



## SERMON STUDY GUIDE

### “JOHN 18:1-14”

#### WEEKLY QUESTIONS

- What stood out to you from the sermon?
- What stood out to you from the text?
- The main theme of John’s Gospel is that by believing in Jesus as God’s son we find life.
  1. How did you find life when reading this passage?
  2. Did you personally find life in a specific way from the sermon this week?
- How did the sermon or passage point you to Jesus?

#### DETAILS

The text this week divides into five scenes, depicting Jesus’s arrival in the Garden of Gethsemane and the arrest of Jesus. This same story is found with slightly different details in the other Gospels (Matt 26:47–56 // Mark 14:43–50 // Luke 22:47–53). In the arrest narrative of John, it is worth paying attention to the details specific to his version of the story to grasp what he emphasizes.

#### 1. JESUS GOES TO THE GARDEN (18:1)

Only John mentions that Jesus crosses the “Kidron” Valley with his disciples before his betrayal (18:1). The geographical reference may allude to David’s flight from Jerusalem when betrayed by his son Absalom (1 Sam 15:23). Jesus, like David, departs from the city that has rejected him.

One of the features of the Gospels is that Jesus’s story retells the story of God’s history with Israel. How do we read scripture and interpret the meaning of our lives in line with God’s story with his people throughout history?

#### 2. JUDAS TAKES THE SOLDIERS TO THE GARDEN (18:2–3)

John describes a “band” (ESV) or “detachment” (NRSV) of soldiers following Judas to arrest Jesus (18:3). The word is a technical military term for a Roman “cohort” consisted of 600 soldiers, but the word could be applied to a more general group of soldiers. John portrays a fairly large group of soldiers traveling with Judas.

Imagine the tension of this moment. What would it have been like to see a large group of men with weapons and torches making their way to the garden?

What would the disciples have been thinking as they watched the line of torches coming their way?

#### 3. JESUS PRESENTS HIMSELF (JOHN 18:4–9)

In the other Gospel accounts, Judas betrays Jesus with a kiss to identify Jesus to the arresting soldiers (Matt 26:48–49 // Mark 14:44–45 // Luke 22:47–48). There is no kiss in John’s Gospel because the text emphasizes that Jesus is in control. His “hour” is not forced by anyone’s hand (see John 7:30; 8:20, 59; 10:39). Jesus willingly gives his life (see also John 10:18; 15:13).

Jesus stands and identifies himself with the words “I am” evoking two contexts, the Old Testament and Jesus’s teaching about his identity throughout the Gospel John. In the first case, the name of God revealed to Moses in Exodus is “I am” (Exod 3:14; see also Deut 32:39; Isa 43:10–11; 45:3).

God is revealed as “I am” to Moses before leading Israel out of slavery in Egypt. What does Jesus’s identity as “I am” indicate about where he leads God’s people?



## SERMON STUDY GUIDE CONT.

In the second case, one of the unique features of John's Gospel is the seven "I am" sayings, whereby Jesus identifies himself as the agent of God in the World:

- I am the bread of life (John 6:35)
- I am the light of the world (John 8:12; 9:5)
- I am the door of the sheep (John 10:7)
- I am the good shepherd (John 10:11, 14)
- I am the resurrection and the life (John 11:25)
- I am the way, the truth, and the life (John 14:6)
- I am the vine (John 15:1)

There are also instances where Jesus simply identifies himself with the phrase "I am," in a way that anyone might respond to a question (e.g. John 4:26; 6:20; 8:18; 9:9). In other cases, Jesus clearly identifies himself with the divine name "I am" in ways that startle his audience because of the loftiness of the declaration (e.g. John 8:24, 28, 58; 13:19), alluding to the name of God revealed to Moses.

What do you think Jesus means by "I am" in John 18:6, 8?

- Is he revealing his divine identity?
- Is he merely resolving the soldiers' quest for "Jesus the Nazarene"?

The arresting soldiers fall in response to Jesus's self-identification. Elsewhere in Scripture, when people encounter angels or divine glory, they often fall in a posture of worship (Lev 9:24; Num 16:22; 20:6; Judg 13:20; 1 kgs 18:39; Ezek 1:28; Dan 8:18; 10:9; Matt 17:6; Rev 4:10; 5:8, 14; 7:11; 11:16; 19:4, 10; 22:8).

Is the soldiers' fall a moment of comedy?

Is the soldiers' fall an ironic revelation of Jesus's power?

### 4. PETER ATTEMPTS TO STOP THE ARREST (JOHN 18:10-11)

Although all the Gospels include the story about a disciple cutting off the servant's ear (Matt 26:51 // Mark 14:47 // Luke 22:50), only John identifies the disciple as "Peter" and reveals the servant's name, "Malchus." Only Luke tells us that Peter healed Malchus's severed ear (Luke 22:51).

What purpose does John have in revealing "Peter" as the sword wielding disciple?

Why does John reveal the wounded servant by name?

- It is possible that Malchus eventually became a believer and the very person who arrested Jesus eventually recognized that he is the Son of God and by trust in him found life.
- Do you think the audience knew Malchus? Did he still bear a scar?

### 5. JESUS TAKEN TO THE HP ANNAS (JOHN 18:12-14)

The complicated political situation in Roman Israel required that the High Priest was not only a religious office but also a political one. The High Priest could wield significant local power, but the Roman government imposed new High Priests to dilute local power. Annas, the father-in-law of Caiaphas, navigated the power dynamics by installing his relatives when the office turned over.

Why do you think John cares to mention this detail?



CHURCH

LOVE GOD, LOVE PEOPLE

## SERMON STUDY GUIDE CONT.

### RESPOND

- How does this passage encourage you, challenge you, or change you in your efforts to become more like Jesus?
- What is one thing you learned about yourself from God's Word? How will you respond in obedience this week?
- Who is someone you can have a conversation with about what Jesus is doing in your life or invite to join you at a CU Church gathering.

### PRAY

... for each other and spend time praising God. Pray that he will show you how to better love God and love people.