

Second Baptist Church of Doylestown
Bible Study Notes
11-6-24

Mark 14

The Rulers Resolve To Kill Jesus – Verses 1-2

¹ Now the Passover and the Festival of Unleavened Bread were only two days away, and the chief priests and the teachers of the law were scheming to arrest Jesus secretly and kill him. ² “But not during the festival,” they said, “or the people may riot.”

14:1 The Passover commemorated the night the Israelites were freed from Egypt (Exodus 12), when God “passed over” homes marked by the blood of a lamb while killing firstborn sons in unmarked homes. The day of Passover was followed by a seven-day festival called the Festival of Unleavened Bread. This, too, recalled the Israelites’ quick escape from Egypt when they didn’t have time to let their bread rise, so they baked it without yeast (leaven). On this holiday, Jewish families still gather for a special meal that includes lamb, wine, bitter herbs, and unleavened bread.

14:2 The Jews were preparing to observe Passover, a time of remembrance for families to celebrate when the blood of lambs had saved their ancestors. But some of the religious leaders had another agenda. Jesus had disrupted their security, revealed their sham, and opposed their authority. Now they would put him away. But the world is controlled by our all-wise God, not puny politicians. God would turn the religious leaders’ murder plot into the greatest blessing that mankind would ever know. Another Lamb would be slain, and his blood would save all people. When grief or disaster seem to be dominating, remember that your life is in God’s hands and remember what Jesus did for you.

Jesus Is Anointed With Perfume – Verse 3

³ While he was in Bethany, reclining at the table in the home of Simon the Leper, a woman came with an alabaster jar of very expensive perfume, made of pure nard. She broke the jar and poured the perfume on his head.

14:3 Bethany is located on the eastern slope of the Mount of Olives (Jerusalem is on the western side). This town was the home of Jesus’ friends Lazarus, Mary, and Martha, who were also present at this dinner (John 11: 2). The woman who anointed Jesus’ feet was Mary, Lazarus and Martha’s sister (John 12: 1-3).

The Reaction To What The Woman Did – Verses 4-9

⁴ Some of those present were saying indignantly to one another, “Why this waste of perfume? ⁵ It could have been sold for more than a year’s wages^[a] and the money given to the poor.” And they rebuked her harshly. ⁶ “Leave her alone,” said Jesus. “Why are you bothering her? She has done a beautiful thing to me. ⁷ The poor you will always have with you, and you can help them any time you want. But you will not always have me. ⁸ She did what she could. She poured perfume on my body beforehand to prepare for my burial. ⁹ Truly I tell you, wherever the gospel is preached throughout the world, what she has done will also be told, in memory of her.”

14:4-9 Matthew and Mark placed this event just before the Last Supper, while John placed it a week earlier, just before the Triumphal Entry. It must be remembered that the main purpose of the Gospel writers was not to present an exact chronological account of Christ's life but to give an accurate record of his message. Matthew and Mark may have chosen to place this event here to contrast the complete devotion of Mary with the betrayal of Judas, the next event in both Gospels.

14:4-5 Where Mark says "some of those present," John specifically mentions Judas (John 12:4-5). Judas's indignation over Mary's act of worship was based not on concern for the poor but on greed. Because Judas was the treasurer of Jesus' ministry and had embezzled funds (John 12:6), he no doubt wanted the perfume sold so that he could benefit from the proceeds.

14:6-7 Jesus was not saying that we should neglect the poor, nor was he justifying indifference to them. (For Jesus' teaching about the poor, see Matthew 6:2-4; Luke 6:20-21; 14:13,21; 18:22.) Jesus was praising Mary for her unselfish act of worship. The essence of worshiping Christ is to regard him with utmost love, respect, and devotion and to be willing to sacrifice to him what is most precious.

Judas Agrees To Betray Jesus, Changing The Plans Of The Jewish Rulers – Verses 10-11

10 Then Judas Iscariot, one of the Twelve, went to the chief priests to betray Jesus to them. **11** They were delighted to hear this and promised to give him money. So he watched for an opportunity to hand him over.

14:10 Why would Judas want to betray Jesus? Very likely, Judas expected Jesus to start a political rebellion and overthrow Rome. As treasurer, Judas certainly assumed (as did the other disciples, see 10:35-37) that he would be given an important position in Jesus' new government. But when Jesus praised Mary for pouring out the perfume, thought to be worth a year's salary, Judas finally began to realize that Jesus' kingdom was not physical or political. Judas's greedy desire for money and status could not be fulfilled if he followed Jesus, so he betrayed him in exchange for money and favor from the religious leaders.

Preparation For The Passover – Verses 12-16

12 On the first day of the Festival of Unleavened Bread, when it was customary to sacrifice the Passover lamb, Jesus' disciples asked him, "Where do you want us to go and make preparations for you to eat the Passover?" **13** So he sent two of his disciples, telling them, "Go into the city, and a man carrying a jar of water will meet you. Follow him. **14** Say to the owner of the house he enters, 'The Teacher asks: Where is my guest room, where I may eat the Passover with my disciples?' **15** He will show you a large room upstairs, furnished and ready. Make preparations for us there." **16** The disciples left, went into the city and found things just as Jesus had told them. So they prepared the Passover.

14:12-15 Many homes had large upstairs rooms, sometimes with stairways both inside and outside the house. The preparations for the Passover would have included setting the table and buying and preparing the Passover lamb, unleavened bread, sauces, and other ceremonial food and drink.

Jesus Gives Judas A Chance To Repent – Verses 17-21

17 When evening came, Jesus arrived with the Twelve. **18** While they were reclining at the table eating, he said, "Truly I tell you, one of you will betray me—one who is eating with me." **19** They were saddened, and one by one they said to him, "Surely you don't mean me?" **20** "It is one of the Twelve," he replied, "one who dips bread into the bowl with me. **21** The Son of Man will go

just as it is written about him. But woe to that man who betrays the Son of Man! It would be better for him if he had not been born.”

14:17-19 Judas, the very man who would betray Jesus, was at the table with the others. Judas had already determined to betray Jesus, but in cold-blooded hypocrisy he shared the fellowship of this meal. It is easy to become enraged or shocked by what Judas did; yet professing commitment to Christ and then denying him with one's life is also betraying him. It is denying Christ's love to disobey him; it is denying his truth to distrust him; it is denying his deity to reject his authority. Do your words and actions match?

14:20-21 In the warning of Jesus we see a profound love for Judas. This was his last, fleeting opportunity to turn back from his evil plot. A remarkable thing to remember is that Jesus loved both Mary and Judas. We almost want to think that He loved Mary and hated Judas, but that isn't the case. If we miss His love towards Judas — rejected love, to be sure — if we miss that love, we miss the whole story.

The Last Supper – Verses 22-25

22 While they were eating, Jesus took bread, and when he had given thanks, he broke it and gave it to his disciples, saying, “Take it; this is my body.” 23 Then he took a cup, and when he had given thanks, he gave it to them, and they all drank from it. 24 “This is my blood of the covenant, which is poured out for many,” he said to them. 25 “Truly I tell you, I will not drink again from the fruit of the vine until that day when I drink it new in the kingdom of God.”

14:22-25 Mark records the origin of the Last Supper, which is still celebrated in worship services today. Jesus and his disciples ate a meal, sang psalms, read Scripture, and prayed. Then Jesus took two traditional parts of the Passover meal, the passing of bread and the drinking of wine, and gave them new meaning as representations of his body and blood. He used the bread and wine to explain the significance of what he was about to do on the cross. The Last Supper is remembered by different terms. Each name believers use for this sacrament brings out a different dimension to it. It is the “Lord's Supper” because it commemorates the Passover meal that Jesus ate with his disciples; it is the “Eucharist” (thanksgiving) because in it we thank God for Christ's work for us; it is “Communion” because through it we commune with God and with other believers. As we eat the bread and drink the wine, we should be quietly reflective as we recall Jesus' death and his promise to come again, grateful for God's wonderful gift to us, and joyful as we meet with Christ and the body of believers.

14:23 Whatever name your church uses for this event (Communion, Lord's Supper, or Eucharist) and on whatever schedule you celebrate it, the importance is that through celebrating Communion together believers experience the presence of Christ. The celebration of Communion: (1) humbles us before God. We confess our sin and restate our need for Christ to guide us. (2) reminds us that we are forgiven. We remember that his shed blood paid the price. (3) expresses our oneness in Christ. We are unified in our faith. (4) encourages us to recommit. We are reminded to pledge ourselves to serve him who died for us.

14:24 Jesus' death for us on the cross seals a new covenant between God and us. The old covenant involved forgiveness of sins through the blood of an animal sacrifice (Exodus 24:6-8). But instead of a spotless lamb on the altar, Jesus offered himself, the spotless Lamb of God, as a sacrifice that would forgive sin once and for all. Jesus was the final sacrifice for sins, and his blood sealed the new covenant between God and us. Now all of us can come to God through Jesus, in full confidence that God will hear us and save us from our sins.

Jesus Predicts The Desertion Of The Disciples And Peter's Denial – Verses 26-31

26 When they had sung a hymn, they went out to the Mount of Olives. **Jesus Predicts Peter's Denial** **27** "You will all fall away," Jesus told them, "for it is written: "I will strike the shepherd, and the sheep will be scattered. **28** But after I have risen, I will go ahead of you into Galilee." **29** Peter declared, "Even if all fall away, I will not." **30** "Truly I tell you," Jesus answered, "today—yes, tonight—before the rooster crows twice you yourself will disown me three times." **31** But Peter insisted emphatically, "Even if I have to die with you, I will never disown you." And all the others said the same.

14:27-31 This was the second time in the same evening that Jesus predicted the disciples' denial and desertion, which probably explains their strong reaction (14:31). For Jesus' earlier prediction, see Luke 22:31-34 and John 13: 36-38.

14:31 Peter was so emphatic. It is easy to say we are devoted to Christ, but our claims are meaningful only when they are tested in the crucible of persecution. How strong is your faith? Is it strong enough to stand up under intense trial? We need the Holy Spirit, not boastfulness and human resolve. We must never discount our vulnerability to pride, greed, or even indifference.

Jesus' Prayer Of Distress – Verses 32-36

32 They went to a place called Gethsemane, and Jesus said to his disciples, "Sit here while I pray." **33** He took Peter, James and John along with him, and he began to be deeply distressed and troubled. **34** "My soul is overwhelmed with sorrow to the point of death," he said to them. "Stay here and keep watch." **35** Going a little farther, he fell to the ground and prayed that if possible the hour might pass from him. **36** "Abba, Father," he said, "everything is possible for you. Take this cup from me. Yet not what I will, but what you will."

14:35-36 Was Jesus trying to get out of his task? Jesus expressed his true feelings, but he did not deny or rebel against God's will. He reaffirmed his desire to do what God wanted. Jesus' prayer highlights the terrible suffering he had to endure— an agony so much more magnified because he had to take on the sins of the whole world. This "cup" was the agony of alienation from God, his Father, at the cross (Hebrews 5:7-9). The sinless Son of God took on our sins and was separated for a while from God so that we could be eternally saved.

14:36 While praying, Jesus was aware of what doing the Father's will would cost him. He understood the suffering he was about to encounter, and he did not want to have to endure the horrible experience. But Jesus prayed, "Not what I will, but what you will." Anything worth having costs something. What does your commitment to God cost you? We must be willing to pay any price to gain what is priceless— eternal life.

The Sleeping Disciples – Verses 37-42

37 Then he returned to his disciples and found them sleeping. "Simon," he said to Peter, "are you asleep? Couldn't you keep watch for one hour? **38** Watch and pray so that you will not fall into temptation. The spirit is willing, but the flesh is weak." **39** Once more he went away and prayed the same thing. **40** When he came back, he again found them sleeping, because their eyes were heavy. They did not know what to say to him. **41** Returning the third time, he said to them, "Are you still sleeping and resting? Enough! The hour has come. Look, the Son of Man is delivered into the hands of sinners. **42** Rise! Let us go! Here comes my betrayer!"

14:38-42 You may not face execution for your faith, but you probably face many problems that wear you down. You deal with irritating people whom you must love and serve; you face the burden of unfinished tasks or lack of obvious results; you cope with helpers who let you down or fail to comprehend. Remember that in times of great stress, you are vulnerable to temptation, even if you have a willing spirit. Jesus explained how to resist: (1) Keep watch (14:34)— stay awake and be morally vigilant. (2) Pray to God (14:35)— this is how you maintain your vigilance. (3) Seek support of friends and loved ones (14:33, 37, 40-41)— this is how you build up your resistance and help others; when one is weak, others are strong. (4) Focus on the purpose God has given you (14:36)— this is how you do God’s will and not your own.

Jesus Arrested – Verses 43-52

43 Just as he was speaking, Judas, one of the Twelve, appeared. With him was a crowd armed with swords and clubs, sent from the chief priests, the teachers of the law, and the elders.

44 Now the betrayer had arranged a signal with them: “The one I kiss is the man; arrest him and lead him away under guard.” **45** Going at once to Jesus, Judas said, “Rabbi!” and kissed him. **46** The men seized Jesus and arrested him. **47** Then one of those standing near drew his sword and struck the servant of the high priest, cutting off his ear. **48** “Am I leading a rebellion,” said Jesus, “that you have come out with swords and clubs to capture me? **49** Every day I was with you, teaching in the temple courts, and you did not arrest me. But the Scriptures must be fulfilled.” **50** Then everyone deserted him and fled. **51** A young man, wearing nothing but a linen garment, was following Jesus. When they seized him, **52** he fled naked, leaving his garment behind.

14:43-45 Judas was given a contingent of police and soldiers (John 18:3) in order to seize Jesus and bring him before the religious court for trial. The religious leaders had issued a warrant for Jesus’ arrest, and Judas was acting as Jesus’ official accuser.

14:47-50 According to John 18:10, the person who pulled out a sword was Peter. Luke 22:51 records that Jesus immediately healed the man’s ear and prevented any further bloodshed. Just hours earlier, these disciples had vowed never to desert Jesus (14:31).

Jesus Before The Sanhedrin – Verses 53-59

53 They took Jesus to the high priest, and all the chief priests, the elders and the teachers of the law came together. **54** Peter followed him at a distance, right into the courtyard of the high priest. There he sat with the guards and warmed himself at the fire. **55** The chief priests and the whole Sanhedrin were looking for evidence against Jesus so that they could put him to death, but they did not find any. **56** Many testified falsely against him, but their statements did not agree. **57** Then some stood up and gave this false testimony against him: **58** “We heard him say, ‘I will destroy this temple made with human hands and in three days will build another, not made with hands.’” **59** Yet even then their testimony did not agree.

14:53 This trial by the Sanhedrin had two phases. A small group met at night (John 18:12-24), and then the full Sanhedrin met at daybreak (Luke 22:66-71). They tried Jesus for religious offenses, such as calling himself the Son of God, which, according to law, was blasphemy. The trial was fixed: These religious leaders had already decided to kill Jesus (Luke 22: 2).

14:55 The Romans controlled Israel, but the Jews were given some authority over religious and minor civil disputes. The Jewish ruling body, the Sanhedrin, was made up of 71 of Israel’s religious leaders.

It was assumed that these men would be just. Instead, they showed great injustice in the trial of Jesus, even to the point of making up lies to use against him (14:57).

14:58 The statement that the false witnesses finally agreed to use as an accusation twisted Jesus' actual words. Jesus did not say, "I will destroy this temple made with human hands"; he said, "Destroy this temple, and I will raise it again in three days" (John 2:19). Jesus was not talking about Herod's temple but about his own body.

Jesus Testifies At His Own Trial - The Sanhedrin Condemns Jesus To Death – Verses 60-65

60 Then the high priest stood up before them and asked Jesus, "Are you not going to answer? What is this testimony that these men are bringing against you?" **61** But Jesus remained silent and gave no answer. Again the high priest asked him, "Are you the Messiah, the Son of the Blessed One?" **62** "I am," said Jesus. "And you will see the Son of Man sitting at the right hand of the Mighty One and coming on the clouds of heaven." **63** The high priest tore his clothes. "Why do we need any more witnesses?" he asked. **64** "You have heard the blasphemy. What do you think?" They all condemned him as worthy of death. **65** Then some began to spit at him; they blindfolded him, struck him with their fists, and said, "Prophecy!" And the guards took him and beat him.

14:60-64 To the first question, Jesus made no reply because it was based on confusing and erroneous evidence. Not answering was wiser than trying to clarify the fabricated accusations. But if Jesus had refused to answer the second question, it could have been taken as a denial of his mission. Instead, his answer predicted a powerful role reversal. Sitting at God's right hand in the place of power, he would come to judge his accusers, and they would have to answer his questions (Psalm 110: 1; Revelation 20: 11-13).

Peter Disowns Jesus – Verses 66-72

66 While Peter was below in the courtyard, one of the servant girls of the high priest came by. **67** When she saw Peter warming himself, she looked closely at him. "You also were with that Nazarene, Jesus," she said. **68** But he denied it. "I don't know or understand what you're talking about," he said, and went out into the entryway. **69** When the servant girl saw him there, she said again to those standing around, "This fellow is one of them." **70** Again he denied it. After a little while, those standing near said to Peter, "Surely you are one of them, for you are a Galilean." **71** He began to call down curses, and he swore to them, "I don't know this man you're talking about." **72** Immediately the rooster crowed the second time. ^[a] Then Peter remembered the word Jesus had spoken to him: "Before the rooster crows twice ^[b] you will disown me three times." And he broke down and wept.

14:66-67 Caiaphas's home, where Jesus was tried was part of a huge palace with several courtyards. John was apparently acquainted with the high priest, and he was let into the courtyard along with Peter (John 18:15-16).

14:71-72 It is easy to get angry at the Sanhedrin and the Roman governor for their injustice in condemning Jesus, but Peter and the rest of the disciples also contributed to Jesus' pain by deserting him (14:50). While most of us may not be like the Jewish and Roman leaders, we are like the disciples because all of us have been guilty of denying Christ as Lord in vital areas of our lives. We may pride ourselves that we have not committed certain sins, but we are all guilty of sin. Don't try to excuse yourself by pointing at others whose sins seem worse than yours.