

HOLY WEEK MEDITATION: MAUNDY THURSDAY

They gathered in an upper room to share a meal.

And the names of the apostles were these:

Simon, called Peter

His brother, Andrew;

James

And his brother John - the sons of Zebedee;

Philip

And Bartholomew;

Thomas

And Matthew the tax collector;

James the son of Alphaeus,

Thaddaeus;

Simon the patriot,

And Judas Iscariot.

And when the hour came, he reclined at table, and the apostles with him. And he said to them, "I have earnestly desired to eat this Passover with you before I suffer. For I tell you I will not eat it until it is fulfilled in the kingdom of God." And he took a cup, and when he had given thanks he said, "Take this, and divide it among yourselves. For I tell you that from now on I will not drink of the fruit of the vine until the kingdom of God comes."

And he took bread, and when he had given thanks, he broke it and gave it to them, saying, "This is my body, which is given for you. Do this in remembrance of me." And likewise the cup after they had eaten, saying, "This cup that is poured out for you is the new covenant in my blood. But behold, the hand of him who betrays me is with me on the table. For the Son of Man goes as it has been determined, but woe to that man by whom he is betrayed!" And they began to question one another, which of them it could be who was going to do this.

Luke 22: 14 - 23

It Was On The Thursday

It was on the Thursday that he became valuable.

He hadn't anything to sell - not since leaving his hammer and saw three years earlier.

Needless to say, he could knock together a set of trestles or hang a couple of shelves at the drop of a hat, no bother at all.

But he wasn't into making things. Not now.

He was into...we... talking, I suppose.

And listening and healing and forgiving and encouraging....

All the things for which there's no pay and the job centre has no advertisements.

So his work wasn't worth much.

Nor, indeed, was he.

For, not being well dressed or well heeled or well connected, he wouldn't have attracted many ticket holders had he been put up for raffle.

But he had a novelty value.... Like the elephant man or the fat lady or the midget at the circus.
Put him on a stage and he might be interesting to look at.
Sell him to the circus with the promise of some tricks and there could be a silver penny or two.....or thirty.....in it.

It was on the Thursday he became valuable.
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Reflection

There were two men who betrayed Jesus that night.

Judas - he sold Jesus out for 30 pieces of silver.

Why?

Did he think he would provoke Jesus to action?

Was it just greed?

He just hadn't got it - he hadn't understood who Jesus was or why he had come.

Even after 3 years of being with Jesus he still hadn't got it.

Then there was Peter.

He denied knowing Jesus.

After being so vehement about his faithfulness, when the crunch came Peter denied knowing Jesus.

Fear had gripped him and robbed him of any courage.

Two men betrayed Jesus that night - a betrayal of friendship.

One would find forgiveness, one could not - both carried the pain of their choices.

What about us?

Do we still miss the whole point of Jesus?

Do we still not get it?

How and when and why do we still betray him?

Pause - silence

Prayer

In the darkness of this night we acknowledge that we too deny Jesus in our lives.

When we are wilfully blind to his teachings and his ways - forgive us.

When we allow fears to overwhelm our faith - forgive us.

Loving God, in Jesus Christ, who died and rose again for our salvation, cast out the darkness of our anxiety, fear and selfishness. Enfold us in your love and give us joy and hope in forgiveness. Amen.

Rev Heather Cooper