

Jesus Betrayed and Arrested

Scripture: John 18:1-11

Code: 1570

Turn in your Bibles to the eighteenth chapter of John in our continuing study of John's gospel. We come this morning to the eighteenth chapter and this is one of the really thrilling chapters because it is, in a sense, a narrative that is historical and could be easily passed over and yet when looked at in depth reveals the excellencies of Jesus Christ in a way that few other, if any, passage in the entire gospel of John does. This is rich and powerful and insightful in terms of Jesus Christ.

Now, we have been studying the gospel of John and I think somewhere around the seventieth message now, which is not bad in the eighteenth chapter, and we found that in chapter one we looked at the introduction, the prologue to the gospel, presenting the picture that was going to unfold. In chapters 2 through 12 we saw our Lord's ministry to the world as He presented Himself to them. In chapters 13 to 17 we see Jesus in just a matter of hours really, covering all those chapters, in personal times with His own disciples, teaching them, loving them, praying for them, commending them to the Father's care. Then in chapters 18 to 21 we have the record of the death and resurrection of Christ.

So, we come now in chapter 18 to the final events of His life. This is the climax. And what has been doctrinal in chapters 13 to 17 is historic in chapters 18 to 21. What He has been saying that happened is now about to happen and we are to enter into the historic narrative of the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ. This is the climax of His life.

Now may I add, at this point, a footnote? The reason that Jesus Christ was born was to die. It greatly concerns me today that the movements that have to do with Jesus that are on a human basis, not divine, are always talking about the fact that Jesus was a wonderful person who through one or another of series of circumstances got Himself into a mess and wound up getting crucified. This is the advocacy of Jesus Christ, Superstar, this is the line that's followed in the Passover Plot, the book. And this is a kind of a constant parroted thing by critics and liberals and so forth and so on. But the Word of God clearly tells us and you will understand it when we're done this morning that Jesus Christ was never trapped, He was never tricked, He was never surprised, He was never a victim, He went to the cross of His own design, of His own will because He was born for that express purpose.

In John chapter 12 we see in verses 27 and following, and I'll just pick a couple of thoughts, Jesus saying: "Now is My soul troubled and what shall I say? Father, save Me from this hour? But for this cause came I unto this hour." And then He says down in verse 32: "And I if I be lifted up from the

earth will draw all men unto Me. This He said signifying what death He should die." Jesus Christ came into the world to die. That was the purpose for which He was born. And we must understand this.

Peter picks up this very theme in his great sermon in the second chapter of Acts on the day of Pentecost. He says in verse 22: "Ye men of Israel, hear these words. Jesus of Nazareth, a man approved of God among you by miracles and wonders and signs which God did by Him in the midst of you as ye yourselves also know, Him being delivered by the determinate counsel and foreknowledge of God, ye have taken and by wicked hands have crucified." The guilt was theirs, the plan was God's. Jesus was not shocked by the cross. He was not misguided. He directed Himself to the cross. That was the design of His existence in the incarnation.

And so, as we come to chapter 18 we come to the climax. We begin with chapter 18 the ascent to the cross. And, people, if you're a Christian this is your moment. This is what it's all about. For every saint, Old Testament and New Testament, the cross is everything. It's the pinnacle and we look at it from both sides. This is the peak of history. Every man who is ever redeemed looks to this peak for his salvation.

Now as we begin this particular eighteenth chapter, I want to give you some footnotes at this point. I was talking to some of our young men that we're endeavoring to kind of teach and bring along in the ministry of the Word and we were sharing a principle that's very important to understand as a Bible student. That you always take the passage in the context. Not only the immediate context but the total context of the book. For example, you can pull verses out of the Bible at random and prove anything you want to prove. But when you really want to study the Bible accurately and be a faithful student of the Word of God, you take it in its context. In other words, you find not only what the verse says but what all the verses around it say so that you're interpreting it accurately as the writer meant it to be interpreted. But beyond that it is also very important that you interpret a passage that you look at the entire book and discern the purpose of the writer in everything.

Now, as we have come to the gospel of John, we have found that John has a single purpose and we have repeated it hundreds of times and we'll repeat it again. John's purpose is not to present Christ as man but to present Christ as ... what? ... as God, as deity. In John's view of the life of Christ he pulls from the life of Christ all the incidents and all the occasions and all of the words that would cause us to see Christ as God in human flesh. Not majoring on the humanness of Jesus, and He was human, He was also divine. But majoring on His deity. John's whole point is to present Christ as God. And that's what he says in chapter 20 verse 31. His whole point is to see Christ as God.

So, when we come to chapter 18, as we approach the chapter, the first thing we think of in our minds is "Now this is in John's gospel." Consequently, John's desire is to present Christ as God, deity, therefore in this passage what will John try to do? He will attempt to produce evidence that Jesus

Christ is God even in this particular portion. Now there could be in the life of a man no more debasing, shaming situation than to be arrested as a common criminal, to be betrayed by a friend, to be marched off, beaten and then crucified, brutalized. That is the most debasing kind of thing that a human can go through. But we know in the back of our minds that even though this is the account of the betrayal and the arrest of Jesus, John will somehow get through that debasing situation evidence conclusive that Jesus is God, will he not? Because this is his purpose. And with that in our minds we begin to study the eighteenth chapter. And guess what we discover? What should be shame, what should be pathetic, degrading, humiliating, brutal kind of narrative turns out to be a presentation of the majesty of Jesus Christ without equal. It's one of the most magnificent passages you'll ever find. And you can read it through in a narrative sense and miss it all if you did not understand the point that John is trying to get across. This is a powerful few verses. And I can promise you that when it's all done you will know things from the Spirit of God that you never knew existed through this passage.

Now, you see, Matthew, Mark and Luke had different purposes. Theirs was not so directly to present Christ as God and thus they include the agony in the garden where we see Him breaking down from the sin and the anticipation. They include the anguish and the sorrow and the crying and the sweating, as it were, great drops of blood. And they include all those things that make Jesus so humiliated. They include the things that humiliate Jesus and make Him suffer. And they make much of that because that's important. But John's purpose is to present deity so you don't find the anguish in the garden, you don't find the crying in the garden, you don't find the sweating and the great drops of blood, you don't find anything degrading or debasing or humiliating at all in John's gospel. In fact, it's just the opposite. Everything that goes on at the arrest of Jesus as John points it out glorifies Christ.

Now, if you wanted to get the total picture, you would have to put all the gospels together and get the total picture. But John has one purpose present Christ as God. So he picks those points and it's a dynamic presentation. And you're going to see in these verses the supremacy of Jesus Christ ... the supremacy of Jesus Christ.

There are four preeminent features in these verses that show us the supremacy of Christ. And what could be a humiliating thing as He's arrested as a common criminal turns out to be glory. The four things that I want you to see are His supreme courage, His supreme power, His supreme love and His supreme obedience. And we'll take them one at a time in a minute.

Now the wretchedness and the injustice and the hellishness of Satan's plot to kill Jesus begins to unfold here in chapter 18. But instead of downing and degrading Christ as the devil intended, we're going to see Him exalted to the highest heavens. We're going to see His unbounded, magnificent ... burst ... magnificence burst open in a series of tremendous truths concerning His incomparable person.

Now, first of all, let's look at His supreme courage. And that we find in verses 1 through 4 His supreme courage. Now let me just give you a footnote. His courage is going to be seen in His determination to go to the cross. Now it's very courageous when a man is willing to die for a cause ... very courageous to be martyred for a truth that you will not reject, that's noble. But to purpose in your mind to go to a cross knowing that it means to You that all Your purity and sinlessness will be violated and that You will bear the sin of every man who ever lived, that You will be abandoned by the God with whom You have been face to face throughout all eternity, that kind of courage is infinite supreme courage beyond anything a human being could ever show. Jesus sets His face to go to the cross, is undaunted, without hesitation and moves directly in that way. He is not trapped. He is not tricked. He is not surprised. He purposes to do it because He is to die for those who will receive Him and believe. And so we see infinite courage. Not a cowering Christ ... not a hiding Christ, not a running Christ, but one who sets Himself to die.

Notice verse 1 and here is His supreme courage. "When Jesus had spoken these words," that is the prayer of 17 and all the other words that He's said in 13 to 16 to the disciples, "He went forth." Evidently left the upper room and also the city of Jerusalem. "With His disciples, over the brook Kidron where was a garden into which He entered and His disciples."

Concluding His prayer then in the upper room, and a time of fellowship and instruction with His disciples, the session is ended and Jesus moves out. Now watch this. He moves immediately to go to the garden of Gethsemane. Now it had been His custom throughout the years of His ministry to spend His evenings on the Mount of Olives in that garden. Gardens on the Mount of Olives belonged to rich people in the city because of the closeness of the dwellings in the city, they couldn't have gardens there, and so many rich people had private gardens over across on the little Mount of Olives. And evidently Jesus had known an individual who perhaps had given Him the key to the gate and He retired frequently at the garden of Gethsemane, over on the Mount. And it was His custom to go there. In fact, John 7 says at the end of the chapter: "Every man went to his own house, "and chapter 8 begins with the words: "And Jesus went to the Mount of Olives." That was home to Jesus. That was where He became close to the Father. That was the time He could rest from the trials and the conflicts of the people and be with God. And so He went to the Mount of Olives. And He gathered His disciples and took them with Him.

Now, many times He had done this before. It would be a common thing to leave Stephen's Gate and go down the little slope toward the little brook Kidron which is in that valley; it's a pretty sheer little slope. Then across the Kidron and up the side of the Mount of Olives. And very often He would get up the side of the Mount of Olives a little ways; He'd make a right turn, and take the little road around the hill to Bethany and spend some time with Mary, Martha and Lazarus. He had done that very often. But this time when He went up the slope He didn't go to Bethany, too late for Bethany. It was time for Gethsemane. So He turned aside from the road to Bethany and He entered the fatal garden. And as

He entered the garden, He knew exactly what was going to happen. Not only did He know what was going to happen, He planned every detail of it.

Now I've thought about some interesting things at this point. As Jesus was leaving Jerusalem this night it was Passover season. And at Passover season the pilgrims had moved into the city from all over the place tens and tens of thousands of them. And Jerusalem was bulging with people. And they were all there, for the most part, to do sacrifice. And so there were lambs being slain incessantly during those days. In fact, thirty years after Christ, historians tell us that there were 256 thousand lambs slain at Passover in Jerusalem, a quarter of a million. And you can imagine somewhat of the mess of just slaughtering that many lambs on one altar in the temple ... blood running everywhere.

Well, the Jews, of course, had provided for that. And the way they had provided for that was to build a trough and a channel which ran from the temple ground which sat immediately at the top of the valley of Kidron. And the valley ... if the temple ground's here, the valley is right like that, just drops right off, they had run a little channel down there where the blood would all drain and it would run right into the brook Kidron. And undoubtedly as Jesus was leaving the city of Jerusalem on that last night and stepped across the brook, he learned ... He looked down and He saw in that brook the red blood of all the lambs that were being slain for the sins of the people. And no question about it, His mind must have become very vivid with His own sacrifice that was to come.

And so, Jesus continued up the other side and He came to the little garden called "Oilpress," Gethsemane. Since it was the Mount of Olives that's naturally expected to be an olive press there and there was. A wooden olive press, the olives were crushed and the oil would flow into the middle and they would gather the oil and use it for the purposes of cooking and other things. And so, Jesus and His disciples gathered to a place that they had been many, many times.

And Judas also knew where it was. And Jesus knew that Judas knew. And Jesus knew that Judas knew that Jesus would go there because He went there every night for the last few nights. And that was His place of prayer and retirement. And so, Jesus enters the garden with His disciples. And Judas has already betrayed Him and is gathering the force to confront Him in that little garden.

This brings up a very interesting point from the Old Testament. There are two kinds of prophecy in the Old Testament. Sometime we'll go into this and we'll teach on this subject. But the two kinds of prophecy are what we call verbal predictive prophecy and typical prophecy. Verbal predictive prophecy is the prophecy that says: "For unto us a child is born, unto us a Son is given," etc. etc. which gives detailed verbalization of Christ's coming, etc. What we call typical predictive prophecy is prophecy in types. In other words, every Old Testament sacrifice was a picture of Jesus Christ. It was a prophecy that a final sacrifice would come and that's typical prophecy. There are some men in the Old Testament who are types of Christ, who by their very life typified Christ. One such one was David. David had a similar account in 2 Samuel 15. David was betrayed by his own familiar friend by

the name of Ahithophel. And David had to escape. And when David escaped he went out the gate of Jerusalem, down the slope, across the Kidron, up to the Mount of Olives with his faithful followers. Ahithophel and David in that little incident then become a perfect picture in the Old Testament of what is to come when the true Christ arrives, when He who is really King, David's greater Son, you see. And so, Jesus Christ fulfills the typical Old Testament prophecy seen in David and Ahithophel and Judas becomes one even more treacherous than Ahithophel.

Now you ask the question: "Why did He go there. I mean, if He knew He was going to get into this mess, why did He go there?" Well, He went there because first of all it was the place of prayer and He wanted to talk to the Father and He did, didn't he? John doesn't tell us about the agonizing in prayer the other writers do. He also went there because it was a place of rest. That was where He went to get away from the conflict all the time. And thirdly He went there because it was the place of sweet fellowship with His disciples, where they could be alone together. But all of that is secondary. The real reason He went there, and get this one, He went there because He knew Judas would be there and He knew the soldiers would be there and He wanted to be sure that it would be very easy for them to arrest Him.

You say, "You mean He didn't ... this wasn't a surprise?" It wasn't a surprise; He mapped it out before the world began. He knew those soldiers would march before those soldiers were ever conceived. The Old Testament details what Judas is going to do, not only in the typical prophecy of Ahithophel's situation, but in very, very accurate verbalization, it even tells about him selling Him and buying a potter's field. Jesus went to that garden because He was forcing the confrontation that would result in His death, you see.

Look at it in verse 2, it tells you that. "And Judas also, who betrayed Him, knew the place. For Jesus often resorted there with His disciples." Now why do you suppose it says that? It says that because that's the reason Jesus went there because Judas knew where He'd go. You say, "Why did Jesus want to make it easy for Judas?" Listen, it wasn't by any means going to be easy for Judas, forever it isn't easy for Judas. But He wanted to put it in a place where the arrest and the betrayal could take place as He wanted it to take place.

For example, if Jesus had allowed Himself to be arrested in the middle of Jerusalem, there would have been an insurrection and a revolution that would have torn the city and perhaps ended in the killing of the disciples because He was popular, you know that. Jesus wanted to make it easy. And Jesus wanted to prove to the disciples that He was not a victim. He could have gone all by Himself to the garden, the disciples stayed in Jerusalem and by word of mouth they would have heard Jesus had been captured and their faith would have gone down the drain. They would have seen Him as a victim. So Jesus says - Come with me, boys, you're going to see how it really is. So He gathers them together and He takes them over there so that in the quiet and the solitude of the garden of Gethsemane the arrest can take place without any disturbance and revolution and so the disciples

can stand there and in calmness watch what happens and see that this is no victim but a victor and so that they can be protected, as we shall see.

Now the leaders of Israel had wanted to get Jesus many times but they feared the people. How many times have you remembered that that was said? They were afraid of the people. And so, Jesus going to the garden eliminated the problem of the fear and made it very, very easy to arrest Him. And He took His eleven along just so they would see that it was a voluntary surrender.

Now you go back to John chapter 10 for a minute and you read this. Just listen and I'll read 17: "Therefore doth My Father love Me because I lay down My life that I might take it again." Listen to this: "No man taketh it from Me but I lay it down of Myself." I have authority to lay it down and I have authority to take it again. Nobody ever took Jesus' life from Him, He was never a victim. A coward would have gone anywhere but the garden because that's the most obvious place where Judas would come and find Him.

Now, on a previous occ ... some of the previous occasions He had avoided the Jews, definitely. You can go back, for example, to chapter 8, I think it's verse 59, it says yes, "They took up stones to cast at Him, but Jesus hid Himself and went out of the temple going through the midst of them and so passed by." In Nazareth they took Him to a brow of a hill to throw Him off and He just went right through the midst, and then He was ... you know ... one of those things ... was gone. In chapter 12 verse 36 just after the confrontation at that chapter in verse 36 it tells us, wrapping it up, "These things spoke Jesus and departed and did hide Himself from them." There were times when He purposely evaded them and He could do it whenever He wanted. But now was not the time.

You say, "Why?" Because this was the appointed hour in which God had designed that Jesus should die. It couldn't be before the Passover season, for He was the Passover lamb. Do you see? Timing. God knew exactly when to do what He wanted to do. And so, Jesus in effect is saying - Well, it's time for Me to be arrested so I'll go somewhere where it will all be easy.

Earlier that evening He had said - Now, Judas, go do what you're going to do ... it's time for you to do it. And Judas thought he was so clever. So sneaky, and he was doing Jesus' own bidding, setting up a confrontation designed and planned before the ages by God Himself. So Jesus is there and He's there because He knows the soldiers will come and Judas will come and He wants it to be easy as possible, He's got His disciples so that they'll see that He is not a victim but a victor.

Meanwhile, let's pick up Judas. Judas has been sent out of the room because he didn't belong with the disciples. And the Bible tells us that when he left Satan entered into Judas. Now, it's one thing to be demon possessed but it must be something beyond that to be possessed by Satan. Satan entered Judas. And so Judas had gone to the chief priests and elders and he had contracted his little deal for what amounted to about \$20, some bargain. And he got the chief priests and the elders to

commission the temple police and to get a spira a band of Roman soldiers to go and capture Jesus. Jesus is up in the upper room celebrating the Lord's Supper, praying, teaching and loving, commending them to the Father, walks with them to the garden. In the meantime, Judas is pursuing Him under the shelter of the black of night; he comes to do the blackest work in the history of the world's treachery.

Now, the Romans and the Jewish police, the temple police, had been gathered with the elders to be a part of the diabolical force which was moving to the garden. In Matthew 26, I think it's verse 47 says that the great multitude came with swords and staves and clubs so they were ready for action. As best we can tell it was the temple police who used the clubs and the soldiers of Rome used the swords and the staves and here they came to get Jesus.

Now notice verse 3: "Judas then, having received a band of men and officers from the chief priests and Pharisees." You see, he went to the chief priests and Pharisees, worked out the deal and they were the ones that got the police and the Romans in on it. And here it comes, Jewish leaders and Gentile soldiers and Jewish temple police. Now you wonder how many of these. Well, it's hard to know exactly but let me give you an idea. The word spira, a Roman cohort, refers to a certain number, evidently was 600 men minimum. And some say as many as 1200 in a cohort. Some say that a detachment from a cohort could be as small as 200. But let's just take the middle and say 600 which is probably accurate, or close to accurate. Here comes 600 Roman soldiers. They have all come from Fort Antonia which is right up against the temple ground. You can still see the pavement there, the Gabbatha, in which Jesus was tried. It's still there, the actual stones way down in Jerusalem. It's butted up right against the temple ground. They got this whole force together and these guys are armed to the teeth. They are professional soldiers like none other in the world were the Roman soldiers.

In addition to them you have a great group of the temple police. We don't know how many of those. Say a hundred or maybe two hundred. Plus all the chief priests and the Pharisees and a whole mob and they all come to Christ and Judas is out front. I'd say that's a compliment to Jesus to send that many to pick up one Galilean carpenter and His friends.

Now they were also aware of the popularity of Jesus and I'm sure they had some of these forces to be sure that if anything happened they'd be able to defend themselves. The Jewish leaders were so anxious to get rid of Jesus Christ and finally they had gotten it together and here they came. Now there's an interesting note, there's a lot of them but we'll just pick up a couple, I wish we had several hours on this. But anyway, they came with lanterns and torches. Now that's very interesting because as we look back the historians tells us that at that time of the year, Passover, there was a full moon. And Jerusalem would have been lit up brilliantly by that full moon and they would have no need for the torches and the lanterns for the walk that they took to get Jesus. None at all. And what it indicates, historians tell us, that evidently they felt that they were going to have to search for Jesus,

that He would be hiding somewhere in the nooks and crannies of the hillside over there and they would really have to poke around to find Him.. They thought they were going to have to look for Him 'cause He would hide. And so, there they are with torches to search for the light of the world, with swords to find the prince of peace. What an insult. What a cruel misinterpretation of who He was. And Judas is out front. What a vile, sick, tragic, sinful person he is.

When I was in seminary I did my thesis to graduate on a character analysis of Judas Iscariot. And these people who have come along in recent years and said: "Well, Judas was just really a good guy, he just ... he was trying to force Christ into setting up the Kingdom, trying to do a good thing but it ... but he was just misguided." My friends, the Bible says Satan entered into him. Jesus said it would have been better for that man if he had never been born. He was vile. He was the lowest of the low. He was a hypocrite beyond the bounds of hypocrisy. And so, here he comes and he's out in front of this big huge force, this big mob of soldiers and he feels secure, right? He doesn't believe that after all that Jesus is God anyway. Here he comes.

And what does he do when he arrives in the garden? The Bible tells us in the other gospels, John doesn't include the kiss because that's degrading and John is exalting Christ ... but in the other gospels we read that Judas went up and kissed Jesus and the Greek construction is that he kissed Him repeatedly.

Now, your brain could fathom that a betrayer would go in and point to the one. You may stretch your brain to its capacity that he might run up and just give Him a little peck on the cheek and beat it. But to believe that he would linger and repeatedly kiss Jesus Christ and then remain there, absolutely blows your mind. There's no way that you could conceive of a man being that debased and that unfeeling to do a thing like that. But he does. I mean, all he had to do was point to Jesus. But not Judas. The same spirit of mental confusion and sin, the same kind of Satanpossessive control that made him a traitor also added to it this devilish refinement of a kiss. And this is an unheard of combination. In all of history you will never find a disciple's kiss coupled with a traitor's sign. It doesn't exist.

END OF SIDE ONE

SIDE TWO-

This is for Judas alone to stand out as the black spot on humanity. There's no parallel. And we see a man like Judas with a cunning mind degenerate into brutal stupidity. Inferiors, you know, kiss the foot or the hand, let's say. Servants, slaves and suppliants asking for pardon kiss the foot and worshipers kiss the hem of a garment. But it's an equal thing when you kiss the face. It's a familiar thing. It's the warmth of love and affection. And Judas kisses Him repeatedly on the face. And so his evil is intensified by the kiss. Feigned innocence, a weak attempt to conceal the reality of what he was, and

maybe to let Jesus think that he had just gone out of the room for a little while and now he was back again and to belong to the fellows. I mean, it's bad enough to betray a friend, right? Worse to sell Jesus Christ. But the greatest stupidity in the world is to think you can kiss God in mockery and get away with it. But the sad part of it is it would have been bad if Jesus had endured only one Judas kiss but He's endured a million since then. People who exalt Him to the skies and won't live for Him. People who talk about all of His greatness and never receive Him as their Savior. What is that but a Judas kiss ... which pollutes the Son of man's face even today as it did almost two thousand years ago.

And Jesus looks him in the eye and pulls him apart as the hypocrite that he is by saying: "Betrayest thou the Son of man with a kiss?" Who you fooling?

All right, so Judas is there and he leads the group. And then in verse 4 we read this: "Jesus therefore knowing all things that should come upon Him." Now don't you know that John's going to get that in? He's not going to let one verse go by that doesn't tell us Jesus is God, omniscient, He knows everything. That's John for you. "Knowing all things that should come upon Him went forth." Did you get that? That's His supreme courage. He knew exactly what was going to happen and He didn't wait for His enemies to get Him. He wasn't hiding behind an olive tree. He went out the gate and met them when they were on their way in. Oh, I like that. This is so humble, so willing the selfsacrifice of Christ.

Guess who initiated the whole thing? Jesus did. Not Judas. Judas didn't get to open his mouth. If we put the thing together we could say that the kiss came first, maybe it did. But before anything could happen, Jesus said: "Whom seek ye?" Look at it in verse 4. "He said unto them, Whom seek ye?" Now He went out of the gate. They were coming to meet Him. He had seen them all the way. He had seen Judas in His omniscience get it all together. He had seen them all come out the gate, down the hill, up the hill, He walked right out and He met them. Majestic courage. This is the courage of Jesus Christ. Oh what courage He has. Oh what magnificent boldness to go to the cross for us.

Now let's pick up verse 5, we'll include it in this point. "They answered Him, Jesus of Nazareth." Now that just sounds like they're parroting their orders, doesn't it? Whom seek ye? Jesus of Nazareth. No recognition of Him as Christ or Messiah or God or anything. Jesus of Nazareth. They just give the title and where He's from to identify Him. They've been commissioned to get Jesus of Nazareth.

But look what it says in verse 5: "Jesus saith unto them, I am." And the "He" isn't there in italics. "I am." Now whose name is that? That's God's name. Jesus said I am. Now watch this. Look at this next little comment. "And Judas also who betrayed Him stood with them." That's a fantastic statement. What is Judas doing there? Why doesn't he get out? I mean, he's got his money, why doesn't he just go?

Well, I think it's there for two reasons. Number one, it shows what happens when Satan rules an individual. The activity of sin is senseless, incoherent, unprotective, stupid. Plus, watch this one, he wanted us to remember that Judas was there because of what's about to happen. Because he wants us to know that Judas is in on it too to show us that Judas was also just the part of the plan that had no power over Jesus whatever. We might think Judas was a big hero, marching in, bringing the army, capture Christ Judas. See. But he makes sure that we know that Judas is still there because of what happens in the next verse. He wants us to know that Judas was there with that, too.

All right, so before we go to the next verse, just review for a minute. We see then the supreme courage of Christ. In a sick, Satanic moment that could have come out debasing for Jesus, He comes out with a majestic kind of courage, doesn't He? He's determined to go to the cross and He goes right out and meets His foe.

Now, secondly, let's look at His supreme power, and this is tremendous. This is fantastic. Verse 6. "As soon then as He had said unto them, I am," watch this, "they went backward and fell to the ground." Now do you know why he wanted us to know that Judas was there? Because he wants us to know that Judas has no power at all. All Jesus has to do is say His name and they all went down. Now in the other gospels you have Jesus on His knees and on the ground in anguish. Not in John's gospel. Jesus is standing up and the whole Roman army on the ground. You see, he wants us to know that He has power over them. Do you know those disciples saw that, didn't they? He wanted them to know, He wanted us to know, He wanted Judas to know and the whole Roman army to know and all the Jews to know that He was in control. That He was laying His life down. That nobody was taking it away from Him. And He just said "I am" and woof a thousand people went down.

Now, one commentator said: "Well, evidently what happened here is somebody fell in the front and See. That's a typical line, oh, that's a typical line. It goes along with the ones who said Peter didn't walk on water there was a sand bar. And you know, all of that. Typical. Jesus said "I am" and the whole pile went down just like that. Now they were soldiers, they aren't stupid. They weren't standing one inch behind each other. They were in some kind of formation. They knew what they were doing. They fell down because of the power of His word. All He had to do was say His name, the name of God, and they collapsed on the spot. There He is one, single unarmed lonely figure and they are an army, equipped and manned for war and He simply speaks His name and they collapsed. Now you tell me whose got the power.

There flowed from Jesus such a power and such a commanding authority which made Him so infinitely strong that they couldn't even stand up in His presence. This is another sign by John to show us that this is no victim, this is Jesus Christ the majestic victor and He has everything in control. He revealed His power. And I think most of all for the delight and the faith of the disciples who would see that He was not a victim.

Now, you know, if you study the Bible an interesting Bible study sometime to do, is to study the concept of the word of His power. God created the world by His word and God said ... right? Let there be light. And God said ... this ... And God said ... and when Christ comes in judgment at the end of the age, the Bible says He has a sharp sword ... where? ... coming out of His mouth. You see, it is the Word of God that is powerful; it is the Word of God that will judge men. It is the word of God that will condemn men. It is the word of God that is incisive. And you read in Revelation, you read in Acts 10, you read in Acts 17, you read in Matthew 13 that Jesus Christ is coming to judge. And the Bible says He will judge by the word out of His mouth. And the mob tasted just a little bit of that kind of judgment power. And they fell helpless at His feet.

Now do you see what John is showing us here? This is no victim; this is the majestic Son of God displaying power. The whole pile fell down ... supreme power. So we see His supreme courage and His supreme power.

Let me show you a third thing ... His supreme love. And this is so beautiful. John shows us through this narrative not only the power and the courage but love. Now as we've seen, let me just give you a little quiz, don't answer out loud, but just in your own mind. We have seen that in all of Jesus anticipating of the cross He is never concerned about Himself but who is He always concerned about? His disciples, isn't He? Constantly on His mind ... the selflessness of Christ. And it's exactly what you see here ... endless love. When at last He should be thinking about Himself He is thinking about them again. This is really tremendous. Now you're going to learn some things here, I trust.

Verse 7, look at this. And this is the second time He does it. "Then asked He them again, Whom seek ye?" This is ... can you imagine this? And they said this: "Jesus of Nazareth." What blocks they are. What stones. What worse than senseless things. I mean, they have just picked themselves up off the ground and they've just- -- Jesus of Nazareth like nothing ever happened. Unbelievable. The stupidity, the blindness of sin. They're still looking for this carpenter from Galilee. They ... it doesn't even tell us that anything entered their mind. Maybe they thought what the liberals think that somebody fell over in front. But even the Jews make no comment about the fact that He named the name of God when He said "I am." Oh the stupidity of sin is unbelievable.

But before you get too hot on their trail, look at your own life. How many times did Jesus knock you down and you got up in the same unbelief that you were in before you fell? As a Christian, how many times have you been belted to the ground because of sin, gotten right back up and done it over again? Hmmmm, that's where we live. Listen, sometimes Jesus uses those things to try and awaken a man's heart and he gets right back up again and it doesn't make any sense. You remember Pharaoh? Same old deal. That's not anything new. That goes on today. People come to church, hear the Word of God. Oh, that's all fine, walk out and forget it. Maybe they go through trauma and they go through tragedy and they go through disasters in their lives and they come out with the same unbelief

they had going in. And so they parrot their orders Jesus of Nazareth. And Jesus wants them to state it emphatically and He told them ... He's asked them twice. This is so good.

Why do you think He asked them twice? You don't know but I'll tell you. He had a good reason. Look at verse 8. "Jesus answered, I have told you that I am. If therefore ye seek Me let these go their way." Oh this is good. He is sharp. They can't handle Him. They would love to have gotten His hands ... their hands on all of them, disciples included. So Jesus twice makes them repeat their orders so that from their own mouths they state that they have no right to the disciples. Did you get it? Twice He makes them say that their orders are to get Him. Then He says - All right, men, then let these go.

Now this is not exactly a victim. This is like a king commanding them. And so, two times He impressed the reply on their minds that they had come to take Him and Him alone. Now do you see the beauty of this, the power? How He had to have the disciples there to see that He was no victim but He had to have them released so that they could go on to carry the message. He had it master planned. And in order to make sure of their safety He had them twice repeat that their orders were for Him alone and they had no business with the disciples at all but were to let them go. And so He protects His own.

I like that. You know, I begin to think about that concept and that's powerful. Here's the enemy and here's the disciples and here's Christ in the middle. Don't you like that? I mean, Jesus Christ isn't the kind of shepherd who rescues the lamb when it's half eaten by the wolf. He is the kind that gets out in front to meet the wolves before they get to the flock. Do you get the difference? Back in chapter 10 and verse 12 when He was talking about the good shepherd, He talked about the fact that the hireling sees the wolf coming and what does he do? Whish - he's gone ... he's gone. The true shepherd meets the wolves. And so here's Jesus, no victim. He's a victor. He's a king giving commands. And He displays His protective love for His own and He protects them.

In John 10:28 Jesus said: "And I give unto them eternal life and they shall never perish, neither shall any man pluck them out of My hand. My Father who gave them to Me is greater than all and no man is able to pluck them out of My Father's hand, I and My Father are one." And by that statement Jesus is securing His protection over His own sheep. And so, Jesus moves out in front. This is beautiful.

They had to remain. They had to carry on the work. They had the job to do, and so He gets out in front and protects them.

Now, I want you to notice verse 9 because some really deep things here and I want you to hang on to this one. This is loaded. Are you ready? Verse 9: In order that, see He had to protect them. Why? "In order that the saying might be fulfilled which He spoke of them whom Thou gavest Me have I lost none." Now stick with me on this. Now that was spoken by Jesus in chapter 17 verse 12. And He said the same thing in verse 12 only it was in a spiritual context. Listen now. He was saying - I'm not going

to lose any of them spiritually. But here it's in a physical context. He doesn't want them to be captured. It's as if He is admitting that if they are captured physically they will be lost spiritually. Do you see it? And that's true. That's true. Now watch this one. "Of them whom Thou gavest Me have I lost none." In order to make sure He wouldn't lose them He says let them go their way, because if you take them I'll lose them. That's what He's saying. In effect, that's the theoretical statement that He's making. Now stay with me.

If they ... if you ... He's saying in His mind - If you were take them they would ... then I would lose them. You say, "You mean to tell me that if they had captured the disciples they would have fallen and lost their salvation?" Hmm, probably. "Oh ... but you can't lose your salvation." That's right. You say, "Well, what does it mean?" Just this, the meaning is simple. Had the disciples at this time been captured by the soldiers and the police it would not have been a physical problem for them only, it would have been a terrific spiritual problem.

What kind of faith did they have? Not that big ... little tiny faith. They weren't ready for torture. Do you know what torture would have done to them? Whoooo, wiped them out. So, Jesus makes sure they're not arrested.

So, somebody comes along and says: "Now that shows it, you see. This is a confession on the part of Jesus," watch this, "that a man can lose his salvation ... if his faith is too weak and his test is too strong. And so Jesus had to move in and do a special thing to keep them from losing their salvation." You know what I say? Right. You know what that proves? That Drove you can't lose your salvation. You say, "Why?" Because Jesus stepped in and stopped the possibility of it. Do you see the point? Theoretically, if they had gone through that they would have gone down the tubes so Jesus said - Nope, they can't do that because I said all that the Father gives to Me shall come to Me and I shall lose ... what? ... none. So I can't let that happen.

So, what appears to some people to teach that you can lose your salvation teaches exactly the opposite. In theory it could happen. Consequently Jesus says - I can't let them get captured because they're not ready for that. And that's exactly what Paul meant in 1 Corinthians 10:13 when he said this: "For there hath no temptation taken you but such as is common to man, but God is faithful who will not suffer you to be tempted above that ye H are ... what? ... able but will with the temptation also make a way of escape that ye may be able to do ... what? ... to bear it." Listen, my friend, there is no chance, no time in the universe; that you will ever lose your salvation. Jesus knows what would cause that possibility and He would never let it happen. Now that's the theory of the thing.

Jesus knew what could happen so He stopped it. That's protective love. And He stopped it because at the end of verse 9 He had to say: "Of them whom Thou gavest Me have I lost ... what? ... none." Now do you see that? You'll go home and you won't be able to figure it out, you'll forget. Buy the tape.

That's a very important passage to interpret correctly. It does not teach that you can lose your salvation. It teaches that theoretically you could if Jesus didn't protect you. Hmmm, isn't that what it's all about? Keeping power. If Jesus stopped keeping me I'd go to hell, right? Romans 5:10, "We have been saved by His death but much more we are being saved by His ... what? ... His life." He keeps interceding for us. He never lets anything come our way that could destroy the relationship. Supreme protective love and here He is protecting His disciples and He's saying to Himself - these fellows would never make it; I've got to hold them off from this. So He commands the scene to make sure the disciples are safe from something they couldn't handle. Don't you believe for a minute, beloved, that Jesus would ever let you slip out of His grasp. That would be an admission on His own part that He can't keep you. No man is able to pluck you out of the Father's hand ... or His hand.

Now, isn't that a secure thing to know? And the typical Christian reaction to that would be. "Boy, I can maybe go do this then. I can kind of wing it a little bit. See, I'm secure." You know how we are, the Lord builds a protection and we have this wonderful thing, we have a fellowship of believers, He says, stay apart from the world and He gives us the Word and we've got all these wonderful things but some of us are kind of, you know, big stuff, right? We can make it, Lord. Ah, the world doesn't affect me, I'm going to slip out in the world and hmmm, wing it a little bit and confront the world where they are and I can make it. I'm pretty good, you know. That's Peter. That's Peter blundering Peter.

So, in verse 10 Peter decides he'll step out of the protective care of the Lord. Now remember the Lord stood in the middle, right? He didn't let anything happen that could destroy that love. He stood in the middle between the enemy and the disciple. That's where He is between you ... that's where He is in relation to us in the world ... He's in the middle, see. But every once in a while we run out of there. See, we run out of the little ... the little shelter He builds and we decide we'll just wing it on our own. And here's Peter, watch him in verse 10. "Then Simon Peter having a sword," I don't know what he was doing with that, anyway, it's a machaira, it's a daggerlike thing, "drew it and smote the high priest's servant and cut off his right ear. The servant's name was Malchus."

Now, this is Peter, impetuous Peter. It's not enough that Christ has protected him, He's just gotten through a whole dialogue to make sure the disciples didn't get captured, now Peter draws a knife and starts cutting into the crowd, see. You know, you can almost imagine the Lord saying - Ohhh, I mean after all I've just went through to get you off the hook, Peter ... now you're going to go ... And you know, the Bible says he cut off his right ear, but you know Peter well enough to know that he wasn't going for ears, nothing would make him happier to see the head rolling down the hill, you know. So, Peter was going to move into the army. He felt invincible. After all, Christ was right beside him, right? And I'm sure he figured in his own mind - If I get into trouble just say "I am" again, Lord. Hmmm, see. So he felt some sort of security in the whole thing and he felt a little bit of that invincibility that you would feel in the presence of Christ. And so he draws this sword, little machaira, and he whacks off this ear. Malchus had fairly good reactions fortunately. And Jesus, beautiful, beautiful demonstration

of protective love, reaches over and says - Sorry, Malchus. Gave him another ear. He recreated his ear, gave him a new one. And He says to Peter, verse 11: "Put up thy sword into the sheath." Stop right there.

Peter, put that thing away. I mean, don't you realize what I'm trying to do?

Now, I admire Peter's courage. I can't say much for anything else. But he is courageous. He really thought he could handle it, you know. The Lord had built protection from him apart from his enemies and he goes running right into the middle of them ... thinking he's invincible. Listen, Peter found out later that night that he wasn't as great as he thought he was. By the time that night was over he was out great big ole burly Peter - just crying his heart out after he denied Jesus.

Now this crowd had seen a couple of pretty astounding miracles by now, right? I mean, they had not only fallen over together but they had seen Jesus reach down and give a man an ear. Now those would be, under normal circumstances to my mind, fairly convincing. Not to this crowd. You'd think they'd fall to His feet in worship. But no, you would only think that because you don't know what sin does, right? It blinds the mind.

So, Jesus not only provided a shelter of care for His beloved but at the same time He did two astounding miracles. But now watch this principle, I love this. Here's Jesus, here's the disciples over here, here's the trouble and Jesus is in the middle. Now watch. He says - Stay in the shelter, friends, don't mix with the world, don't love the things of the world, don't fool around in the world. But Peter does. What does he do? He rushes out and He gets Peter back and fixes it up. Now there you have two great areas that reveal the protective love of Christ. He not only stands between us and the danger but when we willfully get into the problem He comes and rescues us. Is that protective love? You remember the story of the ninety and nine, remember that? The one sheep that he went to find? Well, the principle of that is obvious. It's the principle of the prodigal son. It's the principle of Jesus going out to recover the one who keeps leaving the shelter. I mean, let's face it, Christians, the joy and the peace and the happiness are in the shelter that Christ has built for us. Now if you want to run out, the promise of Christ is He'll come and get you, but you'll get a spanking on the way back. Whom the Lord loves He ... what? ... He chastens. And the reason He spanks you is so you won't do it again.

Now, there you have the protective love of Jesus. Two ways: He secured their protection by getting them to answer the same question twice and then He secures their protection by doing a divine miracle to get Peter out of the problem. Do you think God's done some miracles in your life to get you out of some messes? Well, He has in mine. I thank Him for His protective care.

What does it say to us? It says none of us could ever be lost, now when we've got a Savior who cares for us like that. I've often thought about this. Jesus could have just destroyed that whole group with a

word, but He so willingly went to the cross. He even fixed up Malchus just to make it right, He wasn't interested in injuring men and fighting against them. He was willingly going to die. Nobody took His life from Him. And so we see His supreme courage, His supreme power and His supreme love ... such a love that doesn't even think of itself but only of others. I mean, how could He love them enough to want to heal some of them, you know? When they were going to kill Him? But He did. And He loved His own to protect them.

All right, then lastly supreme obedience, verse 11, and here we see the majesty of His obedience to the Father. "Then said Jesus unto Peter, Put up thy sword into the sheath," and the other writers tell us He also said, "If you live by the sword you'll die by the sword." Then He says this: "The cup which My Father hath given Me, shall I not drink it?" I mean, this is what God planned, Peter. Don't mess it up.

You know, I wonder how many times the Lord has had to say to us in effect - Why don't you get out of My way so I can do My work? You know. He says - Peter, this is what we've been planning since the beginning of eternity, now just get aside for a minute and let it happen. Now notice the word "cup." The idea of a cup in the Old Testament is associated with judgment, the cup of His wrath. Also in Revelation 14:10, 10:19 it talks about the cup of indignation, or the cup of wrath. And what He's saying is He's going to drink a cup full of wrath. When Jesus went to the cross He drank a cup of wrath. Whose wrath was it? It was God's wrath against ... what? ... sin. And Jesus says: "Shall I not drink God's cup of wrath, bearing the shame and the agony and the sin and shall I not die feeling the killing death of God's judgment on sinners?" This is how it's planned, Peter, shall I not do it?

And I say what Peter didn't say - Do it, Lord, do it ... cause we must have it done. And Jesus willingly drinks the cup. And, my friends, He drank it to the bottom, didn't He? He died our death. Jesus will die even though the serpent will bruise His heel, even though God will turn His back on Him, His disciples will forsake Him, the Gentiles will mock and scourge Him, the Jews will cry "Crucify Him," and yet He will die. He will die in love for His own and obedience to the Father's plan ... supreme obedience. My friends, you have seen in this passage the majesty of Jesus Christ ... majestic in His courage, His power, His love, His obedience. But the sad thing is that just like that crowd that night you may not really comprehend it. And verse 12 adds the sad tragic commentary: "Then the band and the captain and officers of the Jews took Jesus and bound Him."

Father, we thank You for the time we've been able to see this particular passage. Father, we know that there's a world about us who would just as soon take Jesus, bind Him, crucify Him by rejecting Him. Father, may there be no one leave this place who would stand with that multitude but may every one of us be within the protective care of Your love because by faith we have become Your sheep. Father, we pray that as we close You might speak to our hearts in specifics that we might have time to respond, that we might believe, that our faith might increase, that Christ might become more real in our lives. We pray in His name, Amen.

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