

Spy Wednesday Reflection

Psalm 88 & John 13:21–32

Theme: Even the darkness is not dark to You

Spy Wednesday.

A strange name for a day in Holy Week. But an honest one.

Because by now, the shadows are lengthening.

And one of Jesus' closest friends, one of the Twelve, has made a terrible choice.

Judas doesn't initially walk away from the table.

He stays. He eats. He shares in the bread.

And still, he chooses betrayal.

It's an uncomfortable story.

But maybe part of what makes it so uncomfortable is that Judas doesn't feel all that far from us.

How often have we - out of fear, exhaustion, pride, or pain - chosen our own way over God's?

How often have we sold out what we know to be good and true for something easier, quicker, or less costly?

Psalm 88 gives us a place to bring that pain.

It's often called the darkest psalm in Scripture.

There is no lift, no resolution.

It ends as it begins: in sorrow.

“Darkness is my closest friend.”

And yet it is prayer.

Not cleaned up for worship. Not edited for comfort.

Held in Scripture. Offered to God.

Even the rawest truth is not beyond God's hearing.

Silence

And then there's the Gospel.

Jesus is troubled. He doesn't cover it up. He names what's unfolding: "One of you will betray me."

And the room stills.

They don't know who.

They look around the table, uncertain.

Because betrayal doesn't begin in the Roman courts, it begins at the table... THIS table

Not among enemies - but among friends.

Judas takes the bread. And leaves.

"And it was night."

Silence

This Gospel and this psalm both sit in places we usually try to avoid: grief, silence, uncertainty, guilt.

But Holy Week doesn't skip over the hard parts. It invites us to stay.

To dwell in the stillness. To listen to the pain we'd rather ignore. To let the story get under our skin.

Note how Jesus doesn't try to stop Judas. He doesn't plead. He doesn't run. He stays.

He names the truth. And lets the betrayal unfold.

Not because he is resigned - but because his love is free.

Costly. Uncoercive. Faithful to the very end.

And in that moment of sorrow, he says: "Now the Son of Man is glorified."

Silence

Glory - in the middle of betrayal?

Yes.

Because in John's Gospel, glory isn't about brightness.

It's not about victory or escape.

It's about love that endures, -presence that doesn't run: Light that chooses to enter the darkness on purpose.

The psalm reminds us that even when we feel lost or ashamed - even when we can't find words - we can still pray.

And the Gospel reminds us that even when we fail - Jesus still stays.

Silence

So what do we carry into this night?

Perhaps this: The darkness is real. Painful even. Unsettling – probably. But it is not Godless.

Jesus doesn't flee from betrayal, or grief, or silence. He walks into them – his eyes wide open, his heart wide open.

Even the worst we carry, the failure, the betrayal, the fear, does not push him away.

He stays.

He goes to the Cross not just because of us, but for us.

I will hold the Christ-light for you
In the night time of your fear
I will hold my hand out to you
Speak the peace you long to hear

Tonight, let him do that for you.

Let him hold the light. In your fear. In your silence. In the shadowed parts of your story.

We are invited - each of us - to stay.

Not to do. Not to fix.

Just to be with him.

In the quiet.

In the sorrow.

In the strange stillness of this night.

To stay with the one who stays with us.

So we wait and we watch.

We stay.