

You Will Find Everything Just the Way that He Said

Mark 14:12-26

Holy Thursday, April 2, 2015

Immanuel Lutheran Church, Broadlands

When Passover was celebrated it was unusual for men to do housework. It was unusual for men to do housework anyway in the ancient world. The ancient family did not have time for a man to do housework. He had to be in the field working or about his vocation or the household would starve. But even at Passover when the occasion was special it was rare that a man did housework. He certainly did not take a water jar out to the well to draw water, especially not in the city and especially if he was not a shepherd.

That means that the disciples were probably surprised when their Lord told them to go and find a man carrying a water jar. It also means that the disciples would be sure to find the right person. After all if the Lord had told them to have found a woman carrying a water jar on the day of Passover they might have never figured out which woman He meant. But since He told them to find the one man carrying a water jar on the Passover, they would be sure to know which one He meant.

This does, however, make the Lord's prediction unlikely. The disciples might be tempted to tell the Lord, "Yeah, right, like that's going to happen." But even though it is unlikely that they would find a man carrying a water jar, they found one anyway. They found everything just the way that Jesus had said it would be.

It should not have really surprised the disciples. Maybe that is why they do not express any surprise in the account. After all it was only a few days ago that Jesus told them to go into the village ahead of them and find a colt tied. He told them to untie it and bring it to Him. He also instructed them that if anyone asks you, "Why are doing this?" tell them, "The Lord has need of it."

On that occasion the disciples went into the village and found everything just the way that Jesus had said. Sure as Jesus said it someone asked them, "What are you doing untying that colt?" They gave the Lord's answer and that answer was satisfactory to the people standing there. All they had to say was, "The Lord has need of it," and they let the colt go. I should try that some time in our congregation's parking lot and see if any of you would let me have your car if I simply told you, "The Lord has need of it." But the disciples were doing what the Lord had told them to do and they found things just as the Lord had told them it would be.

The disciples are looking for a place to eat the Passover. Jesus is giving them the instructions to find the place where they will eat the Passover. Find the man carrying the water jar and follow him to wherever he may enter.

Now people you need to understand how Passover went down in Jerusalem to see the miracle in this. God had commanded in the Old Testament that if a member of the Israelite community did not celebrate Passover that person would be cut off from his people. The only people who were excepted from this rule were those people who were defiled by reason of touching a dead body and those people who were away on a journey. Other than that every Israelite was expected by God Himself to go up to Jerusalem to celebrate the Passover. That means that Jerusalem was packed when Passover was celebrated. Every able bodied Jew from everywhere in the world came to Jerusalem at this time to celebrate Passover. Every lodging place was full. And just like people in Indianapolis rent out their rooms and their driveways to people who go to the big race people in Jerusalem offered their rooms and their

homes to their relatives and to strangers who were in Jerusalem to celebrate the Passover. Some of the ancients even report that the villages surrounding Jerusalem were packed with campers and other pilgrims to celebrate the Passover. If they could not stay in the Holy City itself, they would stay as closely as they could in order to celebrate Passover.

So here is a city swarming with people, pilgrims from all over the world. The city is packed and Jesus sends His disciples to follow a guy home with a water jar and the householder where he enters will show them a large upper room furnished and ready. Really?!

But the disciples do what Jesus tells them to do and they find everything the way that Jesus has said.

When the evening comes Jesus makes a startling revelation. He tells His Twelve apostles that one of them was going to hand Him over to the authorities to be arrested. One of them would betray Him.

This is not the general population of disciples that Jesus is talking about. He is talking about one of the Twelve. He is talking about His closest followers. He is talking about a group of people that He Himself chose to bear His message to the lost sheep of Israel. He is talking about those people who are about to serve as His designated witnesses to His resurrection. He is talking about those people who are the closest and most loyal to Him. He is talking about those people who have already gone around casting out demons and healing the sick and telling people that the Kingdom of God was near. This is the most unlikely group of people from which a betrayer would come.

The disciples themselves are shocked. They stand around ask, "Is it I, Lord?" None of them can feature one of the others betraying Him. The only thing they could wonder is whether or not it would be one of them.

Jesus confirms that it is someone who is eating the Passover sacrifice with Him. One who shares table fellowship with Him from a table that Jesus Himself provided them by miraculous means is going to betray Him.

And even though it seems unlikely that any of these Twelve who had risked so much to follow Him, whom He Himself personally called, would betray Him, we know the end of the account. Later that night all of the Twelve will find everything just the way that Jesus had said it would be.

Everything is just the way that Jesus says that it will be.

If Jesus says there is a colt, there is a colt. If He says to say such and such to get the colt, just say such and such and get the colt. If Jesus says there is a man carrying a water jar, there is a man carrying a water jar. Don't ask Him how this can be. You will find everything just the way that Jesus tells you that it is. If Jesus says that the householder will show you a large upper room, the householder will show you a large upper room. If Jesus says that one of the Twelve will betray Him, the one of the Twelve will betray Him. You will find everything the way that Jesus says that it will be.

The clincher to all of this is our Lord's repeated prediction that He will be handed over to wicked men, they will kill Him, and on the third day, He will rise. The disciples had the most problem with this statement from our Lord. They did not know what He meant by rising from the dead. And even we who have the whole account of the Lord have trouble with resurrections from the dead preferring to be content with spirits floating in paradise. But Jesus did say that He would be betrayed into the hands of evil men. Jesus did say that they would kill Him and Jesus did say that on the third day He would rise. And you know the end of the account. You have found everything just the way that Jesus said it would be.

Therefore when Jesus bids you to eat the bread and says that it is His body, you will come forward and you will find everything to be just the way that Jesus says it will be. When Jesus bids you to come forward and drink the wine and He says that it is His blood which was poured out for you, when you come forward you will find everything just the way that Jesus said it would be. When Jesus says that this blood is poured out for your forgiveness, when you drink it you will find everything to be just the way that Jesus said it would be.

And what about the Passover?

Jesus wants to eat the Passover, but hardly anything is said about the meal itself. Passover is an elaborate meal. It is not simply a time when the Jews sat down and ate meat along with bitter herbs and reenacted their flight from Egypt. By the time of our Lord there was an entire liturgy associated with the Passover. There was a Haggadah that the Jews followed when they ate the Passover. If they did things back then the way that Jews do things now a days there are two cups of wine to be drunk before the meal. There are readings from the psalms and from the book of Ruth to be read. There are readings from the Exodus to be recounted and relived. The bitter herbs are eaten in a ritual fashion to reenact their tears and hard labor in Egypt. They hide a piece of unleavened bread in the room and after the meal the children go and find it. They open the door after the meal to look for the coming of Elijah the prophet and many prayers are said. This is not a spring cookout marking Memorial Day. This is a Divine Service complete with liturgy and meal.

His disciples make a small fuss about where they would eat the Passover. It is probably something that they thought that the Lord had forgotten about. It is with some intensity that they ask Him, "Where do you want us to prepare in order that You may eat the Passover?" Jesus gives elaborate instructions on how to find the place.

And yet for all this talk about the Passover and for this focus on its necessity, Mark does not bother to record much of the Passover meal itself. The only thing he tells us about when it comes to the meal is the Lord's body and His blood. That is the meal that He describes. What Mark is telling you by leaving out the account of the seder that the disciples followed and by putting a new seder in its place is that Jesus is now the Lamb of God. What John's Gospel records explicitly, Mark's Gospel only implies. The disciples want to know where they and Jesus can eat the Passover. They eat the Passover all right and it is Jesus Himself. He is the Lamb of God who has redeemed them out of bondage to sin and death. He is the Lamb of God roasted in the fire of God's wrath. He is the Lamb of God whose bones are not broken. He is the Passover who is sacrificed for you. All you need do is eat Him and the Passover is kept.

Some of you have shown concern that the Passover is an everlasting statute and you have wondered why we don't keep the Passover. The only reason that you wonder that is because you do not fully understand who your Lord is. He is the Passover Lamb. He sacrificed Himself. Now all you need to do in order to keep His covenant is eat Him. And when you eat Him, you have kept Passover, not only on this night of Passover, but every time you eat and drink of His body and blood.

Jesus is the Passover Lamb. And when you come up here you will find it to be so. Jesus was right about the most important aspect of His own life. He was right about His death and resurrection. And if He is right about something as wondrous as His resurrection, He is right about everything else as well. You come forward this evening. You just come forward. And you will find everything to be just the way Jesus said it would be.

In the Name of Jesus. Amen.