

Maundy Thursday

April 9, 2020



Welcome

Welcome to this evening's Maundy Thursday meditation. You might light a candle and dim the lights in an act of recreating Tenebrae in your home. Tenebrae, in Latin, means shadows and it was in the shadows of the evening that Jesus sat a table with his disciples, was betrayed, arrested, and taken away to be crucified.

May the bread of heaven beckon us forward into the night and prepare us to receive goodness and grace.



Click [LINK](#) to listen

'If that a Sinner's Sighs', by John Dowland
Zoe Vandermeer, soprano and baroque triple harp



Prayer of Confession

**If that a sinner's sighs be Angel's food,
Or that repentant tears be Angel's wine,
Accept, O Lord, in this most pensive mood,
These hearty sighs and doleful plaints of mine,
That went with Peter forth most sinfully:
But not as Peter did, weep, weep bitterly.**

Scripture

John 13: 1-20, 33-35

Jesus Washes His Disciples Feet
Jesus Predicts His Betrayal

<https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=John+13%3A1-20%2C+33-35&version=NIV>

John 18

Jesus Arrested
Peter's First Denial
The High Priest Questions Jesus
Peter's Second and Third Denial
Jesus Before Pilate

<https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=John+18&version=NIV>

1 Corinthians 11: 23-26

<https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=1+corinthians+11%3A+23-26&version=NIV>

Meditation

This night is a night of great transition. For the disciples the milieu in Jerusalem shifts from a Passover celebration to the seriousness of an impending doom where Jesus hands himself over to the authorities who put him on trial, mock him and carry out his crucifixion.

This is a night of darkness. Shadows elongate and reveal a dirt pathway over ancient stones that lead to the upper room where Jesus gathered at table for what was to be his last meal with his disciples. They carefully climb the stairs, one or two stumble for the oil lamps had not yet been lit. Across in the valley, the donkey's have stopped their grazing and are still; their eyes getting closer to sleep with each lengthening blink. In the garden at Gethsemane only the full Paschal moon filters through the branches of the olive trees. Otherwise it was dark.

This is a night of great confusion. Jesus seems to know what lies ahead but no one else does. The betrayal, the denial, the final supper in which he shares are yet to come, but none of the disciples seem to know or understand the magnitude of the hour. They are confused; how could any of them be disloyal to their Lord or renounce their relationship to him? Only God and Jesus know that his hour has come. This moment, this time, this place was the zenith of the meaning of his life.

Meditation

This is a night about Christ, what he has done for us, and what he has yet to accomplish. He comes to us in a lowly manger and then ministers to us through the leper, the blind man, and the prostitute. He mounts a humble donkey and rides closer to his death. He hands us a towel so that we might be cleansed. He hands us some bread and wine in order for us to be refreshed. He gives to us his life, freely and willingly. How will you receive him?

This night is a night of ominous silence. For in this hush is every person's story. Your story, my story and the story of Jesus' miraculous love. It is in the silence and between the lines that resides the acts of human misery and the reality of our lives, the questioning, the doubt, the fear. In this silence we wrestle between good intentions and indifference, our yesterdays and today's. Yet, this quiet begets the fullest potential of who we can be and reveals to us the power of God's love and forgiveness.

On this night, the night in which Jesus was betrayed he gives yet again, a new commandment, to love. Simply love. Deeply love. Honestly love just as he loves us. Unselfishly, with generous intent, and forever. It is the very least that we can do for our Lord.

Amen. Let it be so.

Prayer



Spirit of Christ, be with us now. Consecrate us in truth and lead us through this life. The shadows grow darker and encroach upon our light so guide our steps when we can no longer see, send us your light and spirit to sustain our living and prepare us fully to enter into the passion of Christ. Nothing can separate us from the love of God, may it be so.

Go gently into this night.