

Mark Chapter 14: v. 1-42.**Title: "The body of Jesus."**

After two days it was the Passover and *the Feast of Unleavened Bread*. And the chief priests and the scribes sought how they might take Him by trickery and put *Him* to death. ² But they said, "Not during the feast, lest there be an uproar of the people." ³ And being in Bethany at the house of Simon the leper, as He sat at the table, a woman came having an alabaster flask of very costly oil of spikenard. Then she broke the flask and poured *it* on His head. ⁴ But there were some who were indignant among themselves, and said, "Why was this fragrant oil wasted? ⁵ For it might have been sold for more than three hundred denarii and given to the poor." And they criticized her sharply. ⁶ But Jesus said, "Let her alone. Why do you trouble her? She has done a good work for Me. ⁷ For you have the poor with you always, and whenever you wish you may do them good; but Me you do not have always. ⁸ She has done what she could. She has come beforehand to anoint My body for burial. ⁹ Assuredly, I say to you, wherever this gospel is preached in the whole world, what this woman has done will also be told as a memorial to her." ¹⁰ Then Judas Iscariot, one of the twelve, went to the chief priests to betray Him to them. ¹¹ And when they heard *it*, they were glad, and promised to give him money. So he sought how he might conveniently betray Him. ¹² Now on the first day of Unleavened Bread, when they killed the Passover *lamb*, His disciples said to Him, "Where do You want us to go and prepare, that You may eat the Passover?" ¹³ And He sent out two of His disciples and said to them, "Go into the city, and a man will meet you carrying a pitcher of water; follow him. ¹⁴ Wherever he goes in, say to the master of the house, 'The Teacher says, "Where is the guest room in which I may eat the Passover with My disciples?"' ¹⁵ Then he will show you a large upper room, furnished *and* prepared; there make ready for us." ¹⁶ So His disciples went out, and came into the city, and found it just as He had said to them; and they prepared the Passover. ¹⁷ In the evening He came with the twelve. ¹⁸ Now as they sat and ate, Jesus said, "Assuredly, I say to you, one of you who eats with Me will betray Me." ¹⁹ And they began to be sorrowful, and to say to Him one by one, "*Is it I?*" And another *said*, "*Is it I?*" ²⁰ He answered and said to them, "*It is* one of the twelve, who dips with Me in the dish. ²¹ The Son of Man indeed goes just as it is written of Him, but woe to that man by whom the Son of Man is betrayed! It would have been good for that man if he had never been born." ²² And as they were eating, Jesus took bread, blessed and broke *it*, and gave *it* to them and said, "Take, eat; this is My body." ²³ Then He took the cup, and when He had given thanks He gave *it* to them, and they all drank from it. ²⁴ And He said to them, "This is My blood of the new covenant, which is shed for many. ²⁵ Assuredly, I say to you, I will no longer drink of the fruit of the vine until that day when I drink it new in the kingdom of God." ²⁶ And when they had sung a hymn, they went out to the Mount of Olives. ²⁷ Then Jesus said to them, "All of you will be made to stumble because of Me this night, for it is written: 'I will strike the Shepherd, And the sheep will be scattered.' ²⁸ "But after I have been raised, I will go before you to Galilee." ²⁹ Peter said to Him, "Even if all are made to stumble, yet I *will not be*." ³⁰ Jesus said to him, "Assuredly, I say to you that today, *even* this night, before the rooster crows twice, you will deny Me three times." ³¹ But he spoke more vehemently, "If I have to die with You, I will not deny You!" And they all said likewise. ³² Then they came to a place which was named Gethsemane; and He said to His disciples, "Sit here while I pray." ³³ And He took Peter, James, and John with Him, and He began to be troubled and deeply distressed. ³⁴ Then He said to them, "My soul is exceedingly sorrowful, *even* to death. Stay here and watch." ³⁵ He went a little farther, and fell on the ground, and prayed that if it were possible, the hour might pass from Him. ³⁶ And He said, "Abba, Father, all things *are* possible for You. Take this cup away from Me; nevertheless, not what I will, but what You *will*." ³⁷ Then He came and found them sleeping, and said to Peter, "Simon, are you sleeping? Could you not watch one hour? ³⁸ Watch and pray, lest you enter into temptation. The spirit indeed *is* willing, but the flesh *is* weak." ³⁹ Again He went away and prayed, and spoke the same words. ⁴⁰ And when He returned, He found them asleep again, for their eyes were heavy; and they did not know what to answer Him. ⁴¹ Then He came the third time and said to them, "Are you still sleeping and resting? It is enough! The hour has come; behold, the Son of Man is being betrayed into the hands of sinners. ⁴² Rise, let us be going. See, My betrayer is at hand."

Introduction

Today we are going to focus upon the body of Jesus, for our Easter series, part two. Although Jesus was God in human form, He nevertheless experienced the same emotions as we do. **The difference with Jesus is that He was without sin.** Our emotions and experiences are **tainted with our sinful nature** and often need correcting in order to glorify God.

I am going to recommend a book which might be helpful for disciple parents and **anybody wanting help with their emotions.** The book is called "Emotions" – Mirrors of the heart by Catherine Haddow. She is a chartered Psychologist and conference speaker in the U.K.

Catherine uses her training together with the Bible, in order to offer help and counselling to Christian believers. We all go through different emotions but we **don't all know how to correct these emotions in order to glorify God.** I have 5 copies of this book, available today at a give- away price of 500 yen. They won't be available from the book stall as I am heavily subsidizing the price.

We now come to some of the emotional experiences that Jesus went through on His way to the cross. We will learn today how Jesus dealt with these situations, how He used them as teaching tools, and how **we can benefit personally in our own lives today.**

1. The body of Jesus - anointed - Mark 14: v. 1-9.

In verses 1-2, Mark immediately puts the context of our passage into the time of the Jewish Passover. Although the anointing of the body of Jesus probably came before the Palm Sunday entry into Jerusalem, as recorded by Matthew (Matt. 26: v.6-13) and John (John12: v. 2-11), it nevertheless is part of a series of events that Mark connects together.

All three of the events recorded by Mark connect the body of Jesus to some practical teaching for the disciples.

There are three things I would like to draw out from these verses.

- a) **Critics** - v. 4-5. We are told that some people were very critical that this woman wasted a very expensive flask of perfume oil, by pouring it over Jesus.

The critics called it a waste of money. They said that the oil could have been sold and the money given to the poor.

It is obvious that not only did the critics **not discern** what was happening; they also **didn't appreciate the ministry of Jesus.**

Jesus had spent the last three years in ministry, without a home, without any financial support, other than people's hospitality and giving.

Jesus had performed countless miracles, and changed the lives of many people, and yet his close followers were critical of the generosity of this woman's action.

Application

There are many missionaries here in Japan today that pay a high price in order to serve Jesus. The cost to them is sometimes not to see their families, and also to raise lots of money to live in an expensive place.

Let us not be critical of those people who sacrificially give their lives to serve Jesus, and for those people who give their money in order for these missionaries to take the gospel to where God guides them.

May God help us to exercise support and grace towards those people who serve Jesus; often in very difficult circumstances. Our job is to pray for these servants and leave the refining work to the Holy Spirit. A critical spirit always reflects something wrong with our relationship towards God.

Matthew 7: v. 1-5 in N.L.T.

"Do not judge others, and you will not be judged. ²For you will be treated as you treat others. The standard you use in judging is the standard by which you will be judged. ³"And why worry about a speck in your friend's eye when you have a log in your own? ⁴How can you think of saying to your friend, 'Let me help you get rid of that speck in your eye,' when you can't see past the log in your own eye? ⁵Hypocrite! First get rid of the log in your own eye; then you will see well enough to deal with the speck in your friend's eye.

b) Commendation of Jesus - v. 6-7.

In v. 6-7 Jesus commends the woman and rebukes the critical people.

Jesus tells the critics that this woman has done **a great work in serving Jesus.**

Jesus told them that they can help the poor people at any time, but this is the last time that help can be given to Jesus in this way.

To have the commendation of Jesus is a wonderful thing.

In Matthew Chapter 25: v. 14-30 we are told a parable about using the gifts and talents and resources that God gives us to bless the Christian community.

The people who used the talents that were given to them for God's glory were commended by Jesus.

However, the one person who failed to use his gift was rebuked and his gift was taken away and given to others.

Matthew 25: v.21.

²¹ His lord said to him, 'Well *done*, good and faithful servant; you were faithful over a few things, I will make you ruler over many things. Enter into the joy of your lord.'

Application

There are many ministries at OIC that need your help.

We don't realise our gifts and talents until we try and use them.

What has God given you, that you can use at O.I.C.?

We are an international Church and some of you are only here for 1 year, but God can use your gifts and ministry **for that one year.**

It is always worth giving your gifts to Jesus.

Prayer being the most important.

If you are willing to serve at OIC and you know and love Jesus as your own personal Saviour, then I am sure that a ministry can be found for your gifts and talents.

Context of the anointing – v. 8-9.

In these verses Jesus puts the anointing into its context.

Jesus tells us that this sacrificial act by the woman was done to anoint his body for burial.

Jesus also says that wherever the gospel is preached in the whole world, this story would be told in memory of this woman.

So we see that Jesus regarded the ministry of this woman to be a **very important practical act towards Himself.**

Now today we have expensive perfumes that you can buy at any department store in Japan.

However, these perfumes only last a couple of days.

The perfume that was anointed over the body of Jesus was **much stronger and could last several weeks.**

It came from the root of a **type of valerian plant.**

Some people think that it smelt like **patchouli oil.** This smells like cannabis.

It is a very sweet but very lingering smell.

When I was in the police force I could always smell cannabis when we were doing a drugs raid. It has a very strong odour.

The smell would definitely be quite strong around the body of Jesus **up to His death.**

With all that was going to happen to Jesus up to his death, this smell would be the only physical thing that **would add a fragrance to his suffering.**

What a wonderful gift and support it must have been to Jesus at His most difficult time.

What a great encouragement for us to support servants of Jesus when they are having a difficult time!!

During the last true "Revival" that happened in the U.K. a number of people on the Island of Skye in Scotland actually smelt what they described as the **fragrance of Jesus Christ.**

I know that during "Revival" wonderful things can happen.

Revival is different from evangelism.

“Revival” is a moving of God in a powerful way so as to change and transform communities.

I had the opportunity one day of preaching in the small Church on the island of Skye, in Scotland where they claimed to smell the fragrance of Jesus Christ.

I mentioned this in my sermon, and afterwards an old man came up to me and said...

“Young man it was true, I was here and smelt the “fragrance of Jesus Christ, it was wonderful”.

We may never get an opportunity to smell the fragrance of Christ in “Revival” but if we are believers in Jesus Christ, the Bible tells us that we can diffuse the fragrance of His knowledge in every place.

2 Corinthians 2: v. 14-16. (N.K.J.)

¹⁴ Now thanks *be* to God who always leads us in triumph in Christ, and through us diffuses the fragrance of His knowledge in every place. ¹⁵ For we are to God the fragrance of Christ among those who are being saved and among those who are perishing. ¹⁶ To the one *we are* the aroma of death *leading* to death, and to the other the aroma of life *leading* to life. And who *is* sufficient for these things?

2. The body of Jesus – compared to the Passover Lamb. – v. 12-26.

Jesus was celebrating the “Passover Meal” with His disciples and compared his body and blood with that of the Passover lamb.

In case we are new to Christianity, we need first of all to understand something about the Jewish Passover that had been celebrated for over 1,200 years by the Jewish nation.

God’s chosen people were slaves in Egypt for many years. They were treated very badly. God raised up a man called Moses and sent him to rescue God’s people from Egypt.

Initially Moses asked the king of Egypt to let God’s people be released, in order to worship God outside Egypt, but he refused.

God brought about 9 plagues upon Egypt and after each one, the king had an opportunity to let God’s people go, but he refused.

Therefore, God had to work in his mighty power in order to get his people released.

The last plague is recorded here in Exodus 12: v. 1-14.

Exodus 12: v. 1-14.

Now the LORD spoke to Moses and Aaron in the land of Egypt, saying, ² “This month *shall be* your beginning of months; it *shall be* the first month of the year to you. ³ Speak to all the congregation of Israel, saying: ‘On the tenth of this month every man shall take for himself a lamb, according to the house of *his* father, a lamb for a household. ⁴ And if the household is too small for the lamb, let him and his neighbor next to his house take *it* according to the number of the persons; according to each man’s need you shall make your count for the lamb. ⁵ Your lamb shall be without blemish, a male of the first year. You may take *it* from the sheep or from the goats. ⁶ Now you shall keep it until the fourteenth day of the same month. Then the whole assembly of the congregation of Israel shall kill it at twilight. ⁷ And they shall take *some* of the blood and put *it* on the two doorposts and on the lintel of the houses where they eat it. ⁸ Then they shall eat the flesh on that night; roasted in fire, with unleavened bread *and* with bitter *herbs* they shall eat it. ⁹ Do not eat it raw, nor boiled at all with water, but roasted in fire—its head with its legs and its entrails. ¹⁰ You shall let none of it remain until morning, and what remains of it until morning you shall burn with fire. ¹¹ And thus you shall eat it: *with* a belt on your waist, your sandals on your feet, and your staff in your hand. So you shall eat it in haste.

It *is* the LORD’s Passover.

¹² ‘For I will pass through the land of Egypt on that night, and will strike all the firstborn in the land of Egypt, both man and beast; and against all the gods of Egypt I will execute judgment:

I *am* the LORD. ¹³ Now the blood shall be a sign for you on the houses where you *are*. And when I see the blood, I will pass over you; and the plague shall not be on you to destroy *you* when I strike the land of Egypt.

¹⁴ ‘So this day shall be to you a memorial; and you shall keep it as a feast to the LORD throughout your generations. You shall keep it as a feast by an everlasting ordinance.

Exodus 12:v. 29-30. (N.K.J.)

²⁹ And it came to pass at midnight that the LORD struck all the firstborn in the land of Egypt, from the firstborn of Pharaoh who sat on his throne to the firstborn of the captive who *was* in the dungeon, and all the firstborn of livestock. ³⁰ So Pharaoh rose in the night, he, all his servants, and all the Egyptians; and there was a great cry in Egypt, for *there was* not a house where *there was* not one dead.

There are two important things to note from this passage.

Firstly, that **the lamb had to be “Male” and “Perfect”.**

Secondly it was the **blood of that lamb that protected the Jewish people from God’s judgement.**

If the blood of the lamb didn’t cover the door posts and lintel of their homes, then their first born would be killed.

By Jesus saying that he was about to become the Passover lamb for the Jewish people, He was saying that through His death, and the shedding of His blood, **people could escape the wrath of God to come.**

Jesus also called it a **“New Covenant”**. Jesus was making a new agreement that would be, not just for the Jewish people, but for many others too. That means **“Me and you”**.

Application

The application for us all is crystal clear.

We need to believe that Jesus Christ replaced all of the old sacrificial system described in the Old Testament.

In the Old Testament the killing of a lamb acted as a covering for man’s sin, but God sent Jesus Christ into this world to take away our sin.

John 1: v.29 in the N.K.J.

²⁹ The next day John saw Jesus coming toward him, and said, “Behold! The Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world!

If we believe that Jesus Christ died for our sins personally then we can **be saved from God’s wrath;** just like the Jewish people were saved many years ago.

God’s wrath came to the Egyptian first born and God’s wrath will come to us, if we refuse to believe in **God’s love to us through Jesus.**

The choice is yours, I hope if you have **not made that choice yet,** that you will believe in Jesus today and know His peace in your heart.

3. The body of Jesus - In human agony - v. 32 – 42.

In v. 32-42 we have an account of the body of Jesus in human agony.

Jesus had the hardest night of prayer that any human could have. Yes!!! Jesus was divine, but He was also truly human.

In the text we are told that Jesus had **three sessions of prayer during the night.**

In the first session he only took **Peter James and John** with Him.

These were Jesus’s closest disciples.

In Mark Chapter 9 we are told that Jesus took these same disciples up a mountain and they all had a wonderful experience of meeting Moses and Elijah and seeing Jesus being transfigured into a divine person.

They were generally considered to be Jesus’s close support.

In v. 34 Jesus was in a state of deep distress and needed support.

He asked Peter James and John to stay with him and **“Watch”**.

Perhaps it was **a security issue, as well as a support issue?**

In those days being out at night was often dangerous. They were outside the protection of the Jerusalem city walls.

In v. 36 Jesus said these words

“Abba, Father, all things are possible for You. Take this cup away from Me; nevertheless, not what I will, but what You will.”

Basically Jesus asked God that if there was any possible way to avoid what He was about to suffer then please make that happen.

Jesus, although having made a request to God, nevertheless surrendered to God's will for whatever He would decide.

When Jesus returned from his agonizing intense prayer with God He discovered that Peter was asleep. It appears that Jesus was only away for one hour, and Peter was not able to keep awake for this period. In v. 38 Jesus warned Peter about the dangers of the flesh, and the need to **watch and pray**.

Jesus went away again and prayed the same prayer to God.

When He returned, **Jesus found all his support base asleep**.

They were **not watching and praying**.

Jesus went away to pray again, but on his return, He gave His disciples a wake -up call by announcing that He was just about to be **betrayed into the hands of sinners**.

Application

There are two applications here that I would like to challenge us all about today.

The first is the challenge of **doing God's will in our lives, whatever the cost**.

The second is overcoming the flesh, through the power of prayer and vigilance.

- a) **Doing God's will, whatever the cost** - We will never be required by God to go through the experience that Jesus was required to go through in order to provide for our wonderful Salvation. Praise God for that.

However, there will be times in our lives when God requires us to **go forward in His will, at great cost, and serve Him for His glory alone**.

This might be difficult but God will give you the grace and the strength and the provision for this ministry.

I am reading a book at the moment called "**A Good Old Age**".

It is written by a retired Pastor called Derek Prime. He is now over 80 years old.

I plan on giving a free copy to lots of my prayer supporters, who are mainly over 70 years old.

It is a book that challenges and encourages older people over 65 years old.

When Derek prime was much younger he was the pastor of a large Church in Edinburgh called Charlotte Chapel.

I attended this Church for the first time in January 1985, 35 years ago.

I spent most of the service crying because God was really speaking to my heart.

It started during the children's talk.

They were doing a big series telling the story of "**Pilgrim's Progress**".

They had a huge banner which covered the stage.

There was a picture of the "Heavenly Castle" in the distance, but the large picture was of a very wide "**Rocky Road**" (lots of stones and not easy to walk on)

I can remember the words of the preacher, that spoke to my heart.

"Now, pilgrim you are going to travel on this "Rocky Road".

However, there is a large sign which says "**Bypath Meadow**".

The picture he drew of the Bypath meadow was wonderful.

There was lovely green grass and lots of beautiful flowers.

It seemed a wonderful place to go and spend some time.

The preacher said, Bypath Meadow may seem attractive, but I **want you to travel on this rocky road, because that is the way to the "Heavenly Castle"**.

Over the last 35 years I have been travelling along that "Rocky Road" with my wife Wendy.

Many a time we have seen signs directing us into Bypath Meadow, but through God's grace, and by His help we have continued along this "Rocky Road".

May I encourage you to do that same, in spite of the cost that it may mean in your life.

God's best journey for us towards heaven, is always God's best blessing for us as we travel that road, **even if sometimes it is a "Rocky Road"**.

- b) **The second application is about overcoming the flesh, through the power of prayer**.

It may seem that Jesus was a little hard on the disciples. After all it was in the middle of the night. Surely the disciples were allowed to get some sleep?

Normally that would be O.K., but this was a special night. **Jesus needed the support, and the disciples failed Jesus.**

I think that what Jesus in v. 38 was drawing to the attention of the disciples was how powerful the flesh life was.

Our flesh life is our sinful nature and it **is very strong**, and can only be overcome through the **power of prayer and by God's Holy Spirit.**

I have discovered over the last three years the blessing of having regular prayer partners. Yes, it is good to pray yourself, and to pray with people, but it is also good to have people pray for you. Get them to pray for victory over your flesh life.

Try and enlist a few friends to pray for you on a regular basis.

Ask them to pray for victory over temptation in your flesh life.

The men will remember in the DVD "**War Room**" how powerful the prayers were for the husband who was just about to commit adultery.

He was just about to go to a ladies' apartment for special wine, **and just before that he went to the toilet and vomited.**

God answered the prayer of his wife, and it prevented a big marriage problem.

Eventually the man was converted.

Notice Jesus said "Watch and Pray".

Here we have a human responsibility.

We must be vigilant in our thinking and appreciation of situations that might cause us to be tempted.

We must overcome temptation at the **first point of temptation.**

The devil works by slow degrees to get us to sin.

It is NOT always easy to recognise the FIRST point of temptation.

Let me give you an illustration:

In the film, the "War Room" the husband was tempted to commit adultery when the woman invited him back to his apartment to drink some quality wine.

If it hadn't been for the prayers of his wife, and the power of the Holy Spirit causing him to vomit, then he would have gone to the woman's apartment and eventually had sex.

Now this is the important thing.

It wasn't at the table having dinner with the woman that was his first temptation.

His first temptation was much further back when he was having problems in his marriage. The second temptation was when he rung this woman for her to find a good restaurant for him to have a meal at, when he was away on business in another town.

If the man had been vigilant at the first temptation, none of the other temptations would have happened.

The devil knows where he wants to take you in order for you to sin and glorify him.

However, God wants us to be "vigilant" and recognise the first stages of temptation. At that point say NO, then the much harder temptations to resist will not follow.

May God help us to be vigilant and recognise temptation in frame One.

Then we will be able to glorify God and not the devil.