

John 18:1-11

Title – Christ’s Betrayal

Opening

The Apostle John states his purpose for writing his gospel account, “these have been written that you may believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God; and that believing you may have life in His name.” (John 20:31) In chapters 2 to 12 we read of Jesus’ ministry to the world. He presented Himself mainly to the nation of Israel and validated that He was indeed the long awaited Messiah by His teachings, signs and wonders. Chapters 13 to 17, which took us a considerable time to explore, but actually covered a short period of Jesus’ personal time with His disciples. These chapters were a time of Jesus’ final teachings and instruction to His disciples for it is these men who would be charged with planting His church. It was a time of His demonstrating His love for them and ended with His prayer for His glory restored, for His disciples and all believers to come. Now we come to the climax John’s gospel with the recording of the arrest, trial, death and resurrection of Jesus in chapters 18 to 21.

There is a difference in how John approaches this ending of Jesus’ life of ministry to His resurrection than that of Matthew and Mark. Matthew and Mark wanted to show the suffering Jesus as they related Jesus as both man and God. So, they wrote of Jesus’ humiliation and graphic suffering. As we just saw John’s purpose was that, “these have been written that you may believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God; and that believing you may have life in His name.” (John 20:31) John, therefore, focuses on Jesus’ deity.

Before we continue I want to make a point and that is; Jesus was not a victim, He was not sweep up by events He had no control over and He was not blind-sided. A few chapters back Jesus said, **“For this reason the Father loves me, because I lay down my life that I may take it up again. No one takes it from me, but I lay it down of my own accord. I have authority to lay it down, and I have authority to take it up again. This charge I have received from my Father.”** (John 10:17-18)

Jesus came to earth for one reason – to die, to pay for sin, all sin, that people can be reconciled with God. The prophet Isaiah spoke of Jesus paying the price to redeem those called by God the Father 700 hundred years before Jesus was born. Please turn in your bibles to Isaiah chapter 53. As I read from Isaiah think of the cross of Christ looming just hours from the time of the events recorded in John chapter 18. Beginning in verse 1, **“Who has believed what he has heard from us? And to whom has the arm of the LORD been revealed?”** Now Isaiah speaks of the coming Messiah, **2 “For he (speaking of Jesus) grew up before him like a young plant, and like a root out of dry ground (Israel had become a spiritual desert or spiritually dry ground); he (Jesus) had no form or majesty that we should look at him, and no beauty that we should desire him.”** *There was nothing special about Jesus’ outward appearance; He was not the handsome leader David was, nor was He the conquering King defeating the Romans that so many were waiting for.*

3 “He was despised and rejected by men; a man of sorrows, and acquainted with grief; and as one from whom men hide their faces he was despised, and we esteemed him not. 4 Surely he has borne our griefs and carried our sorrows; yet we esteemed him stricken, smitten by God, and afflicted.” *Some things do not change with time – the world at the time of Christ and today did not and does not esteem Jesus as the Christ because people are spiritually dead and do not want to*

be convicted of their sin. Now we continue to read from Isaiah of what had to happen in order for Jesus to atone for all sin and make righteous those whom God has called. Taking up again in verse 5, “But he (Jesus) was pierced for our transgressions; he was crushed for our iniquities; upon him was the chastisement that brought us peace, and with his wounds we are healed. 6 All we like sheep have gone astray; we have turned—every one—to his own way; and the LORD has laid on him the iniquity of us all.” Jesus paid the atoning price for all mankind, but only those whom the Father has called will respond. Isaiah continues speaking of Jesus’ trial, 7 “He was oppressed, and he was afflicted, yet he opened not his mouth; (Jesus remained silent before the chief priest. Now Isaiah speaks of Jesus carrying His cross until Simon of Cyrene bore the cross.) like a lamb that is led to the slaughter, and like a sheep that before its shearers is silent, so he opened not his mouth. 8 By oppression and judgment he was taken away; and as for his generation, who considered that he was cut off out of the land of the living, stricken for the transgression of my people?” Isaiah even tells of Jesus’ tomb, owned by a wealthy man, Joseph of Arimathea who was a believer in Jesus. 9 “And they made his grave with the wicked (Jesus was crucified between two criminals) and with a rich man (Joseph) in his death, although he had done no violence, and there was no deceit in his mouth.” Why did Jesus suffer this terrible death and what was the purpose? Isaiah saw the reason and purpose centuries before, 10 “Yet it was the will of the LORD to crush him; he has put him to grief; when his soul makes an offering for guilt, he shall see his offspring (all believers); he shall prolong his days; the will of the LORD shall prosper in his hand. 11 Out of the anguish of his soul he shall see and be satisfied; by his knowledge shall the righteous one, my servant, make many to be accounted righteous, and he shall

bear their iniquities.” (Isaiah 53:1-11) In reading Isaiah we see the purpose of God the Father. We see that God has all knowledge and had a plan for our salvation since before the creation of the universe. I find it amazing that rabbis can study Isaiah 53 and not see Jesus. But, this is the fate of those who are spiritually blind and dead.

Jesus echoes what Isaiah wrote of and spoke of; how He would die as He taught the people saying, “Now is my soul troubled. And what shall I say? ‘Father, save me from this hour’? But for this purpose I have come to this hour. 28 ‘Father, glorify your name.’ Then a voice came from heaven: ‘I have glorified it, and I will glorify it again.’ 29 The crowd that stood there and heard it said that it had thundered. Others said, ‘An angel has spoken to him.’ 30 Jesus answered, ‘This voice has come for your sake, not mine. 31 Now is the judgment of this world; now will the ruler of this world be cast out. 32 And I, when I am lifted up from the earth, will draw all people (*all who are called*) to myself.’ 33 He said this to show by what kind of death he was going to die.” (John 12:27-33) Now the time is at hand.

As we now turn our attention to John’s account of these last hours of Jesus’ earthly life, we will see his focus is on the deity of Jesus. For the complete picture of these last hours and more detail take time this week to read: Matthew 26:47 to 27:32 and Mark 14:32 to 15:21. John’s focus and ours this morning is on Jesus’ majesty; His divine control, His supremacy and His obedience.

Christ in Control

Jesus is in control – He will fulfill God’s plan, He orchestrates the time and place of

His arrest, protects His disciples and even His enemies are fulfilling God's plan. The end is now near. Jesus time of instruction was over and events will quickly unfold, reading from John 18 beginning in verse 1, "When Jesus had spoken these words, he went out with his disciples across the brook Kidron, (ked·rone) where there was a garden, which he and his disciples entered." *Show picture of Jerusalem, Kidron and the Garden.* This small band left Jerusalem and crossed over the Kidron (ked·rone) meaning "dark", which they would call a wadi and we would know as an arroyo. The Kidron carried water only when it rained during the winter months. The first time the Kidron is mentioned in the scriptures was when King David's son Absalom rebels in an attempt to take the crown from his father. As David fled Jerusalem we read, "While all the country was weeping in a loud voice, all the people passed over. The king also passed over the brook Kidron, and all the people passed over toward the way of the wilderness." (2 Samuel 15:23) Just as the treachery and betrayal followed King David across the Kidron so too it would follow Jesus.

Jesus and His disciples walked slightly up the slope of the Mount of Olives to the garden about 2 miles from Jerusalem. John does not name the garden, but from Matthew and Mark we know it by the name of Gethsemane (gheth·say·man·ay) meaning "oil press". From Luke's gospel we know **the Garden of Gethsemane was a common meeting place for Jesus and His disciples. Judas knew this place well and that Jesus would be found here.** It was at this location that Jesus gave what we call the Olivet Discourse in Matthew 24. It was from this garden He spoke of the signs that will take place before He will return the second and final time. Also, the garden was away from the noise and crowds of Jerusalem. The Roman historian Tacitus estimated the population of Jerusalem to be about 600,000

while the Jewish historian Josephus wrote there could have been a population as large as 1.1 million. This garden offered a quite and secluded place where Jesus could pour His heart out to His Father and because of Christ - God is now our Father. Jesus was also controlling the location of His arrest.

The Pharisees attempts to arrest Jesus over the last couple of years had all failed because Jesus was in control, not them. Now, the outworking of God's plan of redemption and salvation would be brought to its fulfillment, Jesus would now offer His life for the sins of mankind. Jesus also chose this secluded place because Jerusalem was filled to overflowing with pilgrims who had come for the Passover. Many had been supportive of Jesus. If Jesus was arrested in Jerusalem it had the potential of creating protests or even riots or insurrection against the Jewish leadership and the Romans. This is why the Jewish leaders had plotted and tried to arrest Jesus in secret before. Jesus did not want to be the focal point for a riot or insurrection because many would die in the process. Also the disciples could easily be harmed or killed during the chaos of Jerusalem in riot and it was these disciples who would plant Christ's church.

Earlier in the evening Jesus had ejected Judas from His fellowship. Judas then met with the chief priests and made the final arrangements for betraying Jesus.

Reading verses 2 and 3, [“Now Judas, who betrayed him, also knew the place, for Jesus often met there with his disciples. 3 So Judas, having procured a band of soldiers and some officers from the chief priests and the Pharisees, went there with lanterns and torches and weapons.”](#) The ESV says, [“band of soldiers”](#) as does most translations. If this band of soldiers was a Roman cohort, as the NASB uses, that would mean 600 to 1000 men. If it was a detachment of soldiers then the

number would have been about 200 and this is more likely. The Romans were known for not taking chances. Remember in Acts chapter 23 the Romans dispatched 470 soldiers to take Paul from Jerusalem to Caesarea. The Roman tribune “called two of the centurions and said, ‘Get ready two hundred soldiers, with seventy horsemen and two hundred spearmen to go as far as Caesarea at the third hour of the night.’ ” (Acts 23:23) The Roman tribune sent 200 to 600 hundred soldiers with the Jewish officers, most likely temple guards, to arrest Jesus, thus preventing an uprising among the people of Jerusalem. The throngs of people in Jerusalem for the Passover must have been curious as these soldiers and temple guards marched out of the city in the night. John gives details that only an eyewitness would have known. John says in the second half of verse 3 that this massive number of men was carrying lanterns, torches and weapons. This is an interesting detail since the Passover is celebrated during a full moon the need for lanterns and torches were minimal, but these are interesting facts that an eyewitness would take note of. John gives evidence of Jesus deity and ability to know all, for he wrote in verse 4, “Then Jesus, knowing all that would happen to him, came forward and said to them, “Whom do you seek?” Jesus was waiting for this army of men and stepped out in front to protect His disciples and spoke to those in front. Jesus took charge of this situation. He stood one against hundreds and was in charge.

Christ's Supremacy

Jesus stands before these soldiers in control and they respond to His question. Continuing in verse 5, “They answered him, ‘Jesus of Nazareth.’ Jesus said to them, ‘I am he.’ Judas, who betrayed him, was standing with them.” These

soldiers do not approach Jesus and bind Him even though they knew who He was. Judas was with them, but had not given the agreed upon sign. Jesus' response may have gone over the heads of the Roman soldiers but it would not have been missed but the Jews; the temple guards, Judas and others. Here is where I will disagree with the translators of the many translations of the Bible. They added a word that they thought was implied by the context but is not in the original Greek and softens the impact of what Jesus said. Look at verse 5 - Jesus said in the original Greek, "I am", the word "he" has been added. The Gospel According to John is often referred to the gospel of the seven great "I Ams", but I think we see an eighth great "I am" here in Jesus' response to the band of soldiers. This would have made those at the front take pause and think twice about taking Jesus by force. This exchange repeats itself and in doing so makes it clear that they had come for Jesus and not His disciples and who Jesus said he was. Reading verses 5 to 9, Jesus said to them, "I am he." Judas, who betrayed him, was standing with them. 6 When Jesus said to them, "I am he," they drew back and fell to the ground. *It this not a demonstration of Jesus power? It does **not** say some of them "drew back and fell to the ground" but "they" meaning the group of hundreds of men.* Reading from verse 7, "So he (Jesus) asked them again, "Whom do you seek?" And they said, "Jesus of Nazareth." 8 Jesus answered, "I told you that I am he. (Jesus says a second time, that He is God, using the same name He used when He spoke to Moses.) Reading from Exodus, "Then Moses said to God, 'If I come to the people of Israel and say to them, 'The God of your fathers has sent me to you,' and they ask me, 'What is his name?' what shall I say to them? God said to Moses, 'I AM WHO I AM.' And he said, "Say this to the people of Israel, 'I AM has sent me to you.' " [Exodus 3:13-14]) When Jesus was being arrested, twice He

used the same name for Himself that God used in identifying Himself to Moses.

Jesus answered, "I told you that I am."

Jesus finishes His reply in verse 8 of John 18, saying, "So, if you seek me, let these men go." Jesus the Good Shepherd continues to protect His sheep. Jesus kept His disciples from being arrested to protect them and protect the future church that they would plant.

Christ's Obedience

I love Peter, he is a man of conviction and action. He may have faltered after the arrest but we see in Acts that Peter's passion and preaching brings hundreds if not thousands to give their lives to Christ. Let me finish our time in God's Word this morning with verses 10 and 11, "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 its sheath; shall I not drink the cup that the Father has given me?' " In Luke's recording we see one of the disciples, mostly likely Peter, saying, "Lord, shall we strike with the sword?" (Luke 22:49) I am sure Peter was emboldened by Jesus' show of authority and power when He sent hundreds of men fell to the ground at the words "I am".

John does not mention as Luke does, "But Jesus said, 'No more of this!' And he touched his ear and healed him." (Luke 22:51) As much as I want to say, "right on, Peter" it also points out the Peter still did not understand what Jesus had been teaching them about His need to die for the salvation of those called by God. After all, was it not, Peter who said, "You are the Christ, the Son of the living God?" This is recorded in Matthew chapter 16 when they were discussing who the people were saying Jesus was and Jesus asked the disciples who they say He

is. Peter responded, “You are the Christ, the Son of the living God.” **17** And Jesus answered him, “Blessed are you, Simon Bar-Jonah! For flesh and blood has not revealed this to you, but my Father who is in heaven. **18** And I tell you, you are Peter, and on this rock I will build my church, and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it.” (Matthew 16:16-18) It is hard for me to understand how Peter could have been this sure and solid a few months earlier and now he is bold by cutting off an ear, but clueless to why this was happening. Jesus rebukes Peter saying, “Put your sword into its sheath; shall I not drink the cup that the Father has given me?” (v.11) Here, Jesus is still teaching that He must be obedient to His Father just the disciples need to be obedient to Him and we, my beloved, are to be obedient to Christ. Jesus says He must drink the cup given to Him by the Father and that cup would be drained of its mortal life on the cross. This was done as Paul wrote, “For our sake he made him to be sin who knew no sin, so that in him we might become the righteousness of God.” (2 Corinthians 5:21) By Jesus’ sacrifice on the cross, the cup of life drained, you and I became righteous before God the Father. It is this supreme sacrifice that we celebrate and remember through participating in the Lord’s Supper until our deaths when we are with Christ in heaven or until Jesus comes back again to bring an end to history.

Brother Brad please come forward and prepare us for Holy Communion, the Lord’s Supper.