

Easter Week Epilogues - Wednesday

Please read Luke 22:47-53 (The Message) (below) and then pray, asking God to help us allow him to have his way in our lives instead of us trying to do things our way.

No sooner [had Jesus spoken to Peter, James and John] than a crowd showed up, Judas, the one from the Twelve, in the lead. He came right up to Jesus to kiss him. Jesus said, "Judas, you would betray the Son of Man with a kiss?"

When those with him saw what was happening, they said, "Master, shall we fight?"

One of them took a swing at the Chief Priest's servant and cut off his right ear.

Jesus said, "Let them be. Even in this." Then, touching the servant's ear, he healed him.

Jesus spoke to those who had come—high priests, Temple police, religion leaders: "What is this, jumping me with swords and clubs as if I were a dangerous criminal? Day after day I've been with you in the Temple and you've not so much as lifted a hand against me. But do it your way—it's a dark night, a dark hour."

You can watch a video by Peter as he reflects on what we've just been reading – you'll find it at www.facebook.com/muckamorepc

Or here's his thoughts 'on paper'...

I'd like to think he'd thought it through, but knowing Peter, he hadn't. His was the act now, think later kind of mentality. It probably wasn't the first time he'd gone for somebody like the High Priest's servant, Malchus. He was a fisherman, after all; he was used working among hard men; men who wouldn't let anything get in the way of them landing a big haul of fish that would make them money at the market; men who wouldn't think twice about talking with their fists with someone they thought had tried to muscle-in on their patch, out-maneuvre them for the big catch, gain an advantage over them by what they considered to be underhanded actions.

Peter had been away from the fishing for a while as one of Jesus' group of twelve disciples that he'd chosen to mentor and prepare to take on his mantle at some point in the future. He'd not fished commercially for a while but old habits die hard and when Jesus found himself up against a menacing group of soldiers and religious leaders, he lashed out with the sword he was carrying at the first person he could reach – Malchus – shaving the side of his head as he sliced at his ear.

If he thought he was helping Jesus, he was way off beam. *"There's no call for that"* Jesus scolded him; *"Put the sword away"* he said as he was reaching out to heal the man's ear. Poor Peter; he must've felt completely wick. What was wrong with Jesus – couldn't he see the danger that was staring him in the face? Was he just going to stand there and let these men take him without so much as a word of objection? If Peter only knew just how much Jesus knew what all this meant for him he might've acted differently. Peter had never backed off from such a confrontation before – why should he do it now? Maybe if he'd thought for a moment he mightn't have been so quick to lash out. Jesus had spoken about what he was about to experience several times previously but Peter had brushed it off with a John McEnroe "You cannot be serious" type of response. He simply refused to accept that such things could ever, would ever happen to Jesus. But Jesus knew better. *"What's this"*

he said to his assailants. "I've been in the Temple loads of times but you've never so much as lifted a hand against me. But that's fine; do it your way – it's a dark night, a dark hour".

And at that, the guards arrested him and led him away to the High Priest's house – with Peter following at a distance.

Do it your way – how many times has the Lord said that when it comes to our lives? He's tried again and again to help us understand that his way for us is best, but no; we know better – at least, we think we do. While he seems to stand by as it all kicks off, we jump right in, with both feet, thinking we'll get it sorted, our way. And we wonder why things aren't what we want them to be? Sometimes that's the only way God can get our attention; the only way he can make us see that our way isn't all it's cracked up to be and that his way is, actually, the best way. Like Peter, we need to put our swords away, get off our high horse and let Jesus take control of things; take control of our lives, in fact. When we do, we step into the light of his love and his grace, his peace and his joy, his hope and his promise.