

John 18

MIM Intro...

Would you please turn in your bibles to John 18? Just a reminder we'll be partaking in communion together at the end of service.

Last week we saw the most incredible prayer in all of scripture in John 17.

This morning we're only going to study verses 1-12 as we witness the events of Gethsemane and Jesus' arrest.

The title of this morning's message is GOING FORWARD

Let's read verses 1-6 and then we'll pray

1 When Jesus had spoken these words, He went out with His disciples over the Brook Kidron, where there was a garden, which He and His disciples entered. 2 And Judas, who betrayed Him, also knew the place; for Jesus often met there with His disciples. 3 Then Judas, having received a detachment of *troops*, and officers from the chief priests and Pharisees, came there with lanterns, torches, and weapons. 4 Jesus therefore, knowing all things that would come upon Him, went forward and said to them, "Whom are you seeking?"

5 They answered Him, "Jesus of Nazareth."

Jesus said to them, "I am *He*." And Judas, who betrayed Him, also stood with them. 6 Now when He said to them, "I am *He*," they drew back and fell to the ground.

LET'S PRAY

We often think we know what's about to happen, what lies up ahead, around the corner, in our future. We make plans, and set

our minds in confident assurance of what the outcomes are about to be. Yet when we look back in hindsight, it's shocking how wrong we often are about how events will play out.

Possum story

How we think events will play out, and how they actually materialize, are often much different.

Jesus has finished His upper room discourse. He has just finished praying. And although Jesus has spoken many times of His coming betrayal, arrest, crucifixion, and resurrection, the apostles have no idea of the immeasurable drama that is about to unfold.

The 12 verses we have before us are overflowing with symbolism, and prophesy, so we're gonna camp out here.

1 When Jesus had spoken these words, He went out with His disciples over the Brook Kidron, lets pause here. So often the focus is on gethsemane, and rightfully so. But we can't miss the significance of this brook.

The Brook Kidron is really only a brook in the rainy season. The rest of the year it's a dry, dusty gully. Yet the brook in the valley is full of not only biblical history, but also scriptural significance.

We read in 2 Samuel 15 that when King David was betrayed by his son, Absalom, and friend, Ahithophel, King David evacuated Jerusalem by crossing the Brook Kidron. **2 Samuel 15 23 And all the country wept with a loud voice, and all the people crossed over. The king himself also crossed over the Brook Kidron, and all the people crossed over toward the way of the wilderness.**

Later on, both David's betrayers, Absalom and Ahithophel died hanging from a tree. **2 Sam 18:9 9 Then Absalom met the servants of David. Absalom rode on a mule. The mule went under**

the thick boughs of a great terebinth tree, and his head caught in the terebinth; so he was left hanging between heaven and earth. And the mule which was under him went on.

Ahithophel was suicidal and hung himself. **2 Samuel 17:23** **23** Now when Ahithophel saw that his advice was not followed, he saddled a donkey, and arose and went home to his house, to his city. Then he put his household in order, and hanged himself, and died; and he was buried in his father's tomb.

One of Jesus' titles is Son of David, and likewise Jesus was also rejected by his family, and will be betrayed by His close friends.

It's more than ironic or coincidental that Jesus' betrayer, Judas, also ended his life hanging from a tree. **Matthew 27:3** **Then** Judas, His betrayer, seeing that He had been condemned, was remorseful and brought back the thirty pieces of silver to the chief priests and elders, **4** saying, "I have sinned by betraying innocent blood."

And they said, "What is that to us? You see to it!"

5 Then he threw down the pieces of silver in the temple and departed, and went and hanged himself.

The word "Kidron" means "dark, shadowy, gloomy." See the brook was polluted with the run-off from the Temple sacrifices, and its waters carried away the blood of lambs and goats.

Imagine Jesus crossing over this dark, bloodstained brook. All of the lambs over the years sacrificed for Passover, all the blood that was shed, yet they could never take away the sin of the world. But that is exactly what Jesus was going to do the next day.

Let's read all of verse 1.

1 When Jesus had spoken these words, He went out with His disciples over the Brook Kidron, where there was a garden, which He and His disciples entered

We know from the other gospels that this garden is in fact the garden of Gethsemane. Today, and even more so in the first century, the Mount of Olives is adorned with olive trees. And there is an ancient garden just above the valley that contains a grove of olive trees. In fact, the word “Gethsemane” means “oil press or place of crushing.” The garden once had a press that squeezed the oil out of the olives.

2 And Judas, who betrayed Him, also knew the place; for Jesus often met there with His disciples. This garden was a popular hangout for Jesus and His men when they were in Jerusalem.

SHOW PIC 1 Today you can walk down the Palm Sunday Road and the Garden of Gethsemane is on both sides of the street. To the south there’s a church, and in the courtyard, you’ll find 2,000-year-old trees, under which Jesus may’ve prayed. **CLOSE PIC 1**

Head a little north of the road, and there’s a private garden. When we go, we give the gate attendant a few shekels and he lets our group enjoy a time of prayer and solitude.

This is probably the most impactful place for me personally on our trips to Israel. Imagine praying in the very place where Jesus began to be crushed and squeezed for you and me. And of course, Judas knew this place.

Now John’s gospel doesn’t give us the details that the other gospel writers do of the events that took place inside the garden of Gethsemane.

So let’s remind ourselves briefly of what took by looking at Mark’s gospel, **Mark 14:32 Then they came to a place which was named**

Gethsemane; and He said to His disciples, "Sit here while I pray." 33 And He took Peter, James, and John with Him, and He began to be troubled and deeply distressed. 34 Then He said to them, "My soul is exceedingly sorrowful, *even* to death. Stay here and watch."

35 He went a little farther, and fell on the ground, and prayed that if it were possible, the hour might pass from Him. 36 And He said, "Abba, Father, all things *are* possible for You. Take this cup away from Me; nevertheless, not what I will, but what You *will*."

37 Then He came and found them sleeping, and said to Peter, "Simon, are you sleeping? Could you not watch one hour? 38 Watch and pray, lest you enter into temptation. The spirit indeed *is* willing, but the flesh *is* weak."

39 Again He went away and prayed, and spoke the same words. 40 And when He returned, He found them asleep again, for their eyes were heavy; and they did not know what to answer Him.

41 Then He came the third time and said to them, "Are you still sleeping and resting? It is enough! The hour has come; behold, the Son of Man is being betrayed into the hands of sinners. 42 Rise, let us be going. See, My betrayer is at hand."

This is where we pick up the scene in verse 3.

3 Then Judas, having received a detachment of troops, and officers from the chief priests and Pharisees, came there with lanterns, torches, and weapons. The word translated "detachment" is the equivalent of the Latin "spira" - which referred to a Roman military division. A "spira" numbered anywhere between 200 and 600 troops. We'll see in a few verses that this group of arresting officers was made up of the Temple police and Roman soldiers.

It's interesting they came to the garden with weapons in hand. Why were they so afraid of a carpenter preacher and some fishermen-turned-disciples?

Jesus' enemies thought He was some kind of dangerous criminal, so they arm themselves with swords and clubs so they can take Jesus by force.

As if mankind can overpower God? As if the creation is greater than the creator? How foolish!

Yet this is the same fallacy, the same error of thinking that the world will have at the end of the great tribulation, when the nations gather in war against Christ. **Rev 19:19 And I saw the beast, the kings of the earth, and their armies, gathered together to make war against Him who sat on the horse and against His army.** I encourage you to read Revelation 19 and see how this plays out, but I'll give you a hint-God wins.

Now, you remember that Judas sold Jesus for 30 pieces of silver. But what exactly did Judas give in order to receive his reward? Well, it's likely Judas gave information as to where Jesus could be arrested in a quiet setting with little risk of the crowd interfering. Remember the crowd just days before had been crying out 'Hosanna'. The arresting officers didn't want to start a riot.

4 Jesus therefore, knowing all things that would come upon Him, Pause here. Nothing that happens this night catches Jesus by surprise. He is in control throughout the whole ordeal. And the same is true today. There's not a single situation in any of our lives that catches Jesus off guard. He is still in control.

4 Jesus therefore, knowing all things that would come upon Him, went forward and said to them, "Whom are you seeking?" These are 2 of my favorite words in all of scripture. WENT FORWARD.

Surrounded by viscous soldiers armed to the teeth, Jesus knows what awaits Him in just hours, the mutilation He will endure, and because of His love for you and for me, Jesus WENT FORWARD.

5 They answered Him, “Jesus of Nazareth.”

Jesus said to them, “I am He.” And Judas, who betrayed Him, also stood with them. 6 Now when He said to them, “I am He,” they drew back and fell to the ground.

Notice the phrase Jesus uses to address them, “I am He.” How many times have we seen Jesus declare that He and God the Father are one?

You remember from the burning bush as God spoke to Moses, Moses asked ‘who shall I say sent me?’ Exodus 3:14 And God said to Moses, “I AM WHO I AM.” And He said, “Thus you shall say to the children of Israel, ‘I AM has sent me to you.’”

Jesus once again declares His deity, says I am He, and it was like an explosion-these guys shrink back and fall down.

But more than intellectually shocking, this verse is theologically significant and prophetically promising. At Gethsemane, these enemies of God shrank before the presence of the Almighty.

And this will be the posture of God’s enemies in the future.

Romans 14:11 For it is written:

“As I live, says the LORD,

Every knee shall bow to Me,

And every tongue shall confess to God.”[fn]

AND

Isaiah 45:23 I have sworn by Myself;

The word has gone out of My mouth in righteousness,

And shall not return,

That to Me every knee shall bow,

Every tongue shall take an oath.

By shrinking back and falling down, these enemies of God are just doing what one day every person will do before almighty God.

7 Then He asked them again, “Whom are you seeking?”

And they said, “Jesus of Nazareth.”

8 Jesus answered, “I have told you that I am He. Therefore, if you seek Me, let these go their way,” 9 that the saying might be fulfilled which He spoke, “Of those whom You gave Me I have lost none.” Jesus is about to be arrested, tried, tortured, and crucified - but His focus is the safety of His disciples. Jesus didn’t stop caring for His disciples in the upper room. He didn’t stop caring after He spoke that incredible prayer in John 17. Jesus certainly didn’t stop caring at the cross.

Despite the hardships and agonies we may endure in this life, we have the assurance the Lord still loves and cares for us. And one day, because of what Jesus did on the cross, we will be with Him forever. Revelation 21:3 3 And I heard a loud voice from heaven saying, “Behold, the tabernacle of God is with men, and He will dwell with them, and they shall be His people. God Himself will be with them and be their God. 4 And God will wipe away every tear from their eyes; there shall be no more death, nor sorrow, nor crying. There shall be no more pain, for the former things have passed away.”

Folks this is not the end. I love how Peter describes it in 1 Peter- we are pilgrims!

And speaking of Peter...

10 Then Simon Peter, having a sword, drew it and struck the high priest's servant, and cut off his right ear. The servant's name was Malchus. Clearly Peter was better with a fishing pole than a sword! Now this isn't a big sword, it's more like a dagger.

Upon Jesus' arrest, Pete grabs the sword, and swings for Malchus' head and misses – slicing off Malchus' ear.

Imagine the scene for a moment-Malchus screaming in agony, gripping his ear as the blood flows through his fingers!

And what does Jesus do? **Luke 22:51 But Jesus answered and said, "Permit even this." And He touched his ear and healed him.**

Since when do criminals perform miracles of healing on those who arrest them?

This healing is the last miracle Jesus performed during His earthly ministry, and it's probably the most common miracle He does today.

Healing all the people who have been needlessly wounded by His followers who have used the sword of scripture foolishly or recklessly.

Now we know the book of Hebrews refers to the Bible as a two-edged sword. **Hebrews 4:12 For the word of God is living and powerful, and sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing even to the division of soul and spirit, and of joints and marrow, and is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart.** Hey a reckless saint with a sharp sword can do a lot of harm.

Any Christian who's motivated by anger, or jealousy, or fear, or revenge - can take even the life-giving Word of God, and use it to cut up other people.

Our use of Scripture should be guided not by emotion, but rather our use of scripture should be guided by the Holy Spirit.

Even well-meaning servants of the Lord can hurt the very people they want to minister to. We've all been guilty of misrepresenting Jesus - but I'm so thankful Jesus still heals and reattaches people to His body.

Let's read verse 10 again **10 Then Simon Peter, having a sword, drew it and struck the high priest's servant, and cut off his right ear. The servant's name was Malchus**

It's interesting that Peter is the one who brings out the blade and takes a swing.

We're very familiar with Peter, for all of his failures and fumbles. And next week we'll see how bold, brash Peter is about to deny his Lord.

But pause for a moment and think about this scene. There are at least two hundred Roman soldiers plus the officers of the temple, armed to the teeth, and Peter is ready to fight and defend Christ. Sometimes we forget of the bravery that Peter shows here.

11 So Jesus said to Peter, "Put your sword into the sheath. Shall I not drink the cup which My Father has given?" The Cross was necessary, and Jesus had committed Himself to enduring it. Peter's brave, though misdirected act, showed that he still failed to realize that Jesus' death was necessary.

Zeal without knowledge is dangerous.

Even though Peter shows courage and loyalty to Jesus here, Jesus rebuked Peter. Why?

Because the cup. The "cup" in the OT is associated with suffering and especially judgment. The cup Jesus referred to was bearing God's wrath. Jesus is the Shepherd that must be slain for all the sheep, and Peter can't shield Him from that.

We'll end our study in verse 12 this morning.

12 Then the detachment of troops and the captain and the officers of the Jews arrested Jesus and bound Him. We know it was both the romans and the Jewish temple guard because the troops and captain described here were the Romans, whereas the officers of the Jews were the temple security force.

And notice they bound Jesus, continuing to treat Him as if He were a threat.

They arrested Jesus even though they fell backward when He said "I am He." They arrested Jesus even though He healed Malchus' ear, they still bound Him, and led Him away.

But Jesus wasn't bound by these ropes, Jesus was bound with the cords of love.

Isaiah. 53:7 He was oppressed and He was afflicted,

Yet He opened not His mouth;

He was led as a lamb to the slaughter,

And as a sheep before its shearers is silent,

So He opened not His mouth.

And this brings us to communion this morning.

1 Corinthians 11: 23 For I received from the Lord that which I also delivered to you: that the Lord Jesus on the same night in which He was betrayed took bread; 24 and when He had given thanks, He broke it and said, "Take, eat;[fn] this is My body which is broken[fn] for you; do this in remembrance of Me."

AND

1 Corinthians 11: 25 In the same manner He also took the cup after supper, saying, "This cup is the new covenant in My blood. This do, as often as you drink it, in remembrance of Me."