

South Plains Presbyterian Church

April 17, 2011

Reading of Matthew 26:14 - 27:66 followed by a meditation like this:

The story of Holy Week is by turns inspiring, ugly, heroic and sad. The villains in the story act like villains and the hero, Jesus, acts heroically. But the Christians, those early followers of Jesus seem like either they are fools, or jerks, or at best, like any other, every other human being. We read and remember these events in the hope we can latch on to enough truth to see how one person's death might be a good thing. Or, as one of the villains says in another gospel, better one die than many.

Another reason we read this story is to try and find our place in the drama of Holy Week. Are we among the crowds who shout "Hosanna" in praise of Jesus on Sunday only on Thursday to shout "Crucify him"? Are we among the disciples, protesting our loyalty only to run for cover when loyalty becomes dangerous? Have we ever found ourselves in a position of authority like Pilate who knew the right thing to do, but failed to do it? He washes his hands of this dirty business despite the fact that he had the power to prevent a wrongful death. Are we among those religious people who use faith as a weapon? As an excuse? As an easy way out?

We tell the story of Holy Week certain in our own minds that we would never allow a crucifixion, much less participate in one. When we are honest, however, we can hear echoes of our modern betrayals in the betrayal of Jesus so long ago. I suggest we give ourselves a moment of silence to think on these things.