

## Sermon Outline- Mark 14:1-2, 53-65

**Main Sermon Theme:** The chief priests and scribes saw Jesus as an obstacle to be rid of by violence. Yet during the Passover festival, they would unwittingly bring about the Father's sacrifice of the ultimate Passover Lamb.

I. The Jews wanted to murder Jesus, and we also have murderous thoughts toward our neighbor.

II. We want God to die so we can live for ourselves, a sin for which Jesus had to die.

III. The Father and the Son chose the way of the cross to save us murderers.

### Sermon- "Murderous Eyes"

I. "If looks could kill." Likely we have seen this in the eyes of another. Maybe if we have looked in the mirror at the right time, we have seen it in our own eyes. Tonight, we see it in the eyes of the chief priests and scribes, the Sadducees and Pharisees, as they plot Jesus' death in our Gospel Reading. They are filled with hatred and murder as they gaze upon Jesus being greeted with praise in Jerusalem during Holy Week. Before that, when face-to-face with Jesus, they hear Him speak woes and reproaches to them. If they could have spewed venom or shot arrows from their eyes at the Lord, they would have.

"Woe to you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites!" said Jesus (Matthew 23:29), no doubt with a rather stern look. Jesus wants them to recognize their hypocrisy and repent. "Why don't you go ahead and kill Me too and continue your family tradition!" Murderous thoughts and looks are as old as the fall into sin. Cain's downcast eyes became murderous toward his brother. AS our 8<sup>th</sup> graders have learned, Cain killed his brother because he was Abel (bad!). In addressing the Jewish leaders who want to kill Him, Jesus identifies Satan as the father of all who hate God's Son.

II. Surely the Lord's not talking to us pious Christians, is He? But listen to His Word. His apostle St. John writes, "Everyone who hates his brother is a murderer, and you know that no murderer has eternal life abiding in him" (1 John 3:15). And a bit later, "If anyone says, 'I love God,' and hates his brother, he is a liar; for he who does not love his brother whom he has seen cannot love God whom he has not seen" (4:20). Follow the logic. If I claim to love God while hating my brother, I am both a murderer and a liar and cannot love God. If I don't love God, then I must hate Him. It looks like Cain and the hostile Jewish leaders and all of us are murderers in the same hate-filled boat.

Let's not lie to ourselves. We have said in our hearts, "I have reasons for hating my \_\_\_\_\_." Fill in the blank yourself. There are those in our families, at work, or in our communities about whom we can make excuses for wishing them to be dead. We say to ourselves, "I have good cause for casting an evil eye upon that dirty rotten so-and-so who did such and such to me." Maybe now our sights are set on whoever first spread that corona virus around. Our hatred is enough to make us murderers in God's sight and to place us under His wrath. The Jewish leaders filled up the measure of their hatred against Jesus in tonight's Passion Reading. If we are honest with ourselves, when it comes to our sinful nature, we must see ourselves as murderers right along with them.

III. What a marvel, then, that the Father would allow His Son to be murdered at the hands of sinful men, just to save a bunch of rotten, rebellious sinners with eyes filled with rage against both God and man. The Apostle Paul says it this way in Romans 5: "But God shows His love for us in that while we were still sinners, Christ died for us. Since, therefore, we have now been justified by His blood, much more shall we be saved by Him from the wrath of God" (Romans 5:8–9). The wrath of God is not a murderous glance from the Father, but a look of righteous judgment upon the guilt of our sin. We all deserve God's wrath, but instead of giving us what we deserved, God put it on Jesus, and Jesus willingly took it, for us and for our salvation.

From the cross, Jesus looked upon the masses of humanity and said, "Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do" (Luke 23:34). Original sin, which produces lies, hatred, murder, and every other sin, is so deep a corruption that we cannot recognize the depravity of what we think, say, and do unless it is revealed to us by God's holy Word. But once our murderous eyes have looked in horror on what we really have done—nailing the innocent Son of God to the tree with our sins—then we also are ready for the joyful Good News of the forgiveness of all of our sins for the sake of Christ's voluntary sacrifice at the hands of murderers, the death by which He has extinguished the wrath of God toward us. Paul continues in Romans 5: "For if while we were enemies we were reconciled to God by the death of His Son, much more, now that we are reconciled, shall we be saved by His life. More than that, we also rejoice in God through our Lord Jesus Christ, through whom we have now received reconciliation" (Romans 5:10–11). We can rejoice in Christ, who has turned our murderous eyes away from sin, guilt, and despair and lifted them up to look upon Himself as our Savior. Amen.