



Sermon Notes

Term – Autumn 2018

Series – Mark

Gathering & Date – the 5, 11 November

Title – Follow the Lamb

Preacher – Paul Langham

Readings – Mark 14: 1-9, 12-17, 22-26

Notes –

On this significant day of remembrance, I was struck by a comment made by Harry Patch (the last surviving soldier from WW1) who said, ‘... we were like lambs to the slaughter’. As we seek to understand something of the significance of communion, let us follow the lamb through scripture ...

Exodus 12 – the Passover: God is about to lead his people out of Egypt towards the Promised Land. God’s promise is sealed with the sacrifice of a lamb, its blood sprinkled on their doorposts. Every year thereafter, Jews sacrificed lambs at their annual celebration of Passover.

Leviticus 14 – the lamb’s blood covering over sin and taking away guilt. To modern ears, it’s pretty gory and unpleasant, but it drove home to God’s people just how destructive sin was – and is.

Isaiah 53 – a prophetic description of the longed-for Messiah: He was led like a lamb to the slaughter (v.7)

So by the time of Jesus, the sacrifice of the lamb, symbolising God’s deliverance and the covering over of sin, would have been an ingrained spiritual reality in everyone’s mind.

So imagine the impact when John the Baptist pointed to Jesus and says ‘Look, the lamb of God, who takes away the sin of the world!’

Each year of his life, Jesus would have gone up to Jerusalem for Passover and seen the streets running red with the blood of lambs – when, I wonder, did he first realise that his own blood would one day run, for the sins of all who put their trust in him?

St Paul writes: Christ, our Passover lamb, has been sacrificed for us (1 Corinthians 5: 7)

St Peter writes that we ‘were redeemed ... with the precious blood of Christ, a lamb without blemish or defect. (1 Peter 1:19)

The final image of the lamb comes in Revelation, when John, caught up to heaven in a vision, is told to look for the Lion of Judah. Looking round, he records: I saw a Lamb, looking as if it had been slain, standing at the centre of the throne (5:6). All of heaven worships the lamb – and in chapter 21, Jesus is once more depicted as the lamb, who invites all who have trusted in him to his wedding feast. His bride? The church.

For further thought and discussion

If the Son of God has bought your salvation with his own lifeblood, what does that say about how Jesus values you?

In Mark 14 we read of the woman who broke open an alabaster jar of costly perfume – what’s our heart response, our own sacrifice in response to that of the lamb?