

THE SURPRISING JESUS

Studies in the Book of Mark

~Week Seventeen~ “Drama in the Upper Room” Mark 14:12-31



Life Groups

A reminder... This weekly Bible study is connected to the Sunday sermons at UPC. It includes a “Look Back” section to help you reflect on Sunday’s sermon, and a “Look Up” section to take you through the NEXT passage in the book of Mark. If you miss a sermon, you can always listen to it online at www.upc-orlando.com.

***Note...** We are skipping past Mark 13, usually referred to as the Olivet Discourse. To enrich your study of this chapter, you might profit from a message by Mike Osborne entitled “What Was Jesus Predicting?” available on the UPC website under Bible Study Resources: Revelation Unwrapped, at the following internet address:*

www.upc-orlando.com/messages/text/messages.htm

LOOK BACK – Mark 14:1-11

It is now Wednesday of Passion Week. On the evening of the next day Jesus would eat the Last Supper with his disciples. Hours after that he would be arrested, put on trial for insurrection, and sentenced to die. Sensing what is about to happen, a believer in Jesus comes to express her devotion to him before it’s too late.

a) Why did the religious authorities want to wait until after the Feast of Unleavened Bread to do something about the “Jesus problem” (vs. 2)?

b) In what ways does the woman in vs. 3 differ from the religious leaders described in vss. 1-2, and from the disciples in vss. 4-5?

c) Read John’s account of the anointing of Jesus (John 12:1-8). What details does John give us that throw additional light on this incident? (Note: The apparent inconsistency between Mark and John on the timing of this event is explained by the two different calendars in use in Jesus’ day.)

- d) If you had been present at this dinner, do you think you would have felt as the disciples did about the woman's extravagance (vss. 4-5)?

- e) What has it cost you to be a follower of Christ?

LOOK UP – Mark 14:12-31

Now we are in the Upper Room with Jesus and his disciples. It is Thursday evening, just hours before Jesus would be convicted as a criminal, condemned to die, and nailed to a cross.

Mark 14:12-16 – Prelude to the Last Supper

- a) What was the meaning of Passover (vs. 12)? (Hint: See Exodus 12:1-30.) Why was it important for Jesus to die at Passover time?

- b) What is the connection between Jesus and the Passover lamb? (Hint: See 1 Corinthians 5:7, Isaiah 53:7, John 1:29, 1 Peter 1:18-19)

- c) Why do you think Jesus wanted to share this last meal with his disciples (vs. 14)?

Mark 14:17-25 – The Last Supper

- a) What does verse 19 suggest about Judas Iscariot, the disciple who would betray Jesus?

- b) Why do you suppose Jesus chose bread and wine as symbols for his body and blood (vss. 22-24)?

- c) How does the idea of "covenant" (vs. 24) help you understand the meaning of the Lord's Supper?

d) What is Jesus looking forward to in verse 25?

Mark 14:26-31 – Postlude to the Last Supper

a) Why did Jesus go to the Mount of Olives? (Hint: See vs. 32)

b) What two things does Jesus predict in vss. 27-28?

c) Why might Jesus have shared with Peter the prediction in vs. 30?

LOOK IN – Reflect

a) Imagine that you are one of the disciples sharing the last supper with Jesus. What would your reactions be to his saying, “This is my body, this is my blood”?

b) What have you learned from this study that could affect the way you celebrate the Lord’s Supper at UPC?

LOOK OUT – Apply

While the sacrament of communion reminds us of the gospel and reassures us of God’s love, it is also a time for deep self-examination. David E. Garland writes, “When the Lord’s Supper is served at the end of a worship service, people may examine their watches more than their hearts and may be worried more about dinner than how they have betrayed Jesus in the previous week or how they might betray him in the next. Mark’s account of the Last Supper should jolt us awake.”* The next time we celebrate communion, remind yourself to look inside, as well as at the cross.

* David E. Garland, *The NIV Application Commentary: Mark* (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 1996), 535.