

the gospel of

JOHN

all intents and purposes

DISCUSSION GUIDE

WEEK 7: TALE OF TWO SWORDS

Read the Text

John 18:1-11

1 When Jesus had spoken these words, he went out with his disciples across the brook Kidron, where there was a garden, which he and his disciples entered. 2 Now Judas, who betrayed him, also knew the place, for Jesus often met there with his disciples. 3 So Judas, having procured a band of soldiers and some officers from the chief priests and the Pharisees, went there with lanterns and torches and weapons. 4 Then Jesus, knowing all that would happen to him, came forward and said to them, "Whom do you seek?" 5 They answered him, "Jesus of Nazareth." Jesus said to them, "I am he." Judas, who betrayed him, was standing with them. 6 When Jesus said to them, "I am he," they drew back and fell to the ground. 7 So he asked them again, "Whom do you seek?" And they said, "Jesus of Nazareth." 8 Jesus answered, "I told you that I am he. So, if you seek me, let these men go." 9 This was to fulfill the word that he had spoken: "Of those whom you gave me I have lost not one." 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.) 11 So Jesus said to Peter, "Put your sword into its sheath; shall I not drink the cup that the Father has given me?"

Main Point

John 18 starts out with Judas' betrayal of Jesus. Judas was in Jesus' inner circle. He was a friend, confidant, and disciple. Despite all the miracles, teachings and outpouring he saw from Jesus though, he betrayed Him by bringing soldiers and officers to Jesus' special place of prayer and rest to arrest Him. This betrayal has made Judas' name synonymous with villain, but the truth is that we can all relate to him. ***The temptation to trade perfect truth and righteousness for worldly gain is alive in all of us. And if we don't fall more in love with the truth and promises of God, we are vulnerable to taking the path of Judas.*** So how do we protect ourselves from this harmful path? A lot of it has to do with obedience! God loves us and promises us eternal life with Him, but that doesn't mean our life on earth is going to be comfortable and easy. ***When we trust God enough to sustain us through trials and challenges, we more fully experience His perfect love and care for us.*** We see Peter struggle with this tension. Instead of facing the struggle of seeing His closest friend and teacher arrested, He cuts off someone's ear! ***Peter wanted Jesus, but not the loss and heartache that comes with following Him in this world.*** He uses his sword to make God's plan more comfortable for himself. On the flip side, we see the Roman soldiers use their sword as well. That sword is used to reject Jesus. To repress, resist, and silence Him. So whether we land on the side of believing Jesus, but resisting His plan; or not believing Him and trying to resist Him altogether, we are invited to consider what true submission looks like to Him.

Reflect Together

1. ***Who is God?*** We see in this passage that Jesus is in control of His own destiny. He doesn't need Peter to protect Him. He knows what's coming and He is walking in obedience to God's plan. How does Jesus' strength and trust impact you? How does it encourage or challenge you?

2. ***What has He done?***: Pastor Donald reminded us that Jesus understands the difficult things we face. Hebrews 4:15 says “He was tempted in all of the ways that we are tempted but did not sin.” Jesus had the same access to the same Spirit that we have. How does that help you when you fall into sin and temptation? How do you remind yourself of this compassion and empathy?
3. ***Who are you?***: How do you respond when life gets difficult? Do you relate to Peter by using a sword to resist challenges? Or the soldier who tries to reject Jesus altogether? What does your response to trials say about your faith and trust in Jesus?
4. ***What are you to do?***: How could God be inviting you into trusting Him more? Has there been something difficult you’ve been resisting that perhaps He is calling you into?

Abide Together

Pray together as an MC about what came up during discussion. Pray that you would grow together in trusting and abiding in Him, even when things are difficult.

Mission Together

Who do you have in your life that identifies with the soldier where they reject Jesus and try to resist Him? What is a step towards this person you could take this week?