**Mark Sermon #7**

**The Last Seder**

Theme of Mark:

Jesus: Messiah and Son of God: suffering servant and savior of mankind.

Theme verse: Mark 10:45 For even the Son of Man did not come to be served, but to serve, and to give his life as a ransom for many.

We have seen Jesus as the suffering servant.

We have seen Jesus as a kind of superhero, traveling around, healing people.

We have seen Jesus who has power over nature (calmed the storm).

We have seen Jesus as one who has power over the spiritual/demon world.

We have seen Jesus telling us to show mercy before sacrifice when he healed the bleeding woman—caring about the person rather than the rule, even if the rule is from God, when he touched the bleeding woman.

We have seen Jesus explaining and demonstrating discipleship—telling us we must deny self and take up our cross daily,

Telling us that we must become like little children to enter the kingdom—We need to have the attitude of littleness—a powerful God working through our weaknesses and limitations.

Telling us that being in the top 1%, like the RYR is not enough.

The RYR was not willing to have a childlike faith in Jesus. He was relying on his stuff.

If we are “good” at all, it is only because God makes us good.

Mark 10:35-45 James and John still do not get it. They are not coming to Jesus like little children. They ask Jesus to sit at his right and at his left in the kingdom.

Mark 10:45 For even the Son of Man did not come to be served, but to serve, and to give his life as a ransom for many.

This is discipleship, folks. To walk in the footsteps of Jesus.

Now, let us look at the suffering and death of Jesus.

We are skipping much of the Passion Week (will cover that in Matthew and Luke)

**I. First, let us talk about the crucifixion and death of Jesus.**

**Mark’s version is relatively short. I want to focus in on the Lord’s Supper. We will come back to the actual account of the trials, suffering and crucifixion of Jesus in Matthew.**

**Context: Jesus had already told them 3 times that the Messiah must suffer and die. Mark 8:31-33, Mark 9:30-31, Mark 10:32-34 the most clear yet. “We are going up to Jerusalem, and the Son of Man will be delivered over to the chief priests and the teachers of the law. They will condemn him to death and will hand him over to the Gentiles, who will mock him and spit on him, flog him and kill him. Three days later he will rise.”**

**Pretty clear, yes?**

**Jesus is well aware what is coming. Do you have a sense of what is coming in your life—the sacrifices, the suffering, the victories over sin?**

**Mark 14:1-11 This is Wednesday or perhaps Thursday. Everything is coming together. From John we know that the woman who did this is Mary, sister of Martha and Lazarus.**

**v. 8 Jesus: She is preparing my body for burial.**

**This is a very emotional scene for Jesus. He is a “dead man walking.”**

**v. 9 This story will be told in memory of Mary. Exactly.**

**Jesus is completely aware what is coming, yet he stays the course.**

**Mark 14:12-26**

**Here is version of Jesus predicting his death #4. This time it is an acted out parable, like Ezekiel did, but he asks us to act out this parable on a regular basis. He gives us a physical reminder.**

**This is no accident.**

**A few things I notice here:**

**1. [with hindsight] It could not be more clear that Jesus knows exactly what is happening and, in some sense, he is in control of what is happening. v. 13-15**

**This is on 14 Nisan. The day before the Passover.**

**2. This is the pre-Passover meal, the Seder, which is actually celebrated on the eve of the Passover, as the Lord “passed over” Israel that night because of the perfect Passover lambs that were killed and whose blood was smeared on the wooden beams above their doors. This is a foreshadow of Jesus’ blood which was shed the next day so that we could avoid death for our sins and be saved from slavery “in Egypt.”**

**Exodus 12:1-13 24-28 Also, do not break any of the bones (Jesus’ bones were not broken.**

**The symbolism here is quite obvious, and Jesus is well aware of the meaning. He IS the Passover lamb. This is why there is no actual lamb at this very unusual Passover Seder.**

**A side point. John specifies that this meal is on Thursday**

**3. v. 20 One of you who dips bread into the bowl with me will betray me.**

 **This was a communal sharing of bread and wine (and bitter herbs and lamb which are, curiously, not mentioned). Like a meal in Thailand where they dip the rice into the bowls, or in Ethiopia where they dip the injera into the bowls.**

**The Seder meal involved smell, touch, sight, and hearing. Very intimate.**

**v.18 Participants inclined at the table.**

**Not like my family meals.**

**Definitely not like typical Americans eating dinner in front of the TV!!!**

**4. Jesus gave the bread and the wine deep symbolic meaning.**

**a. v. 22 Jesus broke the bread. Take: this is my body.**

**Jesus: This bread is me!!! (not was… “is’’)**

**[ What did they think? Did they “get it” yet?]**

**b. v. 23-24 They passed the cup and everyone drank from the one cup, which was not the custom. This was a communal remembrance for a reason.**

**The cup after the supper is known to the Jews as the “cup of salvation.”**

**10:45 Remembrance of an atoning death. For even the Son of Man did not come to be served, but to serve, and to give his life as a ransom for many.**

**v. 24 This is the blood o the covenant…**

**For the Jews, covenants were sealed with blood (Exodus 24:3-8 Zechariah 9:11). This blood created a new community, gathered around a table.**

**This is my blood. Jews have great aversion to blood!!! (The life is in the blood Lev 17:11, so they drained all blood before cooking meat.)**

**Jesus said: Drink the blood!!!!**

**Embrace the forgiveness/redemption you have in me!!!**

**5. v. 25 We will eat it again in the kingdom of God. Jesus ended the Last Supper with a glimmer of hope of a new breaking in of the Kingdom.**

**Do not let your hearts be too troubled. We will be drink of this cup again.**

**Q: How does Jesus “drink again” in the kingdom of God?**

**Within less than 24 hours of this Seder event, Jesus would be arrested, tried, convicted, beaten, tortured, crucified, and buried.**

**Yet… We have Mark 16:1-7**

**Jesus is here with us right now. He shares with us as we partake of the Lord’s Supper. The Holy Spirit is with us and through the Spirit, Jesus literally participates with us in the drinking of the cup.**

**Catholics and Protestants have debated for centuries about the presence—real or otherwise—in the elements of the Supper. They are missing the point. Jesus is present. He is here with us. He is participating with us, but not in the elements themselves. In the Holy Spirit, Jesus is present with us when we take the bread and wine.**

**Then they sang a hymn, so let’s do that as well.**

**Break…**

**Instead of calling this the Last Supper, we should call it the Last Seder.**

**Imagine the fist time the apostles gathered to reenact the Last Seder as Jesus commanded. For the Christians, the curtain has been torn in two. The old Covenant has been replaced. Everything is new.**

**Remember that last Seder?**

**Now that Jesus has died, we finally get it. The bread comes around…**

**This IS my body… his body. We touched his body. We reclined with him as he broke the Seder bread.**

**The wine… This is the blood of the new covenant we are now celebrating and will celebrate every Sunday moving forward.**

**They saw the blood for themselves. If only we had known…**

**But if we had known, we probably would have tried to stop him, like Peter had.**

**Our Communion is an actual communion—a mutual sharing of an experience.**

**We come forward, break off a piece of bread, and dip it into the cup (or cups), sharing and remembering together. It is a time to “examine ourselves.” (1 Corinthians 11:28) individually, but also as a community. 1 Cor 11:33 So then, my brothers and sisters, when you gather to eat, you should all eat together.**

**Like the apostles, we are drinking this “anew in the kingdom of God.” (Mark 14:25)**

**The Holy Spirit is here and he is among us as we share the elements.**

**In the Holy Spirit Jesus is “drinking it new in the kingdom of God.”**