



GROW AT HOME

DAILY DEVOTION

DAY 22

READ

MATTHEW 26:1-5, 14-16

FOCUS

¹WHEN JESUS HAD FINISHED SAYING ALL THESE THINGS, HE SAID TO HIS DISCIPLES, ²"AS YOU KNOW, THE PASSOVER IS TWO DAYS AWAY--AND THE SON OF MAN WILL BE HANDED OVER TO BE CRUCIFIED."

³THEN THE CHIEF PRIESTS AND THE ELDERS OF THE PEOPLE ASSEMBLED IN THE PALACE OF THE HIGH PRIEST, WHOSE NAME WAS CAIAPHAS, ⁴AND THEY SCHEMED TO ARREST JESUS SECRETLY AND KILL HIM. ⁵"BUT NOT DURING THE FESTIVAL," THEY SAID, "OR THERE MAY BE A RIOT AMONG THE PEOPLE."

¹⁴THEN ONE OF THE TWELVE--THE ONE CALLED JUDAS ISCARIOT--WENT TO THE CHIEF PRIESTS ¹⁵AND ASKED, "WHAT ARE YOU WILLING TO GIVE ME IF I DELIVER HIM OVER TO YOU?" SO THEY COUNTED OUT FOR HIM THIRTY PIECES OF SILVER. ¹⁶FROM THEN ON JUDAS WATCHED FOR AN OPPORTUNITY TO HAND HIM OVER.

REFLECTION from PASTOR CONNIE SURRATT

In these Scriptures we see the end of Jesus' teachings; the end of His physical ministry time. He now starts the process of preparing His disciples for what is to come. His death will take place during Passover--the appropriate time for Jesus to die--when the sacrificial lambs were slain. Prior to this, the sacrifice of all the other lambs was just a symbol. The time had come for the symbol to be fulfilled. As John the Baptist had proclaimed, "...Behold, the Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world!"

At this point Jesus' followers may not believe that what He has foretold will actually happen. The scene has been set for all that Jesus will walk through in His final days. He knows His time has come, but do His disciples? Are they ready for the great test that is coming their way?

Today's passage gives us an insider's look into a secret meeting. The chief priests and elders are scheming to kill Jesus but want to make sure it doesn't happen during a time when lots of people will be around. They are fearful of the crowds and so as not to cause any disturbances, they must make sure that their plan unfolds outside of public view. But, God's plan is not man's plan--Judas presents them with the perfect opportunity for their scheme to take place immediately--during the very festival that is about to commence.

One of the most puzzling things about this historical account is how Judas--who had been with Jesus daily--could turn on Him so easily and betray Him so terribly. For Judas to sell his Master out for 30 pieces of silver, there truly must have been something fundamentally wrong with him. Since it was known that Judas kept the "common purse"--the fund that Jesus and his disciples used for their ministry--and stole from it, it seems that Judas had some darkness already inside of him. But what if it was more than that? What if it was because he started with wrong motives and expectations that Judas became disillusioned with the whole thing? He thought he was signing up to be with one of the most powerful men in history, but the future was--by Jesus own words--starting to be about something else: something less obvious, less tangible and much less glamorous. Instead of lining up to support Him, powerful people were plotting against Jesus and His followers. All of a sudden Judas sees that "his guy" doesn't have the same political future he had set his hopes on. His true character made itself known. You can't hide who you are on the inside forever.

When push comes to shove, who you are inside will come out. My grandmother was one of the godliest women I've ever known. She knew her Bible through and through and prayed for me every day of my life. Towards the end of her life, she developed dementia and as a result, moved into a nursing home. She didn't know who I was when I came to visit, but it never failed that every time I saw her she would always talk about God and want us to pray together. That was who she was at the core of her being. I have often wondered how I would do under that same test. What words would come out of my mouth?

As we walk through Holy Week, let's take this opportunity to examine ourselves. How are we handling this the test God is presenting us with today? What is it revealing about who we are at the core of our being?



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DAILY DEVOTION

DAY 22

REFLECTION from PASTOR CONNIE SURRATT (CONT'D)

QUESTIONS

- WHO AM I WHEN IT'S JUST GOD AND ME?
- DO I BETRAY CHRIST WITH MY ACTIONS OR ATTITUDES?
- WHAT DO I NEED TO SURRENDER TO JESUS SO THAT HE CAN REACH IN AND CHANGE IT TO SOMETHING POWERFUL AND GOOD?

SONG OF THE DAY

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