

A DISCIPLE

2nd in Series: “What If *YOU* Were There?”

Perth Bible Church, March 28, 2010 AM Service Rev. Todd G. Leupold

INTRODUCTION:

The Passion is not just about Jesus, His disciples, or the people living in Jerusalem 2,000 years ago. It is every bit as much about you and I here today.

What if, literally, you or I had been there first-hand, up-close and personal? Would it change our understanding? Perspective? Convictions? Priorities? Lives?

What if, we were there as one of His disciples?

PRAYER

I.) **REALITY CHECK** Mt. 26:17-35; Mk. 14:12-26; Lk. 22:7-30; Jn. 13:1-17:26

A.) **A Planned Passion**

- Every aspect and detail of the Passion events was orchestrated by Jesus Himself, even the arrangements for the Last Supper.
- None of this was an accident. Nothing was unexpected or outside of God's Plan from the very beginning.
- Even, especially, in these events we are to see and appreciate the absolute Sovereignty of God!
- **To be His disciple, then, is to accept His Plans in every detail, whether they be small or great, obvious or confusing.**

B.) **An Exalted Paradox** Jn. 13:12-16; Lk. 22:24-30

- Before Jesus could be truly exalted, He first had to humble Himself.
- Before He could raise up His followers to be exalted with Him, they too must be humbled.
- Before He could claim His Throne and begin His Messianic Rule, Jesus must serve.
- Before His followers can lead others to follow Him in salvation and sanctification, they must serve in love and humility.
- Before He judges, He has come to serve in grace and mercy – especially to the sinful and unclean.
- Before we can receive His authority to judge, we too must serve in grace and mercy – especially to the sinful and unclean.

C.) **An Encouraged Betrayal** Jn. 13:18-27

- Even the betrayal was not only planned but encouraged by Jesus.
- Not because He liked the idea. Not because He looked forward to it.
- But, because it was necessary for the good of humankind.
- To do what was right and necessary, to truly live out sacrificial love, Jesus was not only willing to accept but even to encourage that which would be most painful and difficult for Himself.

- The disciples witnessed this, but would they follow it's example? Loving God Absolutely & *Loving Others Sacrificially*. Eventually, most of them did.
- **What about His disciples today? In this auditorium?**

D.) **The Old Transformed As New** Lk. 22:19-20; Jn. 13:31-35

- Compare **Jeremiah 31:31-34**
- The Old, dependence upon the Law to prove one's righteousness, has proven that not a single person in all of human history is capable of living up to God's standards.
- A law of letters and effort can not be perfectly kept or maintained by fallen humanity.
- **Romans 7:7-12**
- Jesus, the Messiah, came to walk before humanity on this earth *not* simply to set an example of perfection to the law for us to follow in the flesh, *but rather* to offer His life as a sacrifice in order that we may be given new hearts filled with the Spirit and cleansed of sin by which we may be saved and through which we might live to His honor and glory!
- **At the Last Supper, the disciples struggled to understand this. Eventually, however, they did. How about you this morning?**

II.) **WEAKNESS**

- The attitudes and actions of the disciples from this point on until Christ ascended to Heaven and sent His Holy Spirit to dwell in and with them demonstrate our inherent weakness.
- EVEN when we have all the words, teachings, and example of knowledge and Truth that we need, until we fully believe, experience His redemption and live in the Spirit, we are doomed to despair and failure in one or more of these same ways.

A.) **Numb In The Garden** Mt. 26:36-46; Mk. 14:32-42; Lk. 22:39-46

- The news of Jesus' betrayal and impending death was just too much for the disciples.
- Not only did it represent horrible things happening to one they loved, but also a completely unexpected and incomprehensible circumstance that seemingly shattered all of their assumptions, dreams and hope.
- *How could this be God's plan if it doesn't fit my understanding of what God's plan should and must be?*
- *Why, then, bother doing or thinking anything?*
- *Maybe I should just quit and sleep it off?*

B.) **Self-Preservation** Mt. 26:14-16,47-50; Mk. 14:10-11, 43-46; Lk. 22:47-53; Jn. 18:3-12

- *If I can't control what happens to my former plans and dreams, at least I can still try to control my own future.*
- *The cause is taking a bad turn. Disappointment, suffering, pain and failure seem imminent if I follow through with this group and this leader. It's time to just do whatever I can and whatever I have to in order to preserve and provide for myself.*
- The thoughts and spirit of a Judas.

C.) **Denial** Mt. 26:69-75; Mk. 14:66-72; Lk. 22:54-62; Jn. 18:15-18,25-27

- I was a hero, now I'm an enemy. I was someone others were jealous of because of my position with Christ, now they threaten to scorn and punish me for it.
- What to do?
- Deny, pretend, disassociate.

D.) **Abandonment** Mt. 26:56b;27:55; Mk. 14:50; 15:40-41; Lk. 23:48-49

- We're not so popular anymore. Our leader has been turned into a criminal. All our plans have been blown apart. The 'numbers' are against us.
- *It's just too much to expect me to take. Surely, God would understand that, wouldn't He?*
- Hmmm, stand and suffer for Christ or . . . RUN?!!!! Or, just stand out at the uttermost, outside edge.

E.) **Guilt** Mt. 27:3-5

- The result of self-justification for our self-preservation. Like Judas, we try to argue with ourselves things such as: *"I did what was best for me and my family."* *"I didn't really have a choice, it was going to happen anyway. At least this way, I could make sure it was just Jesus and not Him plus all of the disciples. In fact, I didn't betray Jesus so much as save His followers."* *"Most anybody would have done the same if they were in my shoes."* *"I was just obeying my religious authorities."*
- Initially, for a while perhaps, we manage to focus on our justification rather than what we have actually done (betrayal, treason, sold-out). We suppress the truth for a lie dressed up to resemble or feel like truth.
- Inevitably, however, we must face the reality of our guilt – even to the point of being overwhelmed and driven to extremes! We can only fool ourselves for so long, especially those who have lived in the presence of the Christ; seen His miracles and heard His teachings!
- For some it will be sooner, for others later, but always our sin will find us out. When it does, it will seek to destroy us!
- In this light, what really is YOUR relationship with Jesus? **Have you denied, betrayed, sold Him out, run away or abandoned Him in some way that you have continued to justify, ignore or pretend were otherwise? Will you allow this to destroy you or will you confess and release this burden before His merciful cross?**

III.) **CRUCIFIED HOPE** Mt. 27:35-52; Mk. 15:22-38; Lk. 23:33-46; Jn. 19:17-30

- For the disciples, it was not just their friend, teacher and leader who was crucified, bled out, suffocated and murdered on that cross.
- On an even deeper level, it was their very HOPE! Hope in freedom from oppression, escape and redemption from sin, a life on earth truly lived out by and according to the Spirit of God, righteousness as a living expression and not just a word, ultimate victory over sin, death, and suffering, a joy and peace that surpasses understanding, and hope for the world to be re-made in perfection for all eternity under the perfect, sovereign, unbreakable rule of God Almighty!
- Not understanding the real reason, necessity and directing Hand behind Christ's sacrifice they lost all hope. Each one of them quickly returned to their old lives before they met Jesus, living simply to eat, sleep, defecate, & repeat until death.
- **How many of us, even today, are prone to the same type of reaction?** Something happens (or doesn't happen) outside of our expectations for God and we begin to doubt His purpose, His sovereignty, His goodness, perhaps even His very existence. We become despondent and

impatient. We don't wait to see how His plan may yet unfold. We simply turn our backs, give up, walk away, and go back to living as if we never followed Him in the first place. **Oh, what foolishness we weave, what lack of faith and respect we show Him, what injustice we do and bring upon ourselves!**

IV.) RESTORED HOPE Mt. 28:1-7; Lk. 24:1-53; Jn. 20; 21:1-19

- If we let it, our “Fridays” will destroy us. IF, however, we hold on and make it to “Sunday,” then all we thought lost will be restored and added upon beyond our greatest imagination!
- **John 20:1-10**
- His Plan and blessing may prove to be so unexpected and so great that we struggle to recognize or celebrate it for what it truly is!
- **John 20:11-18**
- Some see, believe and embrace right away. Others, need more time and a more personal encounter.
- **John 20:19-31**
- With love and repentance, even the greatest hypocrite will be restored to a beautiful, saving, eternal relationship with Jesus Christ and given a role of great significance in His Kingdom.
- **John 21:15-19**

How will YOU respond this Resurrection Season? What will YOUR passion be?

VIDEO: “NO DOUBT”

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=bNw4idhyLL0&feature=Playlist&p=469A1CB80ED89AE3&index=14>