

WORSHIP FOR THE LORD'S DAY
MAUNDY THURSDAY
APRIL 9, 2020

CALL TO CONFESSION

Pastor Karen Williams

Lord Jesus Christ, as you wash the feet of your disciples make us ready to follow you, loving and serving one another in your name. Jesus said, one who has bathed does not need to wash. In our baptism, we have been bathed by the grace of God. Trusting in the steadfast love of Jesus Christ, who has delivered us from sin and death, let us confess our sin.

***PRAYER OF CONFESSION**

Lord Jesus Christ, how well you know our hearts,

and still you love us— you have loved us to the end.

We have denied you,

and we have denied our calling to serve one another.

We have betrayed you,

and we have betrayed your commandment to love one another.

Pour out your spirit of grace upon us.

Teach us to love and serve you faithfully and to love and serve one another by the example you have set for us; in your holy name we pray. Amen.

SILENT PRAYER

Good and gracious God, we ask for forgiveness and your mercy. Lord be with us, help us to walk in Jesus' path and to be more like him. Amen.

***DECLARATION OF FORGIVENESS** Pastor Karen Williams

Now the lord Jesus Christ has been glorified, and God has been glorified in him. now the promise is fulfilled, and love's redeeming work is done: in Jesus Christ we are forgiven. Thanks be to God!

RECEIVING THE WORD

PRAYER OF ILLUMINATION

Gracious God feed us with your holy Word and fill us with your holy spirit, so that our lives may proclaim the mystery of faith in Jesus Christ our lord. amen.

OLD TESTAMENT

Exodus 12:1-14

12The Lord said to Moses and Aaron in the land of Egypt: 2This month shall mark for you the beginning of months; it shall be the first month of

the year for you. 3Tell the whole congregation of Israel that on the tenth of this month they are to take a lamb for each family, a lamb for each household. 4If a household is too small for a whole lamb, it shall join its closest neighbor in obtaining one; the lamb shall be divided in proportion to the number of people who eat of it. 5Your lamb shall be without blemish, a year-old male; you may take it from the sheep or from the goats. 6You shall keep it until the fourteenth day of this month; then the whole assembled congregation of Israel shall slaughter it at twilight. 7They shall take some of the blood and put it on the two doorposts and the lintel of the houses in which they eat it. 8They shall eat the lamb that same night; they shall eat it roasted over the fire with unleavened bread and bitter herbs. 9Do not eat any of it raw or boiled in water, but roasted over the fire, with its head, legs, and inner organs. 10You shall let none of it remain until the morning; anything that remains until the morning you shall burn. 11This is how you shall eat it: your loins girded, your sandals on your feet, and your staff in your hand; and you shall eat it hurriedly. It is the passover of the Lord. 12For I will pass through the land of Egypt that night, and I will strike down every firstborn in the land of Egypt, both human beings and animals; on all the gods of Egypt I will execute judgments: I am the Lord. 13The blood shall be a sign for you on the houses where you live: when I see the blood, I will pass over you, and no plague shall destroy you when I strike the land of Egypt. 14This day shall be a day of remembrance for you. You shall celebrate it as a festival to the Lord; throughout your generations you shall observe it as a perpetual ordinance.

GOSPEL LESSON

John 13:1-7, 31b-35

13Now before the festival of the Passover, Jesus knew that his hour had come to depart from this world and go to the Father. Having loved his own who were in the world, he loved them to the end. 2The devil had already put it into the heart of Judas son of Simon Iscariot to betray him. And during supper 3Jesus, knowing that the Father had given all things into his hands, and that he had come from God and was going to God, 4got up from the table, took off his outer robe, and tied a towel around himself. 5Then he poured water into a basin and began to wash the disciples' feet and to wipe them with the towel that was tied around him.

6He came to Simon Peter, who said to him, “Lord, are you going to wash my feet?” 7Jesus answered, “You do not know now what I am doing, but later you will understand.” 8Peter said to him, “You will never wash my feet.” Jesus answered, “Unless I wash you, you have no share with me.” 9Simon Peter said to him, “Lord, not my feet only but also my hands and my head!” 10Jesus said to him, “One who has bathed does not need to wash, except for the feet, but is entirely clean. And you are clean, though not all of you.” 11For he knew who was to betray him; for this reason he said, “Not all of you are clean.” 12After he had washed their feet, had put on his robe, and had returned to the table, he said to them, “Do you know what I have done to you? 13You call me Teacher and Lord—and you are right, for that is what I am. 14So if I, your Lord and Teacher, have washed your feet, you also ought to wash one another’s feet. 15For I have set you an example, that you also should do as I have done to you. 16Very truly, I tell you, servants are not greater than their master, nor are messengers greater than the one who sent them. 17If you know these things, you are blessed if you do them.

31When he had gone out, Jesus said, “Now the Son of Man has been glorified, and God has been glorified in him. 32If God has been glorified in him, God will also glorify him in himself and will glorify him at once. 33Little children, I am with you only a little longer. You will look for me; and as I said to the Jews so now I say to you, ‘Where I am going, you cannot come.’ 34I give you a new commandment, that you love one another. Just as I have loved you, you also should love one another. 35By this everyone will know that you are my disciples, if you have love for one another.”

(L)This is the Word of the Lord.

(P)Thanks be to God.

SERMON

Pastor Karen Williams

“Did Jesus Really Sweat Blood”

What really happened the night before Jesus’ crucifixion?

By Lesli White

When people mention Jesus sweating blood in the Bible, they are referencing a passage in Luke. The passage says, “And being in an

agony He prayed more earnestly; and His sweat became like great drops of blood falling down to the ground” (Luke 22:44). At quick glance, it may appear as if Jesus worried. However, a deeper dive into the text reveals that He was not controlled by fear. The sorrow, and distress He experienced were natural human responses.

It’s known as Hematidrosis. It’s actually turned up throughout history and not just with Jesus. In addition to Jesus sweating blood before His crucifixion, Leonardo da Vinci wrote about a soldier who had bloody sweat after battle. Hematidrosis, or hematohidrosis, is a very rare medical condition that causes you to ooze or sweat blood from your skin when you’re not cut or injured, according to WebMD. There are actually only a handful of cases confirmed in medical studies in the 20th century. People who have it generally sweat blood from their skin. It tends to occur around the face, and it can cause the skin around the bloody area to swell temporarily. Given the condition is so rare, doctors aren’t quite clear what triggers it. It has been theorized that it is caused by our body’s “fight or flight” response.

There are those who say it is caused by extreme distress or fear, such as facing death can trigger it. Some people believe that Jesus was so worried the night before His persecution that it triggered this response, but we know that Jesus wasn’t controlled by fear. He put His full trust in God, even during a point where most people would turn to a flight response. When we worry, doubt or experience anxiety, we are allowing the acts of fear to control our life and our decisions instead of placing our trust in God. Jesus never stopped trusting in God. Jesus would have sinned if He had allowed His feelings to lead to worry and not follow through with His Father’s plan. Yet, this wasn’t the case.

Jesus was without worry. He knew what He was going to face on the cross and took it on directly. Jesus said His prayers that night, turning to God saying, “not as I will, but as You will.” He did not worry or doubt God even when He was in anguish. If you’re anxious or worried, there several Bible verses you can turn to that can help you work through that fear.

First Peter 5:7 reminds us of God’s presence in times of anxiety and worry. It says, “Cast all your anxieties on Him, because He cares for

you.” Matthew 6:25 reassures us that we have nothing to be anxious about when we have God, “Therefore I tell you, do not be anxious about your life, what you will eat or drink, not about your body, what you will put on.” Philippians 4:6 reminds us of the power of prayer when dealing with worry, “Do not be anxious about anything, but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving, let your requests be known to God.”

Joshua 1:9 says, “Have I not commanded you? Be strong and courageous. Do not be frightened, and do not be dismayed, for the Lord your God is with you wherever you go.” There are three times in Joshua 1 that God tells Joshua to be strong and to be courageous because he’ll need to be ready for what’s coming later. God also commands that he not be frightened or dismayed and for one reason only; “the Lord your God is with you wherever you go.” If you are going into a particularly unsettling situation and your soul is anxious, have comfort in the fact that God is with you wherever you go.

Isaiah 41:10 says, “So do not fear, for I am with you; do not be dismayed, for I am your God. I will strengthen you and help you; I will uphold you with My righteous right hand.” Sometimes, we can read certain verses from Scripture a hundred times and fail to take them to heart the way the Lord wants us to. Other times, we can linger on a verse or two, and let them minister life, healing and comfort to us. Isaiah 41:10 is so rich with the promises of God that it warrants special attention from us. Ultimately, the Lord wants to impart to us through this verse that we shouldn’t be afraid. “Fear not [there is nothing to fear].” One reason why God warns us against fear is that it can short-circuit the answered prayers and blessings that He has in store for us. When you are anxious, hold onto the promise that God is upholding you in His righteous hand.

Psalms 46:1 reminds us that, “God is our refuge and strength, an ever-present help in trouble.” By definition, a refuge is a safe place. When the Bible describes God as our refuge, it is saying that God is our safe place when we need protection from something. Knowing God is our refuge enables us to trust Him more freely. We need not fear situations or people who threaten our well-being, whether in a physical

or spiritual sense. There is no situation we will ever face that is out of God's control, so the best place to be when your soul is anxious, always, is right with Him.

When we worry, we get so lost in what might happen that we lose sight of our own peace and happiness. If you are facing worry today, remember how Jesus handled moments where worry and fear could have ensued. When we truly trust the Father like Jesus did the night before His crucifixion, there is nothing we can't get through.

After reading this, I wanted to share with you. I thought it was appropriate for this Maundy Thursday.

RESPONDING TO THE WORD

O Lord, we love you, for you have heard our cries.

Therefore, we will call on you as long as we live.

As you delivered our ancestors from slavery and led them to a land of promise and plenty,

liberate all who are captive or oppressed and bring them to a place of abundant life.

As you saved your people from death by the blood of the Passover lamb,
redeem us from sin and death through Jesus Christ, our Passover.

As Jesus Christ our savior and lord stooped down to wash his disciples' feet,

teach us to love and serve one another with Christlike compassion and humility.

As Christ the lord has handed on to us this feast of grace, his body and blood,

help us to share with all who hunger the gifts we have received from you.

O Lord, we love you, for you have heard our cries.

Therefore, we will call on you as long as we live; through Jesus Christ our savior. Amen.

CLOSING THOUGHTS

My Brothers and Sisters in Christ, Stay Safe, Stay Strong, Stay Healthy. Remember we have Christ to help us all through this time of uncertainty.

God's blessings are upon you, the Spirit gives you hope. Love one another, and the world shall know that we belong to Christ, the Lord of Love.

In Christ's Name,

Pastor Karen