

Message #1052
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"WHY WAS JESUS BETRAYED?"
{Isaiah 53:6}
Maundy Thursday Meditation

Trinity Presbyterian Church
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Jesus was in full view of Peter when he denied him the third time.

The Bible says...

"The Lord turned and looked straight at Peter. Then Peter remembered the word the Lord had spoken to him {in the upper room earlier that evening}, 'Before the rooster crows today, you will disown me three times.' He went outside and wept bitterly."
{Luke 22:61-62}

...Peter had pledged his loyalty to Jesus

...He told Him that he would "lay down his life" for Him

And indeed he demonstrated His loyalty to his Lord in the Garden when Jesus was arrested.

...he cut off the right ear of Malchus--the high priest's servant

...yet, Jesus rebuked him publicly and told him to put his sword away

...Peter demonstrated he was willing to go to battle for Jesus

...But, when the moment of truth came and his life was on the line, he denied he knew Jesus

BETRAYED BY A FRIEND

The Psalmist had prophesied...

"Even my best friend, the one I trusted completely, the one who shared my food, has turned against me!" {Psalm 41:9, NLT}

We expect hostility from our enemies.

...but, being betrayed by a friend really hurts

We can react in several ways...

...we can withdraw to suffer in silence

...we can strike back in anger

...we can make excuses for our friend's actions

...we can try to push the hurt out of our minds and ignore it

...we can confront our friend and share our feelings

...or, we can forgive!

THE LOOK OF JESUS

Jesus looked straight at Peter...and he was heartbroken! He had betrayed his best friend...his Lord...his Savior.

...he wept bitterly

...he was plagued with guilt

From the cross, Jesus had cried out, "Father, forgive them {including Peter} for they know not what they do!"

But, we must move beyond the cross to the resurrection to see how Jesus responded to Peter's betrayal.

The angel at the tomb told the women early that morning...

"He has risen! He is not here. See the place where they laid Him. But go, tell His disciples...and Peter...!" {Mark 16:6b-7a}

"But they did not believe the women, because their words seemed to them like nonsense. Peter, however, got up and ran to the tomb..." {Luke 24: 11-12a}

JESUS RESPONSE: FORGIVENESS

Sometime later Peter and a number of the disciples were fishing.

...early in the morning Jesus appeared on the shore

...they didn't recognize Him

...they hadn't caught any fish

...He told them to cast their nets on the

other side of the boat

...they caught more fish than they could handle

Peter recognizes that could be none other than Jesus and swims to the shore to meet Him.

Following breakfast on the beach Jesus asks Peter three times {very significant}--

"Do you truly love me?"

...three times Peter responded, "Lord you know I do!"

...following the third time Jesus said, "Follow Me!"

...JESUS FORGAVE PETER

CONCLUSION

Peter denied his Lord!

Judas betrayed Jesus!

Peter came running to find Jesus!

Judas went off and hung himself.

Peter was forgiven

Judas was condemned for eternity

But--we've all betrayed our Lord! Isaiah wrote--

"We all, like sheep, have gone astray, each of us has turned to his own way; and the Lord has laid on Him the iniquity of us all!" {53:6}

...we've all rebelled

...we've all tried it "our way!"

...we've all made commitments we've broken

Will you be like Judas and run away from Jesus?

...will you be like Peter and run towards Him?

His arms are open wide--

...He wants to celebrate with you

...He wants to forgive you

...that's what the cross is all about