

THIS WEEK'S MESSAGE

OCTOBER 26TH, 2025 // GOSPEL OF MARK

COMMUNION (MARK 14:22-26) A NEW MEANING

As Jesus and the disciples celebrate Passover together, He gives new meaning to it. The bread Jesus blessed is broken and given to the disciples, with Jesus saying, "This is my body." The wine Jesus blessed is given to the disciples, with Jesus saying, "This is my blood of the covenant, which is poured out for many." He is memorializing His death for them.

- Jesus has given them, and us, a way to remember all He accomplished for us on the cross. His body was beaten for us. His blood was shed for us. He was counted a sinner for us. No longer do we need to bring a sacrifice to the temple; Jesus is our sacrifice.
- **The new covenant promised in Jeremiah 31 is made possible by the death of Jesus.**

THE THREE MAIN VIEWS OF COMMUNION

- **Transubstantiation:** Catholic view that the elements must be elevated by the priest and then change into the body and blood of Jesus in substance but not physical appearance.
- **Consubstantiation:** Lutheran view that Jesus is present but the elements don't change.
- **Memorial/Spiritual Presence:** Communion is symbolic but holy because the Spirit is present.

THE EUCHARIST

Many call Communion the *Eucharist*, which translates to *thank you* in Greek. Whatever we call it, **Communion is a sacred, intimate time to reflect on what Christ has done.**

- At ECC, we take Communion every service, not to be legalistic but to make sure our gatherings always center on Jesus and His finished work on the cross.

NOT THE END

Though Jesus' death is imminent, it won't be the end. Jesus knew He would rise on the third day, ascend to His throne, and return to consummate His eternal Kingdom.

- **Are we daily anticipating the Lord's return and the new Kingdom we will live in? We should be joyfully expectant.**

ALWAYS PRAISE AND WORSHIP HIM

Traditionally, the Passover feast ended with the singing of the Hallel (praise) Psalms, 113-118. These psalms magnify the glory of God, praising Him for who He is and what He does.

- That they ended with hymns of praise reminds us that **even in the most tense and difficult of times, God is worthy of our worship.**

PRIDE (MARK 14:27-31) LEFT ALONE

As they go to the Mount of Olives, Jesus tells them they will all fall away from Him. Jesus quotes Zechariah 13:7, which prophesies that when the shepherd is struck, the sheep will scatter. Jesus will be left alone soon.

- Following Jesus isn't only about the good times but also following Him when things are hard. **How faithful are we under pressure?**

GOD AT WORK

Zechariah quotes God as the One who says, "I will strike the shepherd." The wrath of God against sin will be poured out on God the Son. Only God can satisfy the wrath of God. But Jesus' death isn't the end as He affirms His resurrection and that they will see Him again.

- **The gospel is the good news of all God has done to bring salvation to us.**

NOT AS STRONG AS WE THINK

Once again, Peter speaks when he should remain silent. There's a false bravado to Peter's claim. There's also a dig at his friends. Just a few hours before, Peter was asking if he might betray Jesus; now he's bold and brave.

- **We should take opportunities to examine ourselves to see what's really in our hearts. We may not like what we find.**

JESUS SEES THE HEART

Jesus knew what was in Peter's heart. He told Peter that he would deny the Lord three times before the rooster crowed two times that morning. To protect his boast, Peter says even death wouldn't affect his loyalty to Jesus. Not to be outdone, the others all say the same thing.

- **We may want to do the right thing, but we may too easily give in to our flesh.**

COMMITMENT (MARK 14:32-42) GETHSEMANE

Gethsemane ("olive press") was a garden on the Mount of Olives where Jesus would often go with His disciples (John 18:2). He brought them there to specifically pray. Leaving the other eight behind, Jesus took Peter, James, and John deeper into the garden.

- **In times of trials and testing, having friends pray with and for us is a great gift.**

THE STRUGGLE IS REAL

Jesus revealed His emotions in the moment to the three. He was "deeply distressed and troubled" and "grieved to the point of death." He asked them to stay awake and pray for Him.

- God the Son felt the full weight of what was about to happen as He would bear the wrath of God for the sins of the world. **He took this burden to His Father in prayer.**

REALLY HUMAN

In this portrait, Mark shows us an intimate look at the humanity of Jesus. He fell to the ground and began to pray, asking His Father for any other way to accomplish the salvation of sinners. "The hour" referred to His crucifixion, and Jesus asked if it could pass from Him.

- **It's okay to ask God to remove burdens and difficulties we may bear.**

THE CUP

Jesus knew all things were possible with God. "The cup" is a reference to God's wrath. For the one and only time, God the Father and God the Son would be separated as the Father poured out His wrath for sin on Jesus. While Jesus sought another way for salvation to be accomplished, He fully trusted God's will.

- **Do we trust God's will for us?**

PRAYER MAKES A DIFFERENCE

We see Jesus' love for His disciples in His care for them. He checks on the three and finds them sleeping. Jesus calls out Peter because of Peter's bragging and asks why he couldn't stay awake for an hour. He then tells Peter to stay awake and pray so he won't enter into temptation.

- **Would Peter have denied Jesus if he had been praying instead of sleeping?**

THE FLESH IS WEAK

We see once again that we can desire to do the right thing, but in our humanity, we find our own flesh working against us. That's not an excuse but a call to great prayer and dependence on God.

- **We have to pray, read the Bible, obey it, be in community, and depend on the Holy Spirit if we are to put to death our flesh.**

WEAKNESS AND STRENGTH

Three times Peter, James, and John fell asleep with nothing to say when Jesus found them. Three times Jesus went to the Father and received the same answer: the cross was the only way. Jesus' resolve to obey is on display.

- Our lives are full of starts and stops and victories and defeats. **In Jesus, we find grace and strength to carry on despite our failures.**

MEETING THE CHALLENGE HEAD ON

Secure in the Father's will and strength, Jesus awakens the disciples to meet Judas and the mob head on. Like so many in the Bible, God's presence gives courage in the conflicts and challenges Christians face. Jesus will not run away. He will face His future with courage.

- **If God is for us, who can be against us (Romans 8:31)? He is with us in the storm.**

THE PRIVILEGE OF COMMUNING WITH GOD

- God is present in this place through the Holy Spirit in the name of Jesus. **While we are casual in so many ways, what we do here is of great importance.**
- Communion is not an "add-on" to our services; it's the point. We worship, we dive into the Word, and we remember why we are here: because of all Jesus has done for us.

THE TROUBLES OF THIS WORLD

- Jesus never shies away from trouble. He trusts His Father's presence, plan, and purpose.
- Being in **community** gives us people we can **depend on to walk with us and pray for us.**
- Worship takes our eyes off ourselves and our troubles and puts the focus back where it belongs: **on Jesus, our Lord and Savior.**

DEALING WITH OUR FLESH

- The flesh—the remaining sin we put to death—wars against our spirit as we seek to live pleasing to Jesus.
- **Our flesh is never an excuse for our sin;** it's a reminder Jesus isn't finished with us.
- Until we are with Jesus, we must fight to remain holy. **But God graciously gives us everything we need to overcome sin.**

WE NEED JESUS

- The gospel is the good news of all God has done to forgive us of our sin and restore our relationship with Him.
- The cross shows us the price Jesus paid.
- Jesus experienced hell so we don't have to.
- **Either we will trust that Jesus' death for us paid the penalty for our sins, or we will pay that penalty ourselves. Choose Jesus!**