

“Jesus’ Final Hours”

Mark 14:17 - 16:7

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The last hours of Jesus’ earth life were fading fast away. His appointment with death was imminent. Before His work would be totally complete and successful there were significant events that had to take place. TURN TO MARK 14 FOR THOSE EVENTS. The text will be divided to fit with each event.

I. MEETING IN THE UPPER ROOM: V17:

- A. “When it was evening He came with the twelve. As they were reclining at the table and eating, Jesus said, ‘Truly I say to you that one of you will betray Me—one who is eating with Me.’ They began to be grieved and to say to Him one by one, ‘Surely not I?’ And He said to them, ‘It is one of the twelve, one who dips with Me in the bowl. For the Son of Man is to go just as it is written of Him; but woe to that man by whom the Son of Man is betrayed! It would have been good for that man if he had not been born.’ While they were eating, He took some bread, and after a blessing He broke it, and gave it to them, and said, ‘Take it; this is My body.’ And when He had taken a cup and given thanks, He gave it to them, and they all drank from it. And He said to them, ‘This is My blood of the covenant, which is poured out for many. Truly I say to 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.’ After singing a hymn, they went out to the Mount of Olives. And Jesus said to them, ‘You will all fall away, because it is written, “I will strike down the shepherd, and the sheep shall be scattered.” But after I have been raised, I will go ahead of you to Galilee.’ But Peter said to Him, ‘Even though all may fall away, yet I will not.’ And Jesus said to him, ‘Truly I say to you, that this very night, before a rooster crows twice, you yourself will deny Me three times.’ But Peter kept saying insistently, ‘Even if I have to die with You, I will not deny You!’ And they all were saying the same thing also.” Mark 14:17-31 (NASB).
- B. I point out some particulars:
1. See the intimate setting. Jesus and His chosen 12 – away from the rush and quietly observing the Passover.
 2. See the application of the Passover to His work on the cross pictured in the Communion loaf and cup. In Moses’ day, the death angel in Egypt passed over the homes marked with lamb’s blood, thus not slaying the first-born as he did for unmarked homes. So Jesus – the Lamb of God – saves us from death by the shedding of His blood.
 3. See the sad announcement of betrayal by one and denial by another and the claim to undying loyalty by all.
- C. Let’s apply that to ourselves:

1. Do we spend quality, intimate time with Jesus?
 - a. Away from the rush and pressure of life?
 - b. Away from the interruption of TV, cell phone or mp3 player?
 - c. Away from the secular, mundane duties of each day?
 2. Do we value the moments at His table, remembering His sacrifice by which we are saved?
 3. Do we inadvertently betray or deny Him by the way we live or by failing to speak for Him when we can?
- D. Each of us needs an upper room – a quiet, private place – maybe the living room before anyone else is up for the day – maybe an office with a closed door – maybe hiding in the car for awhile.
1. Close out the world’s confusion and chaos.
 2. Close out the distractions.
 3. Open your Bible and let God speak to you.
 4. Open your heart and let it speak to God.
- E. Author Charles Templeton commented that the course of human history has been affected so negatively and positively by what happened in two small upper rooms. One of them is a drab apartment in London. It was dirty, curtainless, with stacks of articles on the table and worn manuscripts. Seated at a table a man labors over a writing that would overthrow governments, enslave millions of people, and affect the course of history for generations. The man: Karl Marx; his writing: Das Kapital, the handbook for the Communist revolution.

But there was another upper room that also altered the course of human history, but in a good way. This one was located in Jerusalem, There were 13 gathered in this room to share a meal and to hear the words of a man whose love and sacrifice would make an eternal impact on human history.

In which upper room will we spend time? The one that produces slavery or the one that produces salvation?

We all need time with Jesus in an upper room. But the scene changes and we see:

II. PRAYING IN THE GARDEN’S GLOOM: V32:

- A. “They came to a place named Gethsemane; and He said to His disciples, ‘Sit here until I have prayed.’ And He took with Him Peter and James and John, and began to be very distressed and troubled. And He said to them, ‘My soul is deeply grieved to the point of death; remain here and keep watch.’ And He went a little beyond them, and fell to the ground and began to pray that if it were possible, the hour might pass Him by. And He was saying, ‘Abba! Father! All things are possible for You; remove this cup from Me; yet not what I will, but what You will.’” Mark 14:32-36 (NASB).
- B. Gethsemane – a fitting name which means “Olive press” referring to the implement that crushed the oil from the olives. Jesus was crushed by the weight of the sin He would soon carry to the cross.

1. As man, He recoiled from the horror, the pain, the shame of the cross.
 2. As God in flesh He was determined to do His Father's will.
 3. Hence the prayer, "Abba! Father! All things are possible for You; remove this cup from Me; yet not what I will, but what You will."
- C. His agony was so great and the gloom so deep and the weight so heavy that He nearly died in the garden. And all the while His disciples slept.
- D. Consider our own lives :
1. Are we troubled by the evil, corruption, cruelty that marks each day with gloom?
 2. Have we found our own Gethsemane where we poignantly cry out for deliverance from some situation but then surrender our wills to His even if it means sacrificing self and self interest?
- E. A boy demonstrates that kind of willingness in a Gethsemane of his own. His sister, a little girl named Liza, was suffering from a rare and serious disease. Her only chance of recovery appeared to be a blood transfusion from her brother, who had miraculously survived the same disease and had developed the antibodies needed to combat the illness.

The doctor explained the situation to the boy and asked if he would be willing to give his blood to his sister. He hesitated only a moment before taking a deep breath and saying, "Okay, I'll do it."

As the procedure progressed, he lay still but his face grew pale and his smile faded. He looked up at the doctor and asked with a trembling voice, "When will I start to die?" The boy had misunderstood the doctor; he thought he was going to have to give her all his blood and would die, but he was willing to do what was needed for his little sister.

No misunderstanding for Jesus – when in the gloom of the garden He prayed, "Not what I will, but what You will.," He knew He would die and was willing to do that for us.

III. SUFFERING APPARENT DOOM: V43:

- A. "Immediately while He was still speaking, Judas, one of the twelve, came up accompanied by a crowd with swords and clubs, who were from the chief priests and the scribes and the elders. Now he who was betraying Him had given them a signal, saying, 'Whomever I kiss, He is the one; seize Him and lead Him away under guard.' After coming, Judas immediately went to Him, saying, 'Rabbi!' and kissed Him. They laid hands on Him and seized Him." Mark 14:43-46 (NASB).
- B. Things looked bleak and tragedy seemed to be imminent. They had come to take Him away and He didn't put up a fight!
1. He had to face Caiaphas and part of the Sanhedrin; then Pilate and then Herod and back to Pilate where He was turned over to the Jews for crucifixion.
 2. He was mocked and beaten and forced to carry His own cross.
 3. He was subjected to emotional, spiritual, mental and physical cruelty.
- C. It looked like:

1. The realm of darkness had extinguished the light; the power of death would prove mightier than the power of life; evil triumphed over good; Satan had bested the Son of God.
 2. Doom for the dreams and hopes and aspirations of the disciples.
 3. Even nature reacted and so there was darkness and an earthquake.
- D. Things are not always as they seem. What looks like defeat might really signify victory. We may see only part of the picture for awhile.
- E. It only appeared that Jesus and His work were doomed –but just the opposite was true. Let me illustrate in this way. It was June 18, 1815, the Battle of Waterloo. The French under the command of Napoleon were fighting the Allies (British, Dutch, and Germans) under the command of Wellington. The people of England depended on a system of semaphore signals to find out how the battle was going. One of these signal stations was on the tower of Winchester Cathedral.

Late in the day the message was flashed by the semaphore signal: "W-E-L-L-I-N-G-T-O-N---D-E-F-E-A-T-E-D." Just at that moment a sudden fog made it impossible to read the message. The news of defeat quickly spread throughout the city. The whole countryside was sad and gloomy when they heard the news that their country had lost the war.

Suddenly the fog lifted, and the remainder of the message could be read. The message had four words, not two. The complete message was: "W-E-L-L-I-N-G-T-O-N---D-E-F-E-A-T-E-D---T-H-E---E-N-E-M-Y!" It took only a few minutes for the good news to spread. Sorrow was turned into joy, and apparent defeat was turned into victory!

Jesus only appeared to be doomed and defeated – J-E-S-U-S --- D-E-F-E-A-T-E-D. But that was Friday ---- and Sunday was coming when we see J-E-S-U-S --- D-E-F-E-A-T-E-D --- T-H-E---E-N-E-M-Y! And He sealed that by rising from the dead!

IV. VICTORY AT THE EMPTY TOMB: 16:1:

- A. "When the Sabbath was over, Mary Magdalene, and Mary the mother of James, and Salome, bought spices, so that they might come and anoint Him. Very early on the first day of the week, they came to the tomb when the sun had risen. They were saying to one another, 'Who will roll away the stone for us from the entrance of the tomb?' Looking up, they saw that the stone had been rolled away, although it was extremely large. Entering the tomb, they saw a young man sitting at the right, wearing a white robe; and they were amazed. And he said to them, 'Do not be amazed; you are looking for Jesus the Nazarene, who has been crucified. He has risen; He is not here; behold, here is the place where they laid Him. But go, tell His disciples and Peter, He is going ahead of you to Galilee; there you will see Him, just as He told you.'" Mark 16:1-7 (NASB).
- B. Triumph at the tomb! Good news from a graveyard! Destruction of the devil's deadliest deed. The open and empty tomb signaled His victory over death. And that means for us:

1. "If the Spirit of Him who raised Jesus from the dead dwells in you, He who raised Christ Jesus from the dead will also give life to your mortal bodies through His Spirit who dwells in you." Romans 8:11 (NASB).
 2. Jesus, "because He continues forever, holds His priesthood permanently. Therefore He is able also to save forever those who draw near to God through Him, since He always lives to make intercession for them." Hebrews 7:24-25 (NASB).
 3. "Therefore we have been buried with Him through baptism into death, so that as Christ was raised from the dead through the glory of the Father, so we too might walk in newness of life." Romans 6:4 (NASB).
 4. "Because I live, you will live also." John 14:19 (NASB).
- C. The stone was rolled away to reveal an empty tomb.
- D. What victory have you experienced because Jesus defeated death and left the tomb empty? He gives victory!
1. Victory over the power and penalty of sin.
 2. Victory over death and fear of dying.
 3. Victory over sorrow and grief.
 4. Victory over hopelessness and despair .
- E. Because Jesus lives, the empty tomb is an assurance of eternal life. In that regard I tell you about Philip, born with Down Syndrome. He attended a third-grade Sunday School class with several eight-year-old boys and girls. Because of a loving teacher, they cared about Philip and accepted him as part of the group.

The Sunday before Easter the teacher brought several large plastic eggs. She gave each child an egg and they were told to go outside and find some symbol for new life, and put it in the egg. Back in the classroom, they would share their new-life symbols, opening the containers one by one.

After awhile the students returned to the classroom and placed the eggs on the table. The teacher began to open them one by one. After each one, whether a flower, butterfly, or leaf, the class would ooh and ahh.

Then one was opened, revealing nothing inside. The children exclaimed, "Somebody didn't do their assignment." Philip spoke up, "That's mine."

"Philip, you didn't do it right!" one said. "There's nothing there!" Philip insisted. "I did it right. It's empty because the tomb was empty!"

The class understood and smiled. Philip became ill and died a few weeks later. At the funeral this class of eight-year-olds marched up to the casket with their Sunday School teacher, and each one lay on it an empty plastic egg, signifying that the tomb was empty and Jesus is alive! And because He lived they knew Philip lived, too.

So, "Thank God! He gives us victory over sin and death through our Lord Jesus Christ. So, my dear brothers and sisters, be strong and immovable. Always work enthusiastically for

the Lord, for you know that nothing you do for the Lord is ever useless.” 1 Corinthians 15:57-58 (NLT). PRAY

JESUS WAS RESOLVED TO DO THE FATHER’S WILL – LET US ALSO BE RESOLVED!