

JOHN 18:1-12
PRAYER AND HIS ARREST!

Please turn in your Bibles this morning to John chapter 18 as we continue our in-depth study of the Gospel of John.

Over the last several weeks we have been looking at John chapters 13 through 17. This was Jesus' farewell address to His men you might say.

Remember that John chapters 13 and 14 dealt with the Passover meal and the teachings, the discussions that went on during and after this meal.

As we moved into John chapters 15 through 17, they have now gotten up and they are heading to the Temple area and out the east gate toward the Mount of Olives and the Garden of Gethsemane.

And once again Jesus is teaching His men and even praying for them.

Now as we move into chapter 18, they have exited the east gate of the Temple, Jesus has taught that He is the vine and we are the branches, and now they are heading to the Mount of Olives where Jesus will be arrested shortly, after a time of prayer before the cross.

As we begin John chapter 18 this morning, I would like to fill in some of the details that went on before Jesus was arrested.

You see, John does not cover the prayer of Jesus in the Garden of Gethsemane. Matthew, Mark and Luke do, and I think it is important we review that because all that John tells us is that they went over the Brook Kidron and to the Garden of Gethsemane.

So here is a review and an introduction to what we will be looking at this morning –

PRAYER AND HIS ARREST!

As they get to the Garden of Gethsemane, we see Jesus take Peter, James and John with Him as He went away to pray.

What about the other eight disciples?

Understand that Jesus had His inner circle of three, not that He did not love the others, but He did have an inner circle of men that He took with Him.

He tells these other men to sit in a spot while Peter, James, John will go with Jesus to the Garden of Gethsemane.

And before He goes to pray, He tells Peter, James and John, “. . . ‘My soul is exceedingly sorrowful, even to death. Stay here and watch with Me.’” Matthew 26:38.

As you read that you can just feel the pain, the agony, that He is overwhelmed by what is ahead of Him.

Make no mistake about it; the agony of this temptation was unequalled.

In Luke 22:44 we are told that this agony was so intense that the capillaries under His skin burst, and He began to sweat drops of blood that was mingled with His sweat!

Now what was Jesus in agony over?

The pain of the crucifixion? Maybe!

What about the pain that He was going to endure at the hands of the Romans, He was going to be so beaten up, His beard plucked out, His back raw from the lashings that He will not even look like a man anymore, just a bloody mess! Maybe that is the reason.

It could be but I think there is more to it than that even though that was going to be so painful.

I think it has to do with the separation from the Father, something that He never experienced in eternity past and will never experience in eternity future.

You see, as the sins of the world were cast upon Jesus the Father turned His face from the Son, that fellowship was broken and I think that is the reason He is in anguish, He is in agony, He is overwhelmed with what is before Him!

One other point here and that is this word “**Gethsemane.**” It means “*olive press*” and there is a powerful point that is being made with that word.

The Garden of Gethsemane was not a flower garden, it was an olive garden and thus, it was the place that olives were pressed to make olive oil, they were crushed to release that oil.

You can go to this area in Jerusalem and see olive trees today, some from the time of Jesus!

Now here is how it is related to Jesus.

Before the oil of the Holy Spirit could be given Jesus was going to be broken, He was going to be crushed!

In speaking of the Holy Spirit Jesus said in John 16:7, “**Nevertheless I tell you the truth. It is to your advantage that I go away; for if I do not go away, the Helper will not come to you; but if I depart, I will send Him to you.**”

Also, in John 14:16-17 Jesus said, “**And I will pray the Father, and He will give you another Helper, that He may abide with you forever - the Spirit of truth, whom the world cannot receive, because it neither sees Him nor knows Him; but you know Him, for He dwells with you and will be in you.**”

Jesus Christ was going to be crushed and as He gave up His Spirit, paying in full the penalty for our sins, He did not leave us as orphans you might say. He sent His Spirit to not only indwell us but to empower us for service unto Him, to live a life that is pleasing to the Lord.

We now see that Jesus leaves Peter, James and John and goes a little further on, and He falls on His knees and bows His face to the ground and His prayer speaks volumes to us about the way of salvation.

You see, if salvation could be obtained by any other way, by any other means other than through Jesus and the cross, then the Father would have listened to the prayer of Jesus and the cross would have been put aside.

What did Jesus pray?

Listen carefully. He prayed to God the Father, “**... O My Father, if it is possible, let this cup pass from Me ...**” Matthew 26:39

That was the prayer of Jesus and what I want you to notice here is that Jesus is fully committed to the will of the Father even if there is no other way! And there wasn't!

Jesus prayed, “**... nevertheless, not as I will, but as You will.**” Matthew 26:39.

You see, God's desire is for man to be saved and there is only one way to be saved. That is through the God Man Jesus Christ.

Jesus is the Mediator between God and man, He is that bridge builder because that bridge was broken when sin entered the world, but Jesus became that bridge for us and there is salvation in no other name, none!

Remember what Paul wrote in I Timothy 2:5-6, “**For there is one God and one Mediator between God and men, the Man Christ Jesus, who gave Himself a ransom for all, to be testified in due time.**”

There is only One who can bridge that gap that sin has made between God and man, and it is only Jesus!

And let me say this. Make no mistake about it; the wrath of God is going to be poured out upon sinful man.

Then how do we escape that wrath?

Through Jesus Christ, that is the only way because He bore our sins on the cross of Calvary, He took the wrath that was due us and thus, the payment for sin has been paid in full if you receive Jesus into your life. If not, then you will endure the wrath of God!

Now Jesus is in prayer, He is agonizing over what is before Him, and what are Peter, James and John doing?

They fell asleep!

We may wonder why they fell asleep at a time like this but think about it. It was a busy day, a long day and as they sat down to relax what happened next? They fell asleep and the same thing tends to happen to us. We sit down after a busy day to relax and our eyes close! In other words, we fall asleep. I like to tell Julie that I was just resting my eyes, but really, don't tell her, I would really be sleeping!

I think that is what is going on here. It is not that they didn't want to stay awake, but Peter, James and John fell asleep. It is as Jesus said, “. . . ‘The spirit indeed is willing, but the flesh is weak.’” Matthew 26:41.

Now as Jesus goes back to pray a second time, I want you to see that Jesus did not seek to do His own will but to fulfill the will of the Father. He prays, “O My Father, if this cup cannot pass away from Me unless I drink it, Your will be done.” Matthew 26:42.

Now as Jesus finished praying, He went back to His men and what were they doing this time?

They were still sleeping.

Jesus woke them up that first time and before you know it, they are fast asleep again!

And Jesus goes away and prays for a third time and as Jesus returns His men are still sleeping and when you see the timing of all of this, you will see that Jesus was in control.

Also, what I want you to notice is that Jesus went into the Garden of Gethsemane in agony, and He left in peace!

How can that be?

Because He submitted to the will of the Father, and I believe that is true in our own lives. As we try to get our own will accomplished there is no peace, just frustration, agony, and-so-on.

But surrendering to the will of God in a given situation places the problem, the situation at His feet and thus, you can rest in Him! What an example for us to follow!

Now, as we read on, we are going to see Judas and this cohort of men, some 600-armed men plus the chief priests' soldiers, the Sanhedrin and many of the chief priests, which means there could have been some 1,000 men or more coming for Jesus, for one man in the middle of the night and they were armed to the teeth!

Make no mistake about it; Jesus knew that Judas and those who would arrest Him were on the way. He could have run and escaped the agony waiting for Him at the cross. But Jesus rose to meet Judas. He was in complete control of all events. And He awakens His men telling them that “**... he who betrays Me is at hand.**” Matthew 26:46. Time to get up boys!

That is where we will pick up our study this morning. Jesus and His men are on their way to the Garden of Gethsemane and from there John will speak of the arrest of Jesus.

Like I have said, this message I have titled – ***PRAYER AND HIS ARREST!***

And I have broken down the verses we will be looking at this morning into the following main points. They are,

A TIME OF PRAYER – JOHN 18:1

THE BETRAYER – JOHN 18:2-3

JESUS IS IN CONTROL – JOHN 18:4-6

PROTECTING HIS MEN – JOHN 18:7-9

HELPING IN THE FLESH – JOHN 18:10-11

ARREST OF JESUS – JOHN 18:12

So, with that as our introduction, let's begin reading in John chapter 18 beginning in verse 1 and let's see what the Lord has for us as we study His Word and look at this topic –

PRAYER AND HIS ARREST!

JOHN 18

VERSE 1

Remember back in John chapter 17, the prayer of Jesus.

We see that Jesus prayed for Himself.

Then Jesus prayed for His men.

And lastly, Jesus prayed for those who would come to saving faith, you and me and all those through the years that have come to Jesus and on into the future as well!

At a time like this, when the cross was before Him, Jesus took the time to pray for you and me! That just tells me how much He loves me, how much He loves you!

Don't forget what time it was. Remember the meal that Jesus shared with His men, the Passover meal and thus, with it being Passover, Jerusalem was filled with people.

Josephus tells us that during this specific Passover there were 250,000 sheep that were sacrificed.

What does that tell us?

It tells us that Jerusalem could have been filled with some 2.5 million people who have come to this Feast of Passover!

And we can see that played out as there would be one sheep for at least 10 people. And that would put the number of people up to 2.5 million!

Thus, with all these sheep being sacrificed, as the blood flowed down from the Temple it would flow into the Brook Kidron, where Jesus and His men were now crossing to go up the Mount of Olives and to the Garden of Gethsemane.

Interestingly enough, the name, "**Brook Kidron**" means "*dusky, gloomy,*" referring to the dark waters that were often stained by the blood from the Temple sacrifices.

Thus, as our Passover Lamb, Jesus, crosses the Brook Kidron He has a vivid reminder of what will shortly take place in His own life, the sacrifice He would make, the shedding of His blood!

Barclay put it like this, "*From the altar there was a channel down to the brook Kedron, and through that channel the blood of the Passover lambs drained away. When Jesus crossed the brook Kedron it would still be red with the blood of the lambs which had been sacrificed.*"

And Spurgeon wrote, "*The very brook would remind him of his approaching sacrifice, for through it flowed the blood and refuse from the temple.*"

We are also told that as they crossed the brook Kidron that "**there was a garden, which He and His disciples entered.**"

Now John does not tell us what the name of this garden was, but Matthew does. He wrote, **“Then Jesus came with them to a place called Gethsemane, and said to the disciples . . .”** Matthew 26:36.

Keep in mind that the wealthy people owned gardens on the Mount of Olives and whoever owned this one, allowed Jesus to use it anytime He wanted.

How do I know that?

Because the Scriptures tell us He spent much time there in this garden.

We are told in Luke 23:39, **“Coming out, He went to the Mount of Olives, as He was accustomed, and His disciples also followed Him. . . .”**

Luke tells us this is the place Jesus went to often.

In fact, during that week He spent His nights there. We are told in Luke 21:37-38, **“And in the daytime He was teaching in the temple, but at night He went out and stayed on the mountain called Olivet. Then early in the morning all the people came to Him in the temple to hear Him.”**

And He did not change His routine even with this danger before Him! Prayer was important to Jesus!

Not only that, but this was such a routine for Jesus that Judas knew exactly where to find Him to have Him arrested as we are going to see! (See Matthew 26:36, Mark 14:32)

As I have said in our introduction to this chapter, John is not going to deal with the prayer of Jesus in the Garden of Gethsemane. We don't know why, but the Holy Spirit did not include that prayer in this Gospel.

Before we move on, why is prayer so important to us? Yes, it was important to Jesus, and He is our example, but why?

Let me share this with you. We are told,

Quite simply, for followers of Jesus Christ prayer is the best way to communicate with God. Prayer is the vehicle for daily dialogue with the One who created us.

The importance of daily communication through prayer cannot be overestimated. It is so important that it is mentioned over 250 times in Scripture.

So why is daily prayer so important?

First, daily prayer gives us an opportunity to share all aspects of our lives with God.

Second, daily prayer gives us the chance to express our gratitude for the things He provides.

Third, daily prayer provides the platform for confessing our sin and asking for help in overcoming that sin.

Fourth, daily prayer is an act of worship and obedience.

And finally, daily prayer is a way to acknowledge who is really in control of our lives . . .

. . . prayer is something that we all should want to do on a daily basis. Yet for many Christians it can be a challenge to humble one's self in daily prayer.

For those who have been walking with the Lord for many years, daily prayer may become stale and lacking in proper conviction or reverence.

Whether one is a new believer or an established one, prayer should always be considered as ***THE*** best way to speak to God.

Imagine not speaking to a loved one or a close friend. How long would the relationship last?

Daily prayer with God is daily fellowship with our heavenly Father. It is truly amazing that God would want to have fellowship with us at all.

In fact, the psalmist asks, “*What is man that you are mindful of him, the son of man that you care for him?*” (Psalm 8:4).

Daily prayer is a good way to understand this incredible truth and the marvelous privilege God has given us.

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On the night before His crucifixion, Jesus took the time to pray and we too should follow His example, not just when things are falling apart, but each and every day!

As we have seen here, this was – *A TIME OF PRAYER!*

As we move on, we will see Judas – *THE BETRAYER!*

VERSES 2-3

Matthew gives us these details of what happened. As Jesus finished praying in the Garden, His men still asleep, we are told in Matthew 26:45-47, “**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. Rise, let us be going. See, My betrayer is at hand.’ 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.**”

Of course, Jesus is speaking of Judas – *THE BETRAYER!*

Think about the number of people that came to arrest Jesus, and not just people, but soldiers!

We are told that they sent a “**detachment**” or “**cohort**” of troops, *SPEIRAN* in the Greek, and it speaks of a 10th part of a legion, which were 6,000 men.

Judas came with 600 armed men with swords, clubs, and lanterns to arrest Jesus.

Not only that, but there were some of the chief priests, possibly to advise the Temple police that were there as well. We see these guys mentioned in John 7:32, “**The Pharisees heard the crowd murmuring these things concerning Him, and the Pharisees and the chief priests sent officers to take Him.**” These “**officers**” were the Temple Police!

So you have some 600 Roman soldiers. You have the Temple police. You have some of the chief priests. Plus, any people that saw this huge gathering following them up the Mount of Olives!

That means that there could have been upwards of 1,000 people coming to arrest one man if you include the religious leaders and others that may have gathered with them, like I have said.

Don’t you think that just a few men would have been enough?

Think about the eleven men that Jesus had with them. They were not too tough a bunch of guys. They were not soldiers. They had one maybe two small swords with them.

So it would have been easy to arrest Jesus without all these people, right?

Yes and no!

Yes, because Jesus was laying down His life and no, not even a million men would have been enough if He was not willing to go, He is the creator!

Now they must have thought He was going to hide so, even though it was a full moon, they brought lanterns and torches with them.

The sky must have lit up as they came up the Mount of Olives.

Also, as Jesus finished praying, He must have watched them as they approached where they were at in the Garden of Gethsemane to arrest Him.

Can you imagine this light making its way up the Mount of Olives! That is why Jesus was able to say, **“See, My betrayer is at hand.”**

Make no mistake about it, Jesus wasn't hiding from them but will reveal Himself to these soldiers and those who accompanied them.

Again, imagine what Jesus saw as they were coming from the Temple area, out the eastern gate to the Mount of Olives. As Jesus looked, He saw this blaze of fire you might say coming towards them, weaving their way up the Mount of Olives and He knew that Judas was leading the way, leading them right to Him.

Why didn't Jesus run from them?

Jesus did not run away because the matter was already settled in Garden of Gethsemane as Jesus prayed and submitted to the Father's will!

As I have said, Jesus entered the Garden of Gethsemane in agony, and He left in peace ready to finish the work the Father had sent Him to do!

Of this Clarke wrote, ***“With these they had intended to search the corners and caverns, provided Christ had hidden himself; for they could not have needed them for any other purpose, it being now the fourteenth day of the moon's age, in the month Nisan, and consequently she appeared full and bright.”***

One more point here. Think about this. Here in this garden a sinless man was about to do battle with Satan's representative, Judas (Luke 22:3). And Jesus would not fail!

Some 6,000 years ago this also happened in a garden as a sinless man did battle with Satan and lost.

Adam failed and Jesus, the last Adam would not fail!

Paul points this out for us in I Corinthians chapter 15 as he wrote, **“For since by man came death, by Man also came the resurrection of the dead. For as in Adam all die, even so in Christ all shall be made alive. . . . And so it is written, ‘The first man Adam became a living being.’ The last Adam became a life-giving spirit. However, the spiritual is not first, but the natural, and afterward the spiritual. The first man was of the earth, made of dust; the second Man is the Lord from heaven. As was the man of dust, so also are those who are made of dust; and as is the heavenly Man, so also are those who are heavenly. And as we have borne the image of the man of dust, we shall also bear the image of the heavenly Man.”** I Corinthians 15:21-22, 45-49.

Now, as they are coming up the Mount of Olives, looking for Jesus to arrest this man, guess who meets them?

We don’t have to guess! Jesus is not hiding from them; He will reveal Himself to them!

And, as we will see – ***JESUS IS IN CONTROL!***

VERSES 4-6

First of all, why did Jesus ask them, **“Whom are you seeking?”**?

And not only once, but twice. (John 18:5, 7)

Because Jesus wanted them to acknowledge who they were looking for to protect His men.

In fact, that is what we see in verse 8 here in John chapter 18 as Jesus tells these soldiers, **“I have told you that I am He. Therefore, if you seek Me, let these go their way.”**

We will deal more with this idea of – ***PROTECTING HIS MEN*** with our next point!

So as Jesus asks them this question, they answer Him by telling Him they are looking for

“Jesus of Nazareth.”

Jesus doesn't say that He is **“Jesus of Nazareth”** even though He was!

What does Jesus tell them?

Jesus tells them, **“I AM”** and once again we see this *EGO EIMI* statement.

In other words, Jesus is telling them that He is God!

You see, in the Greek the ***“He”*** is not there. It was added later for clarification, but by doing that it loses the point being made, that Jesus is God!

They wanted to know who this Jesus is, and Jesus tells them that He is Almighty God!

And if there is any doubt to the fact that Jesus claimed to be God, when you see what happens to these men who came to arrest Jesus, I think that clears things up for us. You see, they were pushed back and fell to the ground!

Think about this for a minute. How many people fell down on their knees?

I think the 600 or so Roman soldiers.

I think the chief priests.

I think the Temple police.

There was Judas who also stood with this group.

And possibly all of the people that came with them.

I find that interesting because Paul tells us in Philippians 2:9-11, **“Therefore God also has highly exalted Him and given Him the name which is above every name, that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of those in heaven, and of those on earth, and of those under the earth, and that every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father.”**

As Jesus announced His deity they fell to their knees because, every knee will bow before the Lord one day and here is a glimpse of that!

Now we don't hear much about this today, even though it is still out there and practiced. And that is this idea, or I should say false teaching of being slain in the Spirit!

This is where some televangelist waves his hand or his coat around and people fall down to the ground, being slain in the Spirit.

Where do they get this from?

From here in John.

What is the problem with using this for believers to be thrown down to the ground?

All these soldiers, officers, and the rest were not saved! And they were bowing down to the King of kings and Lord of lords.

There is another verse in the New Testament that speaks of being slain in the Spirit and that is in Acts chapter 5 where Ananias and Sapphira are slain by the Spirit – they are dead because they lied to the Holy Spirit!

Not a good verse to try and support this false teaching of being slain in the Spirit!

Being slain in the Spirit is not Scriptural and should not be done in the church. That is just one of the many false practices that have come into the church and the Holy Spirit is blamed for doing these things!

Imagine, upwards of 1,000 people coming up to arrest Jesus and who was in control of the situation, these men?

No, they were not in control of the situation, even though they thought they were. Just the words of Jesus brought them to their knees!

What this shows is that Jesus was completely in control of the situation.

As a practical matter, Jesus did not have to go with this arresting army led by Judas. With God's power expressed through His words alone, Jesus could have overpowered them and easily escaped.

Please understand that He was not taken by surprise, and He was definitely not a victim of circumstances. Jesus knew exactly what was going to happen, and He allowed this even though these people were responsible for their actions.

Of this Clarke wrote, ***“Our Lord chose to give them this proof of his infinite power, that they might know that their power could not prevail against him if he chose to exert his might, seeing that the very breath of his mouth confounded, drove back, and struck them down to the earth.”***

So we have seen here that – **JESUS IS IN CONTROL!**

As we move on, we will see that Jesus is – **PROTECTING HIS MEN!**

Look at what takes place after these men have been knocked to the ground by the power of Jesus' words.

VERSES 7-9

Put yourself in the shoes of these Roman soldiers, the Temple police, these religious leaders and how they must have felt when Jesus asked them once again, **“Whom are you seeking?”**

Wouldn't you be a little nervous since the first time you asked Him that question you were driven to your knees?

I'm sure their voices quivered just a little and they braced themselves waiting to be knocked down again as they said ***“JJJEESSSUUSS of NNAAAZZZZAAARRATTH!!!”***

And once again He tells them “**I AM.**” He was more than just a man from Nazareth, He was and is Almighty God!

Once again we see that Jesus used the *EGO EIMI* and no one fell down this time, not like they did before. These were not some magic words spoken by Jesus, but it showed the power of God and that He is in control. It is not just the words He spoke; it was that He is Almighty God, and He does as He pleases!

Now as you read this you may be wondering, “*Who is in charge here?*”

Like I have said, I think you can clearly see that it doesn't seem like the soldiers or the religious leaders, but Jesus. We saw that in the previous verses we have looked at, and we see it once again here.

You see, as you read this you can clearly see that Jesus is telling them who they should arrest and who they should let go. How crazy is that when there are some 600 soldiers and maybe another 400 men who came to arrest Jesus, and yet they are unable to take control of the situation.

One Man, Jesus, has them bound!

And we see Jesus once again draw their attention back to Himself and away from His disciples, as He was – ***PROTECTING HIS MEN!***

Think about this from a logical viewpoint. The disciples of Jesus should have also been arrested as they were accomplices with Jesus, but they would be let go just as Jesus said.

You see, He displayed His divinity when He told them He was Almighty God and now, He once again tells them who He is, but they don't need to see that display again and they are not driven back on their knees before Him!

And the concern for Jesus, as I have said, was for His men, their safety.

Remember in John 17:12 Jesus said, **“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.”**

Here we see Jesus freely give His life and asks them to let His men go, protecting them from any harm.

And what did His men do?

We don't have to guess because Matthew 26:56 tells us what they did as Jesus said these words to let His men go, **“... Then all the disciples forsook Him and fled.”**

They all ran away at one point, before Jesus is taken away!

But notice His dignity. He is in charge of everything. Like I have said, He is even telling them whom to arrest and whom not to arrest.

There had been the prophecy that the Shepherd would be taken, and the sheep scattered, and Jesus had said that He had lost none.

Zechariah 13:7 says, **“Awake, O sword, against My Shepherd, Against the Man who is My Companion,” says the Lord of hosts. ‘Strike the Shepherd, And the sheep will be scattered . . .’**

And we can read and see that the disciples would not be captured.

I find that very interesting, because, like I have said, they should have been arrested. But they weren't!

We see that Jesus intervened for them; we see Jesus – ***PROTECTING HIS MEN!***

And think about that for a minute.

Jesus has done that for us all. He went to the cross and paid in full the penalty for our sins so that the judgment of God will not come upon us. We too are set free!

Clarke once again sums this up for us by saying, *“These words are rather words of authority, than words of entreaty. I voluntarily give myself up to you, but you must not molest one of these my disciples. At your peril injure them. Let them go about their business. I have already given you a sufficient proof of my power: I will not exert it in my own behalf, for I will lay down my life for the sheep; but I will not permit you to injure the least of these.”*

And another writer put it like this, *“In a sense, he sacrificed himself for their safety. He had promised the Father that he would protect them (John 17:12) and he fulfilled the guarantee of the voluntary surrender of his life.”* (Tenney)

What a Savior we have. Laying down His life for us!

Remember what Jesus said in John 10:14-18, **“I am the good shepherd; and I know My sheep, and am known by My own. As the Father knows Me, even so I know the Father; and I lay down My life for the sheep. And other sheep I have which are not of this fold; them also I must bring, and they will hear My voice; and there will be one flock and one shepherd. Therefore My Father loves Me, because I lay down My life that I may take it again. No one takes it from Me, but I lay it down of Myself. I have power to lay it down, and I have power to take it again. This command I have received from My Father.”**

I think that is very clear, our Lord loves us so much that He laid down His life for us!

VERSES 10-11

As these soldiers are preparing to arrest Jesus, there in the distance you could hear Peter say, *“Here I am to save the day!”*

Well, not exactly, but it does seem pretty noble for him to step forward like this, before everyone fled for their lives, the disciples of Jesus that is. In fact, as you read of Peter's actions to protect Jesus you might think this was very brave. But what we see here is Peter - ***HELPING IN THE FLESH!***

But think about what Peter just saw, the display of the deity of Jesus.

And he also saw Jesus in His glory on the Mount of Transfiguration.

He saw the miracles that Jesus did.

And the conclusion that he comes to in knowing all that is he needs to help God out on this one!

Now we do need to deal with this issue of what Peter did because we might think this was a very brave act that Peter did, as I have said. I don't think so.

Let's think about this for a minute.

If Peter was right-handed, to cut off the right ear of Malchus, the servant of the High Priest, meant that this man was running away, he had his back to Peter!

And really, think about it, one man with one sword and did he really believe he could win?

I guess Peter thought he was going to go down swinging and must have picked on the weakest guy, the one running away!

But, as Calvin said, ***"It is exceedingly thoughtless in Peter to try to prove his faith by the sword, while he could not do so by his tongue."***

Something for us to think about, not just dying for the Lord, but living for Him!

Now I can't imagine what this servant of the High Priest was thinking as he was walking away or running away, and Peter cuts off his ear.

Now, in another Gospel we are told that Jesus picked up this ear and placed it back on Malchus, healing him.

Why did Jesus do that?

Because if He hadn't there might have been another cross and Peter would have been the one hanging on it! He was protecting Peter here.

Bruce put it like this, *“Peter’s impulsive action was more likely to get himself and his companions into serious trouble than to do his Master any good, but even if it had a better chance of success, Jesus would allow nothing to stand in the way of his bringing to completion the work which his Father had given him to do.”*

As I have said, we must be careful in our zeal for the Lord that we are not mauling or injuring people.

How many ears has the Lord had to replace that we cut off in our zeal for Him? Again, something for us to think about!

If the Lord wanted, He could have called twelve legions of angels to come deliver Him, even though He did not need them, He could have done it on His own! He did not need Peter’s help!

And that should make sense to us.

Jesus did not need deliverance because He came to fulfill the will of the Father and pay the debt of sin for mankind!

In Matthew 26:52-56 we see this same event where we are told, **“But Jesus said to him, ‘Put your sword in its place, for all who take the sword will perish by the sword. Or do you think that I cannot now pray to My Father, and He will provide Me with more than twelve legions of angels? How then could the Scriptures be fulfilled, that it must happen thus?’ In that hour Jesus said to the multitudes, ‘Have you come out, as against a robber, with swords and clubs to take Me? I sat daily with you, teaching in the temple, and you did not seize Me. But all this was done that the Scriptures of the prophets might be fulfilled.’ Then all the disciples forsook Him and fled.”**

Think about this for a minute. Yes, there were 600 soldiers and maybe some 1,000 people in all, but Jesus could handle it. He could have called to His Father and had 12 legions of angels, some 72,000 angles at His disposal, as I have said.

As Trapp tells us, *“A legion is judged to be six thousand foot and seven hundred horse. And this great army of angels is by prayer dispatched from heaven in an instant.”*

And think about this, it only took one angel to destroy 185,000 Assyrians in one night!
(II Kings 19:35)

So this would have been overkill! But, in doing that He would not have gone to the cross, He would not have fulfilled the will of the Father and the Scriptures would have been broken, we would still be lost in our sins!

It is after all of this that I believe that the disciples of Jesus fled. They saw the handwriting on the wall you might say and as we are told, **“... Then all the disciples forsook Him and fled.”**

Nice group of guys. Remember their boldness in Matthew 26:33-35 as Jesus told them that they were going to forsake Him, that they would be scattered and, **“Peter answered and said to Him, ‘Even if all are made to stumble because of You, I will never be made to stumble.’ Jesus said to him, ‘Assuredly, I say to you that this night, before the rooster crows, you will deny Me three times.’ Peter said to Him, ‘Even if I have to die with You, I will not deny You!’ And so said all the disciples.”**

Yes, Peter was at the forefront of saying that they would never stumble, that they would be by the Lord’s side, but they all were involved in this, and they all stumbled as they fled for their lives when Jesus was arrested!

Poole summarizes it like this, *“We never know our hearts upon the prospect of great trials, until we come to grapple with them, and to be engaged in them. These disciples had all said they would not forsake him; when it comes to the push, not one of them stands by him.”*

But what if they could save Jesus?

What if Jesus called 12 legions of angels down?

What if Jesus just toasted all these soldiers and men who were with them?

He would not have gone to the cross to save us from our sins!

But He did and He did that all for us!

Here’s the thing. We need to think about this. If man could be saved by good works, then why did Almighty God become flesh and dwell amongst us to go to the cross of Calvary?

Now some would say that it is His sacrifice and good works that save us. Not at all!

Paul tells us in Galatians 2:21, **“I do not set aside the grace of God; for if righteousness comes through the law, then Christ died in vain.”**

The Law can't save anyone, it can only show you how far short you come to a relationship with God. It exposes your sin. Only Jesus can save us because He was the Sacrificial Lamb that paid the price for our sin, all of our sin. Never forget that!

There was no other way, as Jesus prayed in the Garden of Gethsemane. If there was, then His prayer to let this cup pass from Him, was not answered by God the Father. But there was no other way, only one, and that was the cross and He was going to complete the work the Father sent Him to do!

Yes, Peter tried helping the Lord out – *HELPING IN THE FLESH*, and that never works! We must walk in the Spirit, being guided by what the Lord wants us to do!

But that flesh gets in the way as we saw here with Peter.

Let me explain it like this. We are told,

John Mason Brown was a drama critic and speaker well known for his witty and informative lectures on theatrical topics.

One of his first important appearances as a lecturer was at the Metropolitan Museum of Art.

Brown was pleased, but also rather nervous, and his nerves were not helped when he noticed by the light of the slide projector that someone was copying his every gesture.

After a time he broke off his lecture and announced with great dignity that if anyone was not enjoying the talk, he was free to leave.

Nobody did, and the mimicking continued. It was another 10 minutes before Brown realized that the mimic was his own shadow!

Was Brown's shadow real?

Of course.

Does a shadow have the power to control a person's actions?

Of course not. It can only mimic us.

But in Brown's case, his shadow did take control momentarily.

Why?

Because he allowed himself to be so distracted – “addicted,” if you will - by it that he completely forgot what he was supposed to be about.

That's a pretty good description of the sin nature we carry within us as redeemed people.

It can cause havoc, even though it has been made powerless by our identification with Christ.

- Today in the Word, May 17, 1992

Remember what Paul said in Galatians 5:16-17, **“I say then: Walk in the Spirit, and you shall not fulfill the lust of the flesh. For the flesh lusts against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the flesh; and these are contrary to one another, so that you do not do the things that you wish.”**

A war is going on and who you surrender to will then be manifested in your life. May it be the Spirit of God!

Our last point, which we will continue to look at next time is the – ***ARREST OF JESUS!***

VERSE 12

Now think about this for a minute. All these groups of people come by and they arrest Jesus, or at least representatives from these groups.

And we see that they bind the hands of Jesus.

Did they really need to bind the hands of Jesus?

Of course not, but again, they truly didn't understand who they had bound and were leading away to the house of Annas. Jesus is the creator of heaven and earth, and no ropes were going to hold Him! But His love for us, fulfilling the work that was before Him would keep those ropes upon His wrists and keep Him upon that cross!

What we will see over the next few weeks is that Jesus will face two main trials.

One of them will be religious and there are three of these religious trials.

Then there will be the civil trial. And again, there will be three of these civil trials or the Roman authority will be evaluating what to do with Jesus, release Him or crucify Him!

May we learn from Jesus, that the easy way out is not always the correct way out. We must submit to the authority of God and follow His direction for our lives!

Jesus prayed and then He was arrested because that was the Father's will and that was the only way our sins could be atoned for, by His sacrifice on the cross of Calvary!