

The Events of Holy Week: Holy (Busy) Tuesday (4/7/2020)

The official name of the Tuesday of Holy Week is Holy Tuesday or Great and Holy Tuesday. My college New Testament professor, Pastor Edward Lindemann, called it Busy Tuesday. Why? Because in the Bible there is more information about the Tuesday of Holy Week than any other day. The Gospel of St. Matthew dedicates four and a half chapters to this day.

A couple of years before Jesus' crucifixion, he was in a synagogue (a Jewish place of worship) up north in Galilee. He healed a man with a shriveled hand. This angered the Jewish religious leaders—the Pharisees—so much that they went out and began to plot with the Herodians how they might kill Jesus.

The old saying goes, “Politics makes strange bedfellows.” Normally, the Pharisees and the Herodians were opposed to each other. But their hatred for Jesus outweighed their hatred for each other. The word “Pharisee” means, “Separated One.” The Pharisees sought to separate themselves from the everyday, run-of-the-mill sinners with all of their self-righteous laws. God gave the Ten Commandments. That wasn't enough for them. They would “one-up” God with their 613 commandments. They were self-righteous and thought they could earn their way into heaven by their own efforts. They were too arrogant to detect or hate their sin. They thought when Messiah came he would pat them on the back and say, “Thanks for taking such good care of my people.”

At the other end of the spectrum were the Herodians. Unlike the Pharisees who despised being under the bondage of the Roman Empire, the Herodians sympathized with Roman rule and wanted to keep the status quo. In the Pharisees' view, this was treasonous. In spite of the friction between these two groups, they plotted together against a bigger threat to their authority, Jesus of Nazareth.

And so on Tuesday of Holy Week they tried to trap him in his words. They asked, “Is it right to pay taxes to Caesar or not?” If he said, “Yes,” then the Jews would be angry with him. If he said, “No,” then they could report him to the Roman governor as a revolutionary. But Jesus saw through their duplicity and said to them, “Show me a denarius. Whose portrait and inscription are on it?” “Caesar's,” they replied. Jesus said, “Then give to Caesar what is Caesar's and to God what is God's.” They were unable to trap him in what he said, and, astonished by his answer, they became silent.

From the time he was conceived in the womb of the virgin Mary, Jesus never thought or uttered a single word that was out of place. He never did a single thing outside of God's law. That's why when they accused him before the Roman governor, they had to accuse him with lies. Directly contrary to what Jesus had said about paying taxes to Caesar, they accused him of opposing the payment of taxes to Caesar. They railroaded him to the cross where he would dole out in blood the payment for our sins. Three days later, by raising him from the dead, the heavenly Father certified that the debt of our iniquities has been paid in full.

Rock of Ages, cleft for me, Let me hide myself in thee;
Let the water and the blood From thy riven side which flowed
Be of sin the double cure: Cleanse me from its guilt and pow'r.

Not the labors of my hands Can fulfill thy law's demands.
Could my zeal no respite know, Could my tears forever flow,
All for sin could not atone; Thou must save and thou alone.

Nothing in my hand I bring, Simply to thy cross I cling;
Naked, come to thee for dress, Helpless, look to thee for grace.
Foul, I to the fountain fly-Wash me, Savior, or I die!

After sharing this devotion with your family, take the time to read Luke Chapters 20-21.

Pastor Zuberbier