

188. The Gospel of John 18:2-12

Jesus' Betrayal and Arrest-Part 3

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(8-14-22)

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This morning in our study in the Gospel of John, we have entered into chapter 18.

John 18 starts out with Jesus and His disciples in the Garden of Gethsemane where Jesus is spending some time with His Father in prayer before being betrayed by Judas, arrested and put on trial.

I have broken down the first 12 verses into two parts. Last time we finished looking at our first part:

1. Jesus' Agony in the Garden

Luke 22:42-44 (NKJV)

⁴² "...Father, if it is Your will, take this cup away from Me; nevertheless, not My will, but Yours, be done." ⁴³ Then an angel appeared to Him from heaven, strengthening Him. ⁴⁴ And being in agony, He prayed more earnestly. Then His sweat became like great drops of blood falling down to the ground.

Today we look at the second part:

2. Jesus' Arrest in the Garden

A. Jesus is betrayed by His friend

John 18:1-3 (NKJV)

¹ When Jesus had spoken these words, He went out with His disciples over the Brook Kidron, where there was a garden, which He and His disciples entered. ² And Judas, who betrayed Him, also knew the place...

Matthew 26:45-50 (NKJV)

⁴⁵ Then He came to His disciples and said to them, "Are *you* still sleeping and resting? Behold, the hour is at hand, and the Son of Man is being betrayed into the hands of sinners. ⁴⁶ Rise, let us be going. See, My betrayer is at hand." ⁴⁷ And while He was still speaking, behold, Judas, one of the twelve, with a great multitude with swords and clubs, came from the chief priests and elders of the people. ⁴⁸ Now His betrayer had given them a sign, saying, "Whomever I kiss, He is the One; seize Him." ⁴⁹ Immediately he went up to Jesus and said, "Greetings, Rabbi!" and kissed Him. ⁵⁰ But Jesus said to him, "Friend, why have you come?"

Luke adds that Jesus then said, "**Judas, are you betraying the Son of Man with a kiss?**" (Luke 22:48)

➤ Let me stop for a minute and talk about betrayal.

Betrayal is one of the most difficult and painful experiences a person can go thru.

The reason for that is because betrayal implies a level of trust and intimacy that few relationships ever reach—like the relationship that a husband and wife have in marriage (which is why divorce is so painful, partly because you know each other’s secrets—and they can and often are weaponized against one another). But betrayal isn’t limited to marriage relationships, it can also happen with family and even with close friends—usually best friends.

That’s because betrayal can only happen when someone you have confided in, put your trust in, and shared your deepest thoughts with—turns on you and uses that information against you in some way. Betrayal can’t happen among acquaintances like co-workers or casual friends because those relationships seldom reach the level of trust and intimacy necessary for a person to feel safe enough to share their deepest hurts and feelings with them.

Most people usually limit what they share with others so as not to make themselves susceptible to betrayal and the pain that comes with it (especially after going thru a divorce)—opting rather to keep relationships on more of a superficial level.

But there are exceptions when we do trust someone enough to open up to them about some of our most inward struggles, fears and hurts—thus making ourselves vulnerable and a ‘target’ for betrayal.

Now understand, one of the reasons betrayal is so painful is because—*it’s unexpected*. In other words, it takes a person by surprise who would have never guessed that their own spouse or a dear friend and confidant would ever turn on them and betray them!

We see in John 13 that Jesus first dropped the bombshell that one of His disciples would betray Him—

John 13:18, 21 (NKJV)

¹⁸ I do not speak concerning all of you. I know whom I have chosen; but that the Scripture may be fulfilled, *‘He who eats bread with Me has lifted up his heel against Me.’*...²¹ When Jesus had said these things, He was troubled in spirit, and testified and said, "Most assuredly, I say to you, one of you will betray Me."

The reason Jesus said what He did in verse 18 was because—He *didn’t* want His disciples to think that Judas’ betrayal took Him by surprise. In fact, at the end of verse 18 Jesus quotes from Psalm 41:9 and tells us it was ultimately a prophecy about Judas betraying Him—

Psalm 41:9 (NKJV)

⁹ Even my own familiar friend in whom I trusted, who ate my bread, Has lifted up *his* heel against me.

(Listen for the context—David speaking of Ahithophel in 2 Samuel 15-17—however it was prophetic of Jesus and Judas)

So again, Jesus didn’t want His disciples (or anyone down thru history) to think that the events of that morning, including and especially Judas’ betrayal, caught Him by surprise—it was all foreknown by God in eternity past and prophesied about.

And to prove it, Jesus prophesied Psalm 41:9 through David—1000 years before He was born on the earth, that we would all know that Judas’ betrayal of Jesus was in the plan of God for the redemption of mankind from the beginning.

Matthew 26:56

“But all this was done that the Scriptures of the prophets might be fulfilled.”

Please understand that just because God knew what Judas would do and wove him into His divine plan—that doesn't mean that Judas was a helpless pawn or *'fall guy'*—he acted according to his own free will even though it fit into the plan of God—Judas was responsible for his actions:

Matthew 26:14-16 (NKJV)

¹⁴ Then one of the twelve, called Judas Iscariot, went to the chief priests ¹⁵ and said, "What are you willing to give me if I deliver Him to you?" And they counted out to him thirty pieces of silver. ¹⁶ So from that time he sought opportunity to betray Him.

For centuries Christians have debated the reason for Judas' betrayal of Jesus.

I mean what would cause one of His closest friends, a man whom He chose to be an apostle, someone who walked with Jesus for three and a half years watching Him minister to hurting people. Watching Him heal the sick, work miracles and teach the truths of God—what would cause Judas to turn on Jesus like this and plot to betray Him to the leaders of Israel who hated Jesus and wanted to kill Him?

I have no idea—all I can do is offer a couple of the most popular suggestions posed by others:

1. *Perhaps Judas was disillusioned with the type of Messiah Jesus revealed Himself to be—in essence wanting a more political, militant Messiah (Jesus taught His disciples to love their enemies—hardly what you'd expect from a general about to lead His troops into battle against the Roman government).*
2. *Some even suggest that Judas did this from a noble motive; that he was impatient for Jesus to reveal Himself as a powerful Messiah, and he thought that this would force Him to act.*

Whatever the specific reason, the words of Judas stand and no doubt will haunt him for all eternity: *"What are you willing to give me if I deliver Him to you?"*

This was also prophesied—this time five centuries earlier through the prophet Zechariah:

Zechariah 11:12-13 (NKJV)

¹² Then I said to them, "If it is agreeable to you, give *me* my wages; and if not, refrain." So they weighed out for my wages thirty *pieces* of silver. ¹³ And the LORD said to me, "Throw it to the potter"—that princely price they set on me. So I took the thirty *pieces* of silver and threw them into the house of the LORD for the potter.

We know that later, Judas brought the money back, and said to the Jewish leadership, *"I can't keep this, I have betrayed innocent blood"*.

To which the chief priests responded—*"That's your problem!"*

So, Judas threw the money down on the floor of the Temple and went out and hanged himself.

This caused the chief priests to say among themselves, *"What do we do now? We can't put the money back into the Temple treasury since it's blood money. We used it to buy the information that brought the death of this man Jesus—it's blood money and can't go back into the treasury."*

So, they came up with the idea of using it to buy a potter's field to bury the poor in—just as the prophecy in Zechariah had predicted.

A potter's field was a piece of ground next to the potter's house.

It was out onto this field that the potter would toss all the pottery that didn't survive the firing process and had cracked or broken.

These fields would eventually become so filled with little pieces of broken pottery that they became unusable for farming and practically worthless.

They therefore became a cheap way to acquire land to bury the poor in—and thus the phrase “*potter's field*” became a term for a graveyard.

A. Jesus is betrayed by His friend

B. Jesus is arrested by His enemies

John 18:1–3 (NKJV)

¹ When Jesus had spoken these words, He went out with His disciples over the Brook Kidron, where there was a garden, which He and His disciples entered. ² And Judas, who betrayed Him, also knew the place; for Jesus often met there with His disciples. ³ Then Judas, having received a detachment of troops, and officers from the chief priests and Pharisees, came there with lanterns, torches, and weapons.

Remember, Judas had left the upper room earlier in the evening (just before the Lord instituted communion) to carry out his betrayal of Jesus.

Judas was given two groups that would carry out the arrest Jesus:

1. “A detachment of troops (Roman soldiers)”

The *detachment of Roman soldiers* was a *cohort* (*speiran*—a 10th part of a Roman legion). A Roman legion consisted of 6000 soldiers—therefore a 10th of that would have been 600 men.

2. “and officers from the chief priests and Pharisees”

These officers were members of the Temple police force (see John 7:32). These Temple police evidently made the actual arrest (since Jesus was taken first to the Jewish authorities and not the Roman governor).

Luke adds that some of the chief priests were also present, no doubt to supervise the Temple police (Luke 22:52-53). Both the Roman soldiers and the Temple officers were working together and were probably commanded to pick up this ‘*dangerous insurrectionist*’ known as *Jesus of Nazareth* who claimed to be some kind of king.

We read how they came with “**lanterns, torches, and weapons.**”

The ‘**lanterns and torches**’ were odd seeing that it was Passover time—which always takes place during a full moon—so why would they need torches and lanterns?

They apparently thought they were going to have to ‘*beat the bushes*’ to find Jesus who would be hiding from them like a common criminal—hence the need also for ‘**weapons**’.

When Judas was given this group of soldiers and Temple police to go and arrest Jesus—he no doubt went back to the upper room believing that Jesus and His disciples were still there. When he saw that

they were gone, he figured that the next likely place he would find them would be the Garden of Gethsemane.

John tells us in verse 2, Judas knew of that place well since Jesus spent a great deal of time with His disciples in that garden praying and spending some quality time with them after a long day in ministry in Jerusalem.

John 18:2–9 (NKJV)

² And Judas, who betrayed Him, also knew the place; for Jesus often met there with His disciples. ³ Then Judas, having received a detachment of troops, and officers from the chief priests and Pharisees, came there with lanterns, torches, and weapons. ⁴ **Jesus therefore, knowing all things that would come upon Him, went forward and said to them, “Whom are you seeking?”** ⁵ They answered Him, “Jesus of Nazareth.” Jesus said to them, **“I am He.”** And Judas, who betrayed Him, also stood with them. ⁶ Now when He said to them, **“I am He,”** they drew back and fell to the ground. ⁷ Then He asked them again, **“Whom are you seeking?”** And they said, **“Jesus of Nazareth.”** ⁸ Jesus answered, **“I have told you that I am He. Therefore, if you seek Me, let these go their way,”** ⁹ that the saying might be fulfilled which He spoke, **“Of those whom You gave Me I have lost none.”**

As we read this account, the one thing I want you to understand is that—**Jesus was in full control!**

**He was not taken by surprise, and He was definitely not
a victim of circumstances—
He knew exactly what was going to happen.
(see John 13:1, 3, 11; 16:19; 18:4)**

Apparently, Judas expected some kind of deception, so he arranged to identify Jesus by kissing Him (Matthew 26:48–49)—a ‘kiss of betrayal.’

But Jesus shocked both Judas and the arresting officers by boldly presenting Himself to them—He had nothing to fear and nothing to hide—He would *willingly* lay down His life for His sheep.

Furthermore, by surrendering to the Roman soldiers and Temple police—Jesus helped to protect His disciples.

By twice asking the question, **“Whom are you seeking?” (verses 4, 7)** to which they replied, **“Jesus of Nazareth” (verses 5, 7)**, Jesus was forcing them to acknowledge that they had no authority to arrest His disciples—in fact, He demanded that they let the disciples go **(verse 8)**.

But something interesting happened the first time Jesus answered their question—

John 18:4–6 (NKJV)

⁴ **Jesus therefore, knowing all things that would come upon Him, went forward and said to them, “Whom are you seeking?”** ⁵ They answered Him, **“Jesus of Nazareth.”** Jesus said to them, **“I am He.”** And Judas, who betrayed Him, also stood with them. ⁶ Now when He said to them, **“I am He,”** they drew back and fell to the ground [including Judas!].

Jesus didn’t really say **“I am He”**—He actually said, **“I am”** (The **“He”** is not found in the original Greek but was added by the translators because the English language requires it but also for ‘clarity’).

By saying **“I am”** Jesus was not only answering their question that He was **‘Jesus of Nazareth’**—but He was declaring His divinity as well—that He was (and is!) *Yahweh* the Almighty God of the universe—the Creator of all things!

The phrase “**I Am**” is the name of God as first expressed in the Book of Exodus 3:13-14. So, for the first time in Scripture God revealed Himself as **the Great “I Am”**—not the Great “*I was*” or the great “*I will be*”.

Inherent in His name is the idea of God being eternal and that He dwells in the eternal present tense. (Explain) As He declared Himself to be the great “**I AM**” the soldiers were knocked backwards and down to the ground like ‘*bowling pins*’ by the ‘*word of His power*’—a further evidence that Jesus was in complete control of the situation and no victim!

John 18:8–9 (NKJV)

⁸ Jesus answered, “I have told you that I am *He*. Therefore, if you seek Me, let these go their way,” ⁹ that the saying might be fulfilled which He spoke, “Of those whom You gave Me I have lost none.”

John 17:12 (NKJV)

¹² While I was with them in the world, I kept them in Your name. Those whom You gave Me I have kept; and none of them is lost except the son of perdition, that the Scripture might be fulfilled.

Jude 24 (NKJV)

²⁴ Now to Him who is able to keep you from stumbling, And to present *you* faultless Before the presence of His glory with exceeding joy.

John 18:10–12 (NKJV)

¹⁰ Then Simon Peter, having a sword, drew it and struck the high priest’s servant, and cut off his right ear. The servant’s name was Malchus. ¹¹ So Jesus said to Peter, “Put your sword into the sheath. Shall I not drink the cup which My Father has given Me?” [And Jesus stooped down, picked up Malchus’s ear and put back on his head healing him] ¹² Then the detachment *of troops* and the captain and the officers of the Jews arrested Jesus and bound Him.

Both Matthew and Mark tell us—“**Then all the disciples forsook Him and fled.**”

A. Jesus is betrayed by His friend

B. Jesus is arrested by His enemies

C. Jesus is forsaken by His disciples

- *We read how that ten of the disciples forsook Jesus and fled.*
- *Simon Peter followed at a distance and wound up denying his Lord three times.*
- *Judas used his relationship with Jesus to betray Him.*

So, the disciples *forsook* Him; Peter *denied* Him; and Judas *betrayed* Him—the only thing we don’t hear is how any of His followers stood by Him!

What group do you think you’d belong to if the authorities came to our church looking for followers of Jesus?

- ➔ Listen for reference to the Russian soldiers who came to a secret church meeting with guns drawn telling anyone who really wasn’t a follower of Jesus to leave immediately...

Earlier in the evening Jesus had told them that before the night was out, they would all forsake Him—of course they all assured Him they would never do that.

Peter and the other disciples (except for Judas) did love the Lord—they were just too weak to stand by Him when they should have.

- Judas was a different story—he betrayed Jesus.
- Failure and betrayal are two very different things.
- We can fail to stand up for the Lord at times because we fear the consequences—we don't want others to think we're a 'Jesus freak' and make fun of us.
- Or maybe our boss will hear of it, and we won't get that promotion.
- Or maybe if you let your classmates know you're a Christian they'll start treating you like a social leper.

(Listen for reference to one student kneeling all by himself at the flagpole of his middle school on "See you at the pole" day—9/24/14)

We can fail Jesus and still love Him.

He knows our hearts; He knows that we really love Him even if we are sometimes weak and prone to failure in our relationship with Him. But how much better to be so in love with Him that we stand for Him and with Him so that the world can see clearly that we belong to Him!

We read in verse 5 that when the soldiers and Temple police came to arrest Jesus that Judas who betrayed Him—stood with His enemies!

**If things get rough
and our faith is tested like never before,
The time to decide is right now—
are we going to stand with Jesus,
or His enemies?**

If you would like to know more about what it means to be a Jesus-follower— please, reach out to us. It would be our greatest privilege to lead you into a saving relationship with Jesus Christ.

Reach out to us [here](#).

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