# DIVING DEEPER DISCUSSION GUIDE



#### TEXT SUMMARY

Our text is Mark 14:43-52, where we see Judas betray Jesus into the hands of his enemies. As we've noted before, Judas' offer to cooperate with Jesus' enemies broke the logjam for them: with his help they could take Jesus by night and not arrest him in public, risking an uproar among the people.

In this act, Judas caused his name to go down in infamy. What once had been a noble name (the Greek form of "Judah," the tribe that produced so many of Israel's kings) is now a by-word for cowardice and treachery. The signal he used to indicate Jesus' identity to the arresting party – the kiss and the title "Rabbi" – was in other contexts a mark of highest respect; now it is used in a sordid act of betrayal.

### INTRODUCTION (OBSERVATION):

- Jesus' betrayal by Judas fulfilled key OT prophecies. Go back to Psalm 55:12-14, 20-21 and Zechariah 11:11-13 to see how God's prophets foretold what happened to Jesus that night.
- 2. It is helpful also to read some of the other gospel-writers' accounts of the arrest. Read Luke's account in Luke 22 and Matthew's in Matthew 26. What additional details do we learn from them?
- 3. How did one of Jesus' men respond to Jesus' arrest? What did all of his men all do next?
- 4. What did Jesus say when the Temple guards arrested him?

## **DISCUSSION** (INTERPRETATION):

The sermon closes with a reminder that the Scriptures hold two truths in tension: **God is sovereign** over the affairs of men and nations, and **people are responsible** for their own actions. Where else in Scripture can we see this principle illustrated (for instance, in Pharaoh's hard heart)?

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#### SO WHAT? (APPLICATION):

Here we move toward first-person pronouns as we begin to consider how we must **respond** to what God has said in His Word.

The betrayal of Judas provides us with a prime example of the tension that has always existed between the sovereignty of God and the responsibility of humans. On the one hand, Judas was playing his out his destiny in the crucial role he played in the death of Jesus. On the other hand, he was doing exactly what he himself wanted to do; he was not a puppet on a string. Both principles are set firmly in place: God's sovereignty and our responsibility. This means that whatever we do, no matter how wicked our intentions, we are always fitting into God's wise and good plan.

Remember how Joseph explained that to his brothers in Gen 50:20: "What you planned for evil God intended for good." Here in our text and throughout Jesus' ordeal, wicked men are doing what they choose to do, and they are responsible for their actions; yet their schemes will only carry out God's purposes: "Let the Scriptures be fulfilled" (Jesus in Mark 14:49).

- 1. Has there ever been a time when your awareness of the sovereignty of God provided comfort when your life circumstances were chaotic or tragic? What is that story?
- 2. Because we know that God orchestrated even the death of His Son to bring about great good, we must always contemplate our own suffering in the shadow of the Cross. Have you ever seen something that appeared at first to be catastrophic turn out to be actually good? How have you been able to see the wisdom and faithfulness of God in retrospect?