

Destination: Meaning of the Mystery

Good Friday: Kenny Conley

Supplies:

- Heart
- Apple
- Cotton Balls/Lamb
- Crown
- Cross
- 5 Boxes

Welcome! Congratulations, you have made it through the Journey through the Passion. This is the final stop for tonight. Whether you made it through all the destinations or just one or two, that's okay. In this destination, Meaning of the Mystery, we're going to pull everything together and make sense of it all. I'm going to answer the questions:

- Why did all of these things happen on Holy Week?
- What was the purpose?
- What was the meaning of it all?

Without understanding the mystery, someone might look at everything that happened in Holy Week and say, what does this all mean?

I want to make this crystal clear, so I have here some mystery boxes. Each box contains a small piece of the story, some of it you've encountered already tonight, other parts might be new. Each box though will help us with each part of the story... I might need some help too, okay?

Let's start with the first box, okay?

Box 1: Heart

It all starts with love. We learn in the Bible that God is love and he

created people so that he could have a relationship with them. The Bible talks about the close friendship that God had with Adam and Eve in the garden of Eden. It talks about how God would come to the garden and walk with them and talk with them. This was God's plan. God isn't an angry and mean God, but a loving father and friend.

Box 2: Apple

We don't really know how long Adam and Eve lived in the garden. It could have been weeks, years or decades. But we do know that their time in the garden came to an end. You see, God loved Adam and Eve with all his heart, but he didn't want to make Adam and Eve love him. He gave them a choice. He told them to live, play and work in the garden. Everything in the garden is yours. However, there is one tree in the garden. That tree is called the "Tree of the Knowledge of Good and Evil." Whatever you do, don't eat from that tree. Stay away from it. To eat from this tree is disobedience. All you know is goodness, but if you eat from this tree, you will know evil. To eat from this tree is sin, sin is disobedience. To choose to eat from this tree is to choose something different than a friendship with me. I offer you life, forever in this garden. However, if you eat from this tree, the punishment is death.

We all know the story. Adam and Eve, who were created to live in friendship with God forever and ever ate from the tree and their punishment was death. They have to leave the garden and because God was pure and perfect and Adam and Eve were sinful and disobedient, the relationship was broken

Box 3: Cotton balls (lamb if I can get one)

Adam and Eve's disobedience broke God's heart. All he wanted was a

friendship. Even though Adam and Eve had messed it up, God had a plan. He decided to offer a temporary fix. He said, "Okay, the rule was that if you disobey, death was the punishment. I don't want to be separated from you for all eternity, so here's what we're going to do. I can't change the penalty, but I'll let something else die in your place. Instead of you dying because of your sin, you can let a lamb take your place. It has to be a perfect, white and spotless lamb. Every year, you must offer a lamb to die for your disobedience. It isn't perfect, but at least it pays the punishment for your sin and when you die, you'll have the hope of being with God again.

So, for thousands of years, the Jewish people did this. They offered a sacrifice of a lamb for their sins. This is why there were all these lambs at the temple when Jesus went there. Some people didn't have their own lambs, so they had to buy a lamb to sacrifice.

Box 4: Crown

Over the years, the Jewish people lived in a land called Israel. For many years, Israel was a powerful kingdom. However, most of Israel's existence was not happy or fun. For centuries (hundreds of years), Israel was either ruled by horrible kings or Israel was even conquered by other kingdoms and they lived like prisoners in their own land. All throughout history, people called prophets talked about a future king that would come to rule Israel with power. He would create a new kingdom that would last forever and the Jews would be free forever. This powerful king would be sent by God. There were all these prophecies that said when this king might be born, where he might come from and some of the things that he would do.

Here's where Jesus comes in. All these prophecies about a powerful

king, Jesus fulfilled them. Every single one. From where he was born, when he was born, where he grew up and the things he did. Amazing, the king was finally here. The king who was going to set the Jews free from captivity and establish a kingdom that would last forever was finally here.

But something seemed to be wrong. Jesus was incredible, kind, loving and wise. But when you were with him, he didn't come across like this powerful king that was going to conquer the enemy. There were several things that didn't seem to make a lot of sense. He spent a lot of time with the poor. He hung out with people that kings don't associate with. When he came to Jerusalem, he rode in on a donkey. A DONKEY! A powerful king would never ride in on a donkey. Even at the passover dinner, he washed his disciples feet and during the dinner, he changed the routine up and gave them wine and bread and talked about his body being broken and his blood being spilled. Like he was going to die.

Box 5: Cross

Then something happened that no one saw coming. No one! This promised king was arrested, beaten up and then killed on a cross. He died. The end.

Everyone was stunned.

Mortified.

“Wait a second? Wasn't this guy the king sent by God? Wasn't he going to free us and establish a kingdom that would last forever?”

Crazy, huh?

Here's the thing. Something that people would learn a few days later. Jesus was exactly who they thought he was... kind of. He was the promised king... but he wasn't going to do things the way people thought he would. He did come to establish a new kingdom, but it didn't involve sitting on a throne in Jerusalem. He had no intention of kicking the Romans out of Israel.

He came to establish a kingdom of friendship. A loving friendship between God and people once again. Jesus was God, God in the flesh. The same God that walked in the garden with Adam and Even in the very beginning. Jesus didn't want to be king of a land, he wanted to be the king of our hearts. That we would have a friendship with God once again.

Oh, and remember the sacrifice. Our punishment for sin was death. Every year, people had to sacrifice the spotless lamb so that when we died, we'd have hope of being with God once again. Well, Jesus knew that we were trapped in our sin and disobedience and we had to make these sacrifices every year. Jesus came to be our lamb. Even though it was us that sinned and disobeyed, Jesus said "I love you. I want to be your friend and I want to free you from your sin and disobedience. I want to pay your punishment for you. So, Jesus, the son of God, who was pure and spotless and without sin or disobedience allowed himself to be arrested, beat up and sacrificed on the cross... for us. No more lambs. If we would let Jesus be our king, if we would let him rule our hearts, then his sacrifice would be more than enough for us.

Conclusion

This my friends is Good Friday. Maybe you now know why it is called Good Friday. Your journey for tonight is over. I want to invite you to stay for a few more minutes if you'd like, as a family you can talk about the questions in your passport. Feel free to wrap up and head home and talk about this in the car or at bedtime when you're all comfy in your beds. Let me pray for you as we dismiss.