

... “Have you come out to arrest Me with swords and clubs, as if I were a robber? Day after day I was sitting in the temple courts teaching, and you did not arrest Me. But all this has happened, so that the writings of the prophets would be fulfilled.” Then all the disciples deserted Him and fled. The company of soldiers, the commander, and the Jewish officers arrested Jesus and bound Him. First they led Him to Annas, because he was father-in-law to Caiaphas, who was high priest that year. Now it was Caiaphas who had advised the Jews, “It is better that One Man should die for the people.”

Simon Peter and another disciple kept following Jesus. That disciple was known to the high priest, so he went into the high priest’s courtyard with Jesus. But Peter stood outside by the door. So the other disciple, the one known to the high priest, went out and talked to the girl watching the door and brought Peter in. The servants and officers were standing around a fire of coals they had made because it was cold. While they warmed themselves, Peter entered and sat down with the guards to see how it would turn out. While Peter was in the courtyard below, one of the servant girls of the high priest came. When she saw Peter warming himself, she looked directly at him and said, “You were also with Jesus the Galilean.” But he denied it in front of everyone, saying, “I do not know what you are talking about. Woman, I do not know Him.” When Peter went out to the entry way, someone else saw him and said to those who were there, “This is one of them. This fellow was with Jesus of Nazareth.” Again Peter denied it with an oath and said, “I do not know the Man.” After a little while those who stood by came and said to Peter, “Surely you are also one of them, because even your accent gives you away. You are a Galilean!” Then he began to curse and to swear, “I do not know this Man you are talking about! I do not know the Man!” At that very moment, while he was still speaking, the rooster crowed. The Lord turned and looked at Peter. Then Peter remembered the Lord’s Word, how He had said to him, “Before the rooster crows today you will deny Me three times.” And he went outside, broke down and wept bitterly.

The high priest questioned Jesus about His disciples and His teaching. Jesus answered him, “I have spoken openly to the world. I always taught in a synagogue or at the temple, where all of the Jews gather. I said nothing in secret. Why question Me? Ask those who heard what I told them. Look, they know what I said.” When He said this, one of the officers standing there struck Jesus in the face. “Is that how You answer the high priest?” he demanded. “If I said something wrong,” Jesus answered, “testify about what was wrong. But if I said what is right, why do you hit Me?” The chief priests and the whole Sanhedrin were looking for false testimony against Jesus so that they could put Him to death. They found none, even though many false witnesses came forward. Finally two came forward and said, “This fellow said, ‘I am able to destroy the temple of God, and to rebuild it in three days.’” Yet even on this point, their testimony did not agree. The high priest stood up and said to Him, “Have you no answer? What is this that these men are testifying against you?” But Jesus remained silent. Then the high priest said to Him, “I place you under oath by the living God: tell us if you are the Christ, the Son of God!”

Jesus said to him, “It is as you have said. But I tell you, soon you will see the Son of Man sitting at the Right Hand of power and coming on the clouds of Heaven.” Then the high priest tore his robes and said, “He has spoken blasphemy! Why do we need any more witnesses? See, you have just heard the blasphemy! What do you think?” They answered, “He is deserving of death!” Then some began to spit on Him. They covered His face, struck Him with their fists, and said, “Prophecy to us, Christ! Who hit You?” The guards also took Him and beat Him. And they went on saying many other blasphemous things against Him.

*(Here ends the 3<sup>rd</sup> Passion History Reading)*

○ † **I. The Service of Vespers** ELH p.120 † ○

**WELCOME: 02/24/16 4:30pm LENT-2 MIDWEEK INVOCATION** Please *rise*.

*P: In the Name of the Father, and of the Son ✠, and of the Holy Spirit,*

**C: Amen.**

**THE CONFESSION OF SINS** *P: Dearly beloved! We have come together in the presence of God our heavenly Father, to render thanks for the great benefits that we have received at His hand, to set forth His most worthy praise, to hear His holy Word, and to ask for ourselves and on behalf of others, those things that are necessary for our life and salvation. O come, let us worship Him! Let us kneel and bow down before Him. Let us confess our sins with penitent hearts, and obtain forgiveness by His infinite grace and mercy.*

**C: Almighty and most merciful Father, we have strayed from Your ways like lost sheep. We have followed the devices and desires of our hearts. We have offended against Your holy Law. We have done those things which we should not have done, and we have not done those things which we should have done. Have mercy on us, O Lord! Spare us and restore us, according to the promises You have declared to us in Jesus Christ, our Lord. For His sake grant that we may live a godly, righteous and sober life, to the glory of Your holy Name.**

**THE ABSOLUTION**

*P: The almighty and merciful Lord has granted us pardon and forgiveness of all our sins, grace for true repentance and amendment of life, and the comfort of the Holy Spirit. Amen.*

**OPENING HYMN: “In the Cross of Christ I Glory” ELH #523 4 verses**

1. **In the Cross of Christ I glory, - Towering o'er the wrecks of time.  
All the light of sacred story - Gathers round its head sublime.**
2. **When the woes of life o'ertake me, - Hopes deceive, and fears annoy,  
Never shall the Cross forsake me; - Lo, it glows with peace and joy.**
3. **When the sun of bliss is beaming - Light and love upon my way,  
From the Cross the radiance streaming - Adds more luster to the day.**
4. **Bane and blessing, pain and pleasure, - By the Cross are sanctified;  
PEACE IS THERE THAT KNOWS NO MEASURE, JOYS THAT THROUGH ALL TIME ABIDE.**



**The VERSICLES** ELH, p.120

*P: ♪ O Lord, open my lips. C: ♪ And my mouth will show forth Your praise.*

*P: ♪ Make haste, O God, to deliver me. C: ♪ Make haste to help me, O Lord.*

**The GLORIA PATRI** **C: ♪ Glory be to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Ghost. - As it was in the beginning; is now, and ever shall be, for-ev-er-more. - A-men.**

📖 Here are the words to **Psalm 130** - Please read along! 📖

*P: Out of the depths I have cried to You, O LORD;*

**C: <sup>2</sup> Lord, hear my voice! Let Your ears be attentive To the voice of my supplications.**

<sup>3</sup> *If You, LORD, should mark iniquities, O Lord, who could stand?*

**<sup>4</sup> But there is forgiveness with You, That You may be feared.**

<sup>5</sup> *I wait for the LORD, my soul waits, And in His Word I do hope.*

**<sup>6</sup> My soul waits for the Lord More than those who watch for the morning – Yes, more than those who watch for the morning.**

<sup>7</sup> *O Israel, hope in the LORD; For with the LORD there is mercy, And with Him is abundant Redemption.*

**<sup>8</sup> And He shall redeem Israel From all his iniquities.**

**All: Glory be to the Father and to the Son and to the Holy Ghost, one True God, now and forever. Amen**

**PASSION HISTORY: 3<sup>RD</sup> READING ✕ *Judas Betrayal; Arrest; Peter Denial***

**RESPONSORY P: O Lord, have mercy upon us. C: Thanks be to You, O Lord!**

**SERMON HYMN *Hail, Thou Once-Despised Jesus ELH #270 IN BABILONE***

1. Hail, Thou once despised Jesus! - Hail, Thou Galilean King!  
Thou didst suffer to release us; - Thou didst free salvation bring.  
Hail, Thou universal Savior, - Who hast borne our sin and shame!  
By Thy merits we find favor; - Life is given through Thy Name.

2. Paschal Lamb, by God appointed, - All our sins on Thee were laid;  
By almighty love anointed, - Thou hast full atonement made.  
Every sin may be forgiven - Through the virtue of Thy Blood;  
Opened is the gate of Heaven, - Reconciled are we with God.

3. Jesus, hail! enthroned in glory, - There forever to abide;  
All the heavenly hosts adore Thee, - Seated at Thy Father's side.  
There for sinners Thou art pleading; - There Thou dost our place prepare;  
Ever for us interceding - Till in glory we appear.

4. Worship, honor, pow'r and blessing, - Thou art worthy to receive.  
Loudest praises, without ceasing, - Meet it is for us to give.  
Help, ye bright angelic spirits, - Bring your sweetest, noblest lays;  
**Help to sing of Jesus' merits, - Help to chant Immanuel's praise!**

**SERIES "IRONIES OF THE PASSION" TONIGHT "NOT DURING THE FESTIVAL"**

### The OFFERING

The **VERSICLE** *P: Let my prayers rise before you as incense:*

**C: And the lifting up of my hands-- As the evening sacrifice.**

**NUNC DIMITTIS ("Lord, Let Us Depart in Peace" ...music on page 124)**

**C: 1. Lord, now You let Your servant ... de-part in peace:  
Accord-... -ing to You Word.**

**2. For mine eyes have seen... Your Sal-va-tion;  
Which You have prepared before the face... of all peo-ple. 7**

**3. A-- Light to light- ... -en the Gen-tiles:  
And the glory of Your... peo-ple Isra-el.**

**4. Glory be to the Father ... and to the Son / And to... the Holy Ghost;  
5. As it was in the beginning, is now, and... ever shall be / Forev-er-more, A-men.**

**KYRIE ELEISON (Lord Have Mercy) C: Lord, have mercy upon us.  
Christ, have mercy upon us. - Lord, have mercy upon us.**

**The LORD'S PRAYER C: Our Father, Who art in heaven... A--men.**

**The (Evening) COLLECT (Pastor prays, Congregation Amen) C: A - -men.**

**The BENEDICAMUS P: Let us bless the Lord. C: Thanks be to God.**

**The BENEDICTION P: The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, And the love of God,  
And the communion of the Holy Spirit be with you all. C: A - -men.**

**CLOSING (BENEDICTION) *Jesus Still Lead On ELH #587 SEELENBRÄUTIGAM***

1. Jesus still lead on Till our rest be won; - And although the way be cheerless,  
We will follow calm and fearless; Guide us by Your Hand, To our promised land.

2. If the way be drear, if the foe be near, - Let no faithless fears o'ertake us,  
Let not faith and hope forsake us; - Safely past the foe, To our Home we go.

3. When we seek relief from a long-felt grief When temptations come alluring,  
Make us patient and enduring; Show us that bright shore, Where we weep no more.

4. Jesus, still lead on Till our rest be won; - Heavenly Leader, still direct us,  
Still support, console, protect us; Till we safely stand, In our promised Land.

**Silent Prayer (Candles out.) You may be seated. FELLOWSHIP**

**History of Suffering & Death of our Lord Jesus Christ  
according to Four Evangelists + The Wartburg Project Version© 2014.**

**THIRD READING ✕ Judas Betrayal; Arrest; Peter Denial...**

While Jesus was still speaking, suddenly Judas (one of the twelve) arrived.

With him was a large crowd with lanterns, torches, swords, and clubs, from the chief priests and elders of the people. Judas was leading them. Then Jesus, knowing everything that was going to happen to him, went out and asked them, "Who are you looking for?" "Jesus the Nazarene," they replied. "I am he," Jesus told them. Judas, the one betraying him, was standing with them. Then when Jesus told them, "I am he," they backed away and fell to the ground. Then Jesus asked them again, "Who are you looking for?" "Jesus the Nazarene," they said. "I told you I am he," Jesus replied. "So if you are looking for me, let these men go." This was to fulfill the statement he had spoken, "I lost none of those you gave me." Now the betrayer had given them a sign, "Whoever I kiss is the man. Arrest him." Immediately he went to Jesus and said, "Greetings, Rabbi!" and kissed him. Jesus said to him, "Judas, are you betraying the Son of Man with a kiss?"

Then they advanced, took hold of Jesus and arrested him. When those who were around him saw what was about to happen, they said to him, "Lord, should we strike with the sword?" Then Simon Peter, who had a sword, drew it, struck the high priest's servant and cut off his right ear. The servant's name was Malchus. But Jesus responded, "Stop! No more of this! Put your sword back into its place, because all who take the sword will die by the sword. Do you not realize that I could call on my Father, and at once he would provide me with more than twelve legions of angels? But then how would the Scriptures be fulfilled that say it must happen this way?" Then he touched the servant's ear and healed him. At that same time Jesus said to the crowd, (*continues... 7*)

(LENT.2W) **WEDNESDAY Matthew 26:1-5 “NOT DURING THE FESTIVAL” 02.24.16**

**INTRODUCTION** Timing is everything. That's true in many areas of our lives. Have you ever seen one of those public marriage proposals? You know, at a football game or wherever, the guy proposes in front of everybody, and it's even shown on TV? If you're going to do it that publicly, you'd better wait until you're sure what the answer is going to be. Several years ago, at a Houston Rockets basketball game, a guy got down on one knee on the court at halftime and proposed to his girlfriend. While they were showing it, the TV announcers were joking about how just once they'd like to see the girl **say no - and she did!** She ran off the court and left him kneeling there while the announcer had to blather on about how he was just joking. When and how a man proposes matters. If he does it too soon or in the wrong way, he may ruin a relationship that could have become a marriage. Tonight's example of **irony from the Passion is all about timing**. It can be summed up in one simple statement that the religious leaders of Israel agreed on, a statement of when they wanted to kill Jesus: **TODAY'S THEME: Not during the festival.**

**I. The “festival,” of course, is the Passover.** It was the most important festival of the year, and it was followed by a week-long celebration known as the **Festival of Unleavened Bread**. During the Passover, Jewish pilgrims flooded Jerusalem. We are now just two days before the Passover - Tuesday of Holy Week. The pilgrims were already streaming in. One could feel the holiday excitement in the air. Jesus' most committed enemies agreed: **Not during the festival! It was the one time they *didn't* want to kill Jesus.**

Matthew sets up the irony for us so well that it's almost overstatement to point it out. On that Tuesday, **TWO groups of people were meeting**. 1) On the Mount of Olives, Jesus sat down with his disciples. 2) Whereas, in the palace of Caiaphas, the high priest, the chief priests and the elders of the people were meeting. What were these Jewish leaders doing? Matthew says, *“They schemed to arrest Jesus secretly and kill him.”* **The leaders of the Jewish nation, the men charged with both justice and religious purity, hated Jesus so much that they were plotting to kill Him.** They wanted to do it in some sly, some secret, some treacherous way. They wanted to make sure that they wouldn't be blamed for it. **How's that for irony?**

So they reached consensus on one important issue: **not during the festival**. The Bible doesn't even tell us who said these words, because it doesn't matter. They all recognized the wisdom of this statement. It would be so much easier to deal with Jesus after the Passover was over. The crowds would go home. Jerusalem would once again become a relatively sleepy, provincial capital, and they could do whatever they wanted to Jesus. But, just **not** during the festival. That was the one time they didn't want to kill Jesus.

**What a contrast to what Jesus was doing.** He and his disciples had already had a full day. They had been to the temple, and Jesus had confronted His enemies and won every argument with them. Then He and His disciples had walked out of the city to the Mount of Olives, and there Jesus had taught

them about his return. Then he spoke these crucial words: *“As you know, the Passover is two days away - and the Son of Man will be handed over to be crucified.”* **It didn't matter what the chief priests and the elders were plotting. Jesus' time had come.** In two days, on the very day of the Passover, He would be arrested so that He could be crucified. **At the one time His enemies did not want to do it, they would kill Him.** (What IRONY)

(But, in God's Plan) **There would be nothing secret or sly about it.** He wasn't going to be stabbed in the back by an assassin. He wasn't going to just disappear. **He was going to be crucified. By definition, that was a public act.** First of all, it would have to be done by the Romans, because the Jewish leadership did not have authority to carry out executions. That would require a legal proceeding. Crucifixion involved tying or nailing the Victim to a post and letting Him hang, sometimes for days, until He died. **It took place in a (very) open space.** Guards had to watch over the prisoner until He died. In Jerusalem, it meant that one had to march the prisoner through the city and outside to Calvary, where executions took place.

Nothing about Jesus' death was what the Jewish leaders expected or wanted. **What lesson are we to learn from this irony of Jesus' Passion?** Who was really in charge? The leaders of the Jews were convinced that they had matters under control. Even though the Romans ruled the land, they pretty much had Pontius Pilate wrapped around their collective little finger. They controlled the temple, and through it, the people. They were convinced they could make this happen the way they wanted it to. **God, however, had other ideas. God had chosen the Passover as the day when his Son would be arrested and die, because God had given them the Passover as a prophecy of Christ.** He wanted Jerusalem to be filled to overflowing on the day his Son died, because **God wanted His people to see the fulfillment of all that He had been promising for millenia.**

**Jesus' entire ministry was aimed at this final trip to Jerusalem.** So even though these men agreed, *“Not during the festival,”* it was they who paid Judas to betray Jesus. These very men sent the temple guards to Gethsemane with Judas on the night of the Passover to arrest him. These men gathered false witnesses in the middle of that night, held a kangaroo court, and convicted Jesus of blasphemy. These men brought him to Pilate and demanded that he die. These men convinced the people to ask for the release of Barabbas instead of Jesus when Pilate wanted to let Jesus go. These men even walked back and forth in front of his Cross taunting him.

**These men did all that because God's plan could not be stopped.** God's love demanded that He give Himself to pay for all sins - even for the sins of these men. So when these men least wanted to kill Jesus, God made them fulfill the plan he had conceived of before the world began. And God did all that for us. He saw you and me before He even said, *“Let there be light!”* He controlled everything so that it all happened exactly the way it was supposed to. He even used these men to bring Jesus' mission to completion **so that we would live.** (End of Part 1.)

II. **The Jewish leaders played into God's hands.** Now, obviously, when God decides that He's going to make something happen, it's going to happen. But how we become his tools matters. Do we serve Him out of faith or in spite of our unbelief? What made these men serve God's plan? It was **their own sinful pride**. We see that in the rationale for their decision: **not during the festival! It was the one time that what they feared most would actually happen.**

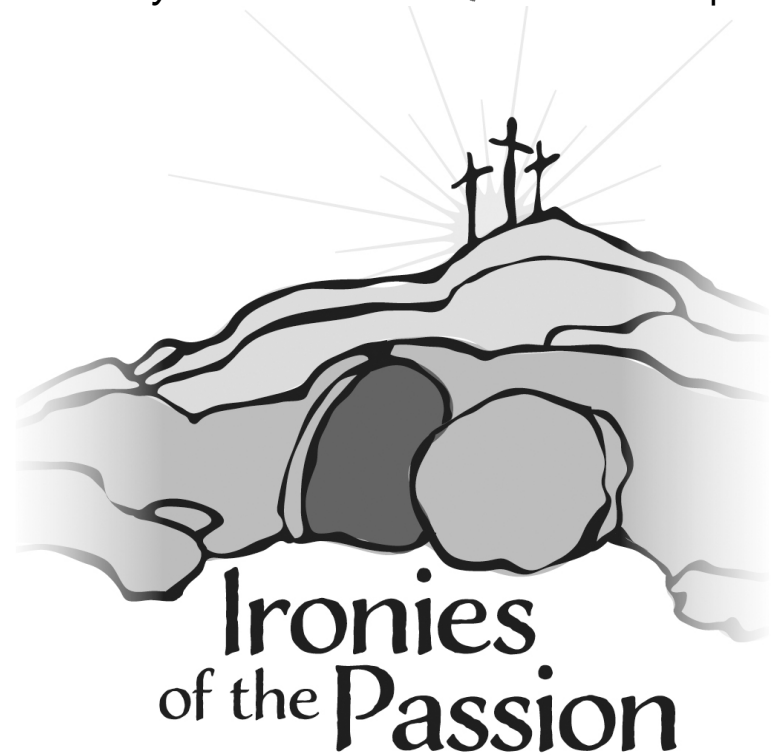
(And,) What did they fear most? Losing their position. That's why they hated Jesus. He was too popular. From the very beginning, they worried that he was undercutting their position. That same fear drove the decision to wait. Because of all those pilgrims who were filling Jerusalem, they said, *"But not during the festival, or **there may be a riot among the people.**"* Riots are destructive. People get hurt, even killed. Buildings get burned down. Property gets looted. **But that's not** what these men were worried about. They ruled Israel because the Romans let them. The Romans figured that, as long as these guys collected taxes and kept the people in line, it was cheaper and easier to let them take care of local matters. But if they couldn't handle the job, the Romans would find someone else to do it. **That was the Jewish leaders' big fear. They liked being in charge.**

**We also have and carry that sinful pride.** God calls us to be humble, to put Him first, to serve Him and our neighbor. God calls us to be pure in heart and mind, as well as in word and action. Sinful pride always finds a reason to rebel against God. Even if we actually succeed in hiding that pride from every other human being, God still sees it. And for that sinful pride in our hearts and lives earns we deserve death and hell. Every single one of us.

**That's why God made sure that His Son died on the very day these men didn't want Him to. Jesus was dying for us.** And it was no accident that He died on a Cross. The Romans had other ways of executing criminals. They reserved Crucifixion for the worst: traitors and insurrectionists. Indeed, there was horrible pain involved. But the Bible nowhere dwells on the pain of the Cross. It dwells **on the shame**. To the Romans, the Cross proclaimed that a **person was the lowest kind of criminal**, unworthy of any kind of honor in death. **To the Jews, the Cross was even worse.** God had said, *"Anyone who is hung on a pole is under God's curse" (Deuteronomy 21:23).* And when God says "curse," he doesn't mean the evil eye or casting spells or anything like that. God's curse is when He damns someone to hell. To the Jews, being hung on the Cross symbolized being abandoned to hell.

**CONCLUSION Timing is everything.** These men wanted to kill Jesus, just **not that week**. And when it didn't go the way they planned, they still celebrated getting rid of him. They probably even counted themselves lucky that there was no riot. Irony is a set of circumstances or an outcome that is contrary to what you might expect. They might have seen irony in the foolishness of their fears, but that's not the real irony here. The real irony is that God used their hatred and opposition to bring our Savior to the Cross at **exactly the moment** He planned so that Jesus could fulfill His mission and **win eternal life for us**. Give thanks for that Passion Irony. ***IJ'N, Amen. SDG***

Our Savior Lutheran Church  Lakeland, FL  ELS  
Lent-Midweeks 2016  *Ironies of the Passion*  
February 10<sup>th</sup> – March 16<sup>th</sup>  2016  4:30 pm



*Services*

Ash Wednesday/Midweek 1	..... This Man Went Home Justified .....	Luke 18:9-14
Midweek 2	..... It Is Better That One Man Die for the People!.....	John 11:45-53
Midweek 3	..... Not During the Feast .....	Matthew 26:1-5
Midweek 4	..... He Had Been Wanting to See Jesus .....	Luke 23:6-12
Midweek 5	..... We Have No King but Caesar! .....	John 19:12-16a
Midweek 6	..... Don't You Fear God?.....	Luke 23:39-43
Palm Sunday	..... Do You Hear What These Children Are Saying?.....	Matthew 21:12-17
Maundy Thursday	..... Do This in Remembrance of Me.....	1 Corinthians 11:23-29
Good Friday	..... He Said, "I Will Rise Again" .....	Matthew 27:62-66
Easter Sunday	..... Why Do You Look for the Living Among the Dead? .....	Luke 24:4-8