

Luke 22 39-71 After You Reject Jesus

Setting: Chronology, Time of Day (Late), Geography (from Jerusalem to Mount of Olives)

This morning we will see Jesus' prayer in the Garden of Gethsemane, His betrayal and arrest, Peter's denial, and His trial before the Jewish leaders.

Along the way we are going to notice people who reject Jesus and see what we can learn from them.

[39](#)And he came out and went, as was his custom, to the Mount of Olives, and the disciples followed him. [40](#)And when he came to the place, he said to them, "Pray that you may not enter into temptation."[41](#)And he withdrew from them about a stone's throw, and knelt down and prayed,[42](#)saying, "Father, if you are willing, remove this cup from me. Nevertheless, not my will, but yours, be done."[43](#)And there appeared to him an angel from heaven, strengthening him.[44](#)And being in an agony he prayed more earnestly; and his sweat became like great drops of blood falling down to the ground. [45](#)And when he rose from prayer, he came to the disciples and found them sleeping for sorrow,[46](#)and he said to them, "Why are you sleeping? Rise and pray that you may not enter into temptation."

This scene is so important because we see so much about the nature of Jesus and about prayer –

Jesus is agonizing and in His agony He turns to God in prayer, which is always a good thing to do, but why is He agonizing? Because He knew what was coming: He who never sinned Himself was about to become sin for us (2 Cor 5:21) and experience the fullness of God's wrath.

And it had to be that way, for as we see, Jesus asks, "Father, is there any other way this can be done, could you remove this cup from me?" And the answer is no, to which Jesus willingly submits.

There was no other way for our sin to be paid for. That's radically important when you try to understand Christianity in light of other world religions or when you wonder whether or not you really have to come to Jesus to be saved.

According to the Bible, Jesus asked if there was *any* other way and the answer was no. Why would God go through all of this if you could just try really hard to live a good life and be sorry when you blow it, or if you just had to keep going through some cycles of reincarnation until you finally arrived?

Death comes to everyone, and then a judgment, and the only way to survive that judgment is to pass under the blood of Jesus.

So Jesus comes to this moment and He is agonizing, pouring out His heart to the Father and He tells the disciples to pray too – but while He is agonizing, they drift off.

The other gospels tell us that Jesus brought Peter, James, and John with Him while He prayed and but they all nodded off and He had to wake them up three times.

So here we have the first of three times that we will see Peter blow it – the big, impulsive fisherman who just a little while ago at dinner said he was *so committed* to Jesus keeps stumbling because he doesn't understand what is going on spiritually. Had Peter been praying like Jesus told him to, perhaps he would have seen the bigger picture.

Jesus is praying “Father, Your will be done” Peter is thinking, my will be done – he doesn't understand the severity of this moment the way Jesus does. He's not alone; we will see that many others were thinking the same thing on this night – they were focused on doing what they thought was right instead of seeking God.

[47](#)While he was still speaking, there came a crowd, and the man called Judas, one of the twelve, was leading them. He drew near to Jesus to kiss him,[48](#)but Jesus said to him, “Judas, would you betray the Son of Man with a kiss?”[49](#)And when those who were around him saw what would follow, they said, “Lord, shall we strike with the sword?”[50](#)And one of them struck the servant of the high priest and cut off his right ear.[51](#)But Jesus said, “No more of this!” And he touched his ear and healed him.[52](#)Then Jesus said to the chief priests and officers of the temple and elders, who had come out against him, “Have you come out as against a robber, with swords and clubs?[53](#)When I was with you day after day in the temple, you did not lay hands on me. But this is your hour, and the power of darkness.”

Jesus willingly allows Himself to be arrested – in fact, that's the only way He could be taken after all, how do you put handcuffs on God? But while Jesus is complying, Peter resists arrest.

John's gospel tells us that Peter was the one who swung his sword and took off the ear of Malchus, a servant of the high priest. We see Peter blow it again because he is focused on his ideas and has not submitted to the Father.

Peter is out of sync with Jesus – like an iPod, he needs to be connected and reflect the Master.

He's not the only one out of sync with Jesus, here we see Judas pursuing his agenda. He has spent the past three years living with Jesus, traveling together, listening to His teachings, seeing His miracles, and yet for some reason, He has rejected Jesus' way of doing things too and sold Him out.

[54](#)Then they seized him and led him away, bringing him into the high priest's house, and Peter was following at a distance.[55](#)And when they had kindled a fire in the middle of the courtyard and sat down together, Peter sat down among them.[56](#)Then a servant girl, seeing him as he sat in the light and looking closely at him, said, “This man also was with him.”[57](#)But he denied it, saying, “Woman, I do not know him.”[58](#)And a little later someone else saw him and said, “You also are one of them.” But Peter said, “Man, I am not.”[59](#)And after an interval of about an hour still another insisted, saying, “Certainly this man also was with him, for he too is a Galilean.”[60](#)But Peter said, “Man, I do not know what you are talking about.” And immediately, while he was still speaking, the rooster crowed.[61](#)And the Lord turned and looked at Peter. And

Peter remembered the saying of the Lord, how he had said to him, “Before the rooster crows today, you will deny me three times.”⁶² And he went out and wept bitterly.

For the third time in a matter of hours, Peter has blown it because he had his own ideas and wasn't in sync with what God was doing. And right then, at the climax of it all, Jesus looks at him.

What do you think was in Jesus' eyes at that moment? Because how you picture Jesus' face says a lot about your concept of God. Was it a look of bitterness, or of disappointment, or was it a look of compassion?

Remember, Jesus KNEW Peter was going to fall, Jesus told him so at dinner and Peter said *'that's impossible'* – Peter remembers it now and “he went out and wept bitterly.” The Greek words here mean he sobbed convulsively – there are two ways of saying someone cried in Greek, one is a silent weeping, that's not what this is, this is the word for someone who is absolutely wrecked.

Now so far, we have seen both Peter and Judas reject Jesus, but we have one more group to go – Jesus is seriously losing the popularity contest this evening.

⁶³Now the men who were holding Jesus in custody were mocking him as they beat him.⁶⁴ They also blindfolded him and kept asking him, “Prophecy! Who is it that struck you?”⁶⁵ And they said many other things against him, blaspheming him.

⁶⁶When day came, the assembly of the elders of the people gathered together, both chief priests and scribes. And they led him away to their council, and they said,⁶⁷ “If you are the Christ, tell us.” But he said to them, “If I tell you, you will not believe,⁶⁸ and if I ask you, you will not answer.⁶⁹ But from now on the Son of Man shall be seated at the right hand of the power of God.”⁷⁰ So they all said, “Are you the Son of God, then?” And he said to them, “You say that I am.”⁷¹ Then they said, “What further testimony do we need? We have heard it ourselves from his own lips.”

They could not have arrested Him unless He surrendered, and they could not have convicted Him unless He testified - He is fully in control of what is going on.

Jesus, the son of God, sent by God to save the world from sin is rejected by the religious and political leaders of the nation. Luke gives us a condensed account of what happened, but from the other gospels we know that they put Him on trial and tried to have people testify to what Jesus had done wrong, but they couldn't get anyone to agree on what He had done or said that was so bad. So finally they ask Him if He is the Son of God, and He says yes. They consider this blasphemy and condemn Him.

It's morning now and next week will see them lead Jesus over to the Roman governor to ask for His execution because the Jews did not have the authority to carry out capital punishment while the Romans were ruling them.

So, we have seen three rejections this morning – *Jesus is in sync* with the Father’s will, He is pursuing God’s glory and is obeying Him **even though it is painful** and He is doing it all for the sake of saving us.

Peter, Judas, and the Jewish leaders *are all out of sync with God* and are pursuing their own agendas and have resisted and rejected Jesus and as a result, have rejected God.

So what happens next? Where does life go for each of them?

Well, let’s work our way backwards and start with the Jewish leaders. They will persist in their rejection of Jesus because He was a threat to the comfortable positions they enjoyed. Like many executives and politicians they had an abundance of power and pleasure and were vigilant in protecting it. Jesus was seen as a threat to their positions and had to go, so they schemed up a plan to get rid of Him. But after He was executed He rose from the dead and His followers kept on preaching His messages so the leaders started going after them and you can read many of the details in the book of Acts.

They heard Jesus’ teaching from His own mouth, then they heard the testimony of His followers time and time again, but they just would not break, they persisted in their rejection of Him and clung to the power they had amassed for themselves. As a result, God stripped away all that they were clinging to and destroyed both the city and the Temple that they were so proud of in 70 AD. In the end they were left empty handed, without either God or their power and pleasures.

Judas was a little bit different. Turn with me to Matthew 27.

1When morning came, all the chief priests and the elders of the people took counsel against Jesus to put him to death.2And they bound him and led him away and delivered him over to Pilate the governor.

3Then when Judas, his betrayer, saw that Jesus was condemned, he changed his mind and brought back the thirty pieces of silver to the chief priests and the elders,4saying, “I have sinned by betraying innocent blood.” They said, “What is that to us? See to it yourself.”5And throwing down the pieces of silver into the temple, he departed, and he went and hanged himself.6But the chief priests, taking the pieces of silver, said, “It is not lawful to put them into the treasury, since it is blood money.”7So they took counsel and bought with them the potter's field as a burial place for strangers.

Judas felt remorse, but he tried to handle it on his own. That’s a mistake that many people make – they see what needs to be fixed and think they have to handle it on their own. As a result, they wind up making the wrong choices or discovering that they don’t have the strength to do what needs to be done.

Remorse is OK – it’s good to feel a sense of sorrow for your sin, but what will you do then?

Peter is the only one who got it right.

We saw that Peter regretted his actions too – but when remorse came, he went in a different direction – he headed back to Jesus and to fellowship.

Even though he had just denied Jesus publicly, cursing and swearing that he did not know Jesus, when he was broken he remembered the words that Jesus had spoken and returned to the disciples. The next time we see him is over in chapter 24. Jesus was crucified, then buried and news comes that His body is missing from the tomb so Peter and John race over to the tomb to see what is going on. John wins the race, but Peter actually goes inside the tomb and realizes Jesus is gone, He has resurrected.

Not long afterwards, Peter is out on the lake fishing again with some of the disciples when Jesus appears to them and restores Peter.

John 21:[15](#)When they had finished breakfast, Jesus said to Simon Peter, “Simon, son of John, do you love me more than these?” He said to him, “Yes, Lord; you know that I love you.” He said to him, “Feed my lambs.”[16](#)He said to him a second time, “Simon, son of John, do you love me?” He said to him, “Yes, Lord; you know that I love you.” He said to him, “Tend my sheep.”[17](#)He said to him the third time, “Simon, son of John, do you love me?” Peter was grieved because he said to him the third time, “Do you love me?” and he said to him, “Lord, you know everything; you know that I love you.” Jesus said to him, “Feed my sheep.[18](#)Truly, truly, I say to you, when you were young, you used to dress yourself and walk wherever you wanted, but when you are old, you will stretch out your hands, and another will dress you and carry you where you do not want to go.”[19](#)(This he said to show by what kind of death he was to glorify God.) And after saying this he said to him, “Follow me.”

Peter responded to that call and was used mightily by God in the coming years as the gospel spreads from Jerusalem, over to Samaria, and eventually to the Gentiles. The Gospel of Mark is Peter’s account told to Mark, and he also wrote 1 and 2 Peter. In spite of his failure, God used him mightily when he finally got synced up.

So Peter, Judas, and the Council – all three rejected what Jesus was doing – so have all of us. At some point we have all resisted and rejected what God is doing. The question is – do you persist in that rejection? And if you turn from your rejection, if you realize your sins and your errors, what do you do about that? Do you take matters into your own hands like Judas or do you come to Jesus like Peter?

These are important questions – hopefully you have seen that the only valid choice is to turn to God in prayer – ask Him to forgive you, let go of your own plans and agendas, and say, “nevertheless, not my will, but Your will be done.”