

John 18:1-27 NIV Bible Study

Title: **Jesus' Betrayal and Peter's Denial**

Main Idea: Jesus remained faithful to the Father's will through betrayal, arrest, and injustice, while Peter's denial reveals how fear can cause us to falter when our faith is tested.

Exegesis

About the author

- John son of Zebedee
- A Palestinian Jew
- Audience: Jews and Gentiles
- Genre: The Gospel of Jesus
- An apostle
- A disciple of Christ
- Whom Jesus Loved (John 13:23-24, 18:15-16, 20:2-9)

This portion of scripture is found in all four Gospels: **Matthew, Mark, Luke and John**

- Matthew 26:47
- Mark 14:43
- Luke 22:47
- John 18

Each Gospel includes unique details about these events, but the major events are consistent across all accounts.

(notes only)

Jesus was betrayed by Judas, Peter struck the servant of the high priest and cut off his ear, and Jesus was taken to Annas, the father-in-law of Caiaphas, who was high priest that year. Meanwhile, Peter denied Jesus three times, and after the third denial, the rooster crowed. According to Matthew, Mark, and Luke, Peter then went out and wept bitterly.

John's Gospel Only

- *Jesus' appearance before Annas (the High priest that year, also Caiaphas Father-in-law)*

- *While all four Gospels mention a disciple cutting off the servant's ear, only John specifies that Peter was the one who drew the sword and that the servant's name was Malchus.*
- *When the soldiers come to arrest Jesus and he says "I am he," the entire mob draws back and falls to the ground in a display of divine majesty.*
- *The book of John particularly highlights that everything that happened, fulfilled scripture and occurred in accordance to God's plan.*
- The Brook Kidron

Section 1: Jesus Is Betrayed and Arrested

John 18:1–11

Key verse: John 18:1,4-6,10-11

1 When he had finished praying, Jesus left with his disciples and crossed the Kidron Valley. On the other side there was a garden, and he and his disciples went into it.

4 Jesus, knowing all that was going to happen to him, went out and asked them, "Who is it you want?" 5 "Jesus of Nazareth," they replied. "I am he," Jesus said. (And Judas the traitor was standing there with them.) 6 When Jesus said, "I am he," they drew back and fell to the ground.

10 Then Simon Peter, who had a sword, drew it and struck the high priest's servant, cutting off his right ear. (The servant's name was Malchus.) 11 Jesus commanded Peter, "Put your sword away! Shall I not drink the cup the Father has given me?"

What is happening:

- The Chapter begins with Jesus crossing the **Kidron Valley** with his disciples and enters a **Garden**

The Kidron Valley (The Brook Kidron ESV)

- Is mentioned frequently throughout the book of John
- This valley is known to run between the city of Jerusalem and Mount of Olives.
- The Garden is likely to be identified with the orchard of Gethsemane on the Mount of Olives. Closely located near the Garden of Gethsemane

Judas knew the exact location

- Judas knew the place because Jesus had often met there with His disciples.

- Judas used his familiarity with Jesus to help His enemies find Him.
 - **Proximity doesn't mean Intimacy**
 - Just because you come to church doesn't mean you're saved
 - You could feel the presence of God in the church building but that doesn't validate your intimacy with Him.
 - Jesus said Matthew 7:22-23 Many will say to Me on that day, 'Lord, Lord, have we not prophesied in Your name, cast out demons in Your name, and done many wonders in Your name?' 23 And then I will declare to them, 'I never knew you; depart from Me, you who practice lawlessness!'

Lawlessness - means going against God's moral standards, rebelling against His will, and living according to your own desires.

You could love God and practice lawlessness

You could believe in God and practice lawlessness

Jesus calls us to deny ourselves, pick up our cross and follow him

- Instagram Video Example "If your flesh is happy then your spirit isn't"
- God's will isn't always fun and enjoyable but it's required to live a Godly and righteous life in this world.

Judas enters the garden, but he doesn't come alone, he comes with a group of soldiers carrying weapons to arrest Jesus

Then we get to verse John 18:4

4 **Jesus, knowing** all that was going to happen to him, **went out** and asked them, "**Who is it you want?**"

Notice Jesus; response to Judas arrival

- He didn't hide
- He didn't lie
- He didn't run

Instead

- Jesus accepted God's will and stepped forward
- Jesus was not a **helpless victim** of circumstances. He willingly faced His arrest because He was **fulfilling the Father's plan of salvation**.
- Jesus knew the suffering that awaited Him, yet He continued forward.

John 18:5-8

5 “Jesus of Nazareth,” they replied. “I am he,” Jesus said. (And Judas the traitor was standing there with them.) 6 When Jesus said, “I am he,” they drew back and fell to the ground. 7 Again he asked them, “Who is it you want?” “Jesus of Nazareth,” they said. 8 Jesus answered, “I told you that I am he. If you are looking for me, then let these men go.”

Jesus asks the Soldiers, “Who is it you want”

- They replied “Jesus of Nazareth”
- Then Jesus answered with “**I am He**”

When Jesus responds to the soldiers, the original Greek text does not include the word “he.” He literally says, “Ego Emi” (I AM).

- This is the sacred name of God revealed to Moses at the burning bush (exodus)
- Jesus identifies Himself directly with the divine name of God
- Jesus is saying that **He Is God**, with this statement

Verse 6 says that once Jesus responded with “I am he” they drew back and fell to the ground

- This was a sign of reverence and divine revelation

This showed the power of the name of Jesus

- Jesus did not draw a sword, and He didn't use an army of angels.
- He simply spoke His name.
- The guards fell to the ground. Even though they came to capture Him, they were physically overwhelmed by the sudden revelation of His divine identity

Application

- Church, this is the power that the name of God has over people and even our circumstances and situations
- You don't have to know all the theology in the world or physically retaliate back, all you need to know is the name of Jesus
- If Ezekiel spoke the Word of the Lord to the dry bones and it had power, you can speak the name of Jesus, who is the Word made flesh, and your dry bones can live again!"

John 18:10-11

Summarize - Peter takes out his sword, cuts the high priest's servant Malchus, according to Luke Jesus heals the servant, then replies with ““Put your sword away! **Shall I not drink the cup the Father** has given me?”

Teaching point:

“Drink the Cup” serves as a metaphor for **death** and symbolizes **God’s wrath**. Jesus suffered the agony of bearing God’s wrath, which was poured out on him as a substitute and in payment for our sins.

Peter wanted to defend Jesus according to his own understanding, but Jesus was committed to fulfilling the **Father’s will**.

Peter saw the situation as a battle to fight. Jesus understood that He was moving toward the cross to accomplish the Father's plan of redemption.

Section 2: Jesus Faces Annas and Caiaphas

John 18:12–14,19-24

Key verse John 18:12-13,23

12 Then the detachment of soldiers with its commander and the Jewish officials arrested Jesus. They bound him 13 and brought him first to Annas, who was the father-in-law of Caiaphas, the high priest that year.

23 “If I spoke the truth, why did you strike me?”

The soldiers arrest Jesus, bind him and take him to Annas

- Annas was the father-in-law of Caiaphas who was the high-priest that year
- Annas then questions Jesus about his disciples and his teachings
 - This suggests that the primary concern is theological
- Jesus then responds with

John 18:20

20 “I have spoken openly to the world,” Jesus replied. “I always taught in synagogues or at the temple, where all the Jews come together. I said nothing in secret.

Jesus’ reply echoes God’s word in the book of Isaiah

Isaiah 45:19

- 19 I have not spoken in secret, from somewhere in a land of darkness; I have not said to Jacob’s descendants, ‘Seek me in vain.’ I, the Lord, speak the truth; I declare what is right.

Jesus' point wasn't that He never spoke in private, but that His message was the same in private and in public!

- Jesus stood firm in His identity and His message, even when He was arrested and questioned by those who opposed Him.
- This is a reminder that following Christ requires us to know what we believe and be willing to stand by the truth, even when doing so brings opposition.

(laughing moment)

Then a novella broke out

In verse 22-24

22 When Jesus said this, one of the **officials** nearby **slapped** him in the **face**. "Is this the way you answer the high priest?" he demanded.

23 "If I said something wrong," Jesus replied, "testify as to what is wrong. But if I spoke the truth, why did you strike me?" 24 Then Annas sent him bound to Caiaphas the high priest.

Jesus does not respond with violence.

- He does not remain silent about the injustice.
- Instead, He exposes the wrongdoing by asking a direct and reasonable question.
- "If I said something wrong," ... "testify as to what is wrong."

Jesus demonstrates that we can remain faithful to God while facing mistreatment.

He does not retaliate in anger, but He also does not pretend that injustice is acceptable.

Section 3: Peter Denies Jesus

John 18:15–18, 25–27

Key verse: John 18:15,17,26-27

15 Simon Peter and another disciple were following Jesus. Because this disciple was known to the high priest, he went with Jesus into the high priest's courtyard,

17 "You aren't one of this man's disciples too, are you?" she asked Peter. He replied, "I am not."

26 One of the high priest's servants, a relative of the man whose ear Peter had cut off, challenged him, "Didn't I see you with him in the garden?" 27 Again Peter denied it, and at that moment a rooster began to crow.

This portion of the chapter begins with Peter following Jesus as He's being transported to Caiaphas and the High priest.

Before we could fully understand what's happening here, Jesus shares a foreshadow of this exact event during the passover

In John 13, right after the Passover meal, Peter boldly claims that he is ready to follow Jesus anywhere and will even lay down his life for Him. Jesus responds with the chilling prediction that sets up everything you wrote in your section:

John 13:36-38

36 Simon Peter asked him, "Lord, where are you going?" Jesus replied, "Where I am going, you cannot follow now, but you will follow later." 37 Peter asked, "Lord, why can't I follow you now? I will lay down my life for you." 38 Then Jesus answered, "Will you really lay down your life for me? Very truly I tell you, before the rooster crows, you will disown me three times!

Jesus warned Peter of this just a few hours ago, on the same night that he would deny Jesus three times.

Application

- Church, I want us to look at our own lives today and ask ourselves: What is something God is warning me about right now that I am struggling to believe?"
- What is God warning you about today that you are refusing to believe?
 - If God is telling you something, listen, even if it hurts!

Peter was afraid of what would happen to him if He stated that he was Jesus' disciple, so he lied and told the first

Peter had previously expressed his willingness to lay down his life for Jesus (John 13:37). Yet when the moment came, **he denied being His disciple.**

This shows us the difference between what we believe we would do in a difficult situation and what we actually do when our faith is tested.

John 18:25-26

25 Meanwhile, Simon Peter was still standing there warming himself. So they asked him, "You aren't one of his disciples too, are you?" He denied it, saying, "I am not." 26 One of the high priest's servants, a relative of the man whose ear Peter had cut off, challenged him, "Didn't I see you with him in the garden?"

Peter denies Jesus three times in a row

- As Peter stands warming himself, others ask him whether he is one of Jesus' disciples.
- Peter denies Jesus again. A relative of Malchus, the servant whose ear Peter had cut off, questions him because he had seen Peter in the garden.
- Peter denies Jesus for the third time.

Teaching point: **Fear** can cause us to **compromise** our faith when we care more about **protecting ourselves** over **identifying** with **Christ**.

Peter had seen Jesus' miracles, heard His teaching, and personally witnessed His ministry. Yet in this moment, he **denied knowing Him**.

This passage challenges us to examine our own faith.

- Do we stand with Jesus when it is easy, but distance ourselves from Him when our reputation, relationships, comfort, or security are at stake?

John 18:27

27 Again Peter denied it, and at that moment a rooster began to crow.

The rooster's crow marked the fulfillment of Jesus' prediction that Peter would deny Him three times (John 13:38).

- Peter's failure did not surprise Jesus.
- Jesus knew Peter's weakness before Peter experienced it himself.
- John ends this portion by recording the rooster's crow, emphasizing the fulfillment of Jesus' words.

Teaching point:

- Our failures do **not** take God by surprise, but they **reveal** our **need** for His grace and our dependence on Him.

- John does not record Peter weeping in this passage. Matthew 26:75, Mark 14:72, and Luke 22:62 tell us that Peter remembered Jesus' words and wept after the denials.
- Peter's denial reminds us of the seriousness of failing Jesus, while his later restoration reminds us that failure does not have to be the end of our story.
- Your failure, is not your identity
- Your failure is not your future

Let God restore and forgive you because He has the final say!

Questions

1. Am I truly committed to Jesus in my heart, or am I only following Him when it is convenient for me?
2. When my faith is challenged, am I willing to stand for Christ even when it costs me comfort, acceptance, or relationships?
3. In what situations am I tempted to hide my faith or deny my commitment to Christ, and what can I do to stand firm when those moments come?