Mary to the care of his beloved friend John. His is an attitude of total selflessness, submission and service put in words and actions for everyone present there to see and hear.

This Holy Week I pray that all of us will place more focus than we ever have before on the lessons that our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ lays out before us. I invite you to read and meditate on those chapters devoted to Jesus' temple teachings. I urge you to dig deep into John 13-17 for the more intimate lessons that our Lord wants us to learn. And then, come and participate together, remember, and even celebrate together the major events of the week in worship; Holy Thursday in the upper room and Garden, Good Friday though Christ's arrest, condemnation, crucifixion, and death, and then come Sunday to the empty tomb to rejoice in the life and salvation, the victory that Jesus freely gives us as his divine gift of grace. "He is risen! Alleluia!"