

Dustin Daniels | River Bible Church
Mark 14:43-52 | A Kiss with Vengeance
October 17, 2021

WELCOME:

- Please turn your Bibles to Mark 14:43-52
- Bibles in back—our gift to you.

REVIEW:

Last Sunday, our Scripture passage had us in the Garden of Gethsemane.

It was there that we learned about the true humanity of Jesus.

The Holy Spirit taught us why Jesus was—in His humanity—distressed, grieved and troubled.

As you'll remember, the reason is due to the **overwhelming** reality of the weight and the wickedness of our sin.

It was nearly too much for Jesus, even as Son of Man to sustain before He gets to Calvary.

That's why The Father sent an angel to minister to Jesus—to keep Him alive.

Jesus' response and reaction to sin is also a testimony to why **He is the only one** who can be *the Lamb of God to take away our sin*.

Jesus is the only one because He is both the Son of God **AND** the Son of Man.

Jesus is both divine and human.

Why is that so important?

First, because it is humans who sinned.

We are the ones who are guilty—so a human must suffer and pay the price of sin.

Secondly, since no human is perfect, God had to step down off His throne to make the propitiation Himself.

It is only God who can satisfy God's wrath on sin.

Jesus, who is both divine and human, is the reason why there is only one way to Heaven—no other man other than Jesus could be the substitute for us.

So, last Sunday, Jesus walks into the Garden of Gethsemane—looks into the cup that He must drink,

And sees both our *sin* and the Father's wrath.

KEYPOINTS:

1. *In times of great stress, you are most vulnerable to temptation.*
2. *God says "no" our to prayers.*
3. *Constant, repetitious prayer doesn't deliver us from ^{personal} Gethsemane, but through Gethsemane.*
4. *We can still choose to trust God when we don't understand Him.*

INTRODUCTION:

Today's text is Gethsemane's sequel.

Today's Scripture passage reveals the incredible accuracy of Jesus' predictions of betrayal, suffering, dying, and rising three days later.

Jesus' betrayal and arrest in Gethsemane are in all four Gospels—Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John. (Matt. 26:47–56; Luke 22:47–53; John 18:2–12).

Mark's account of this narrative once again is concise.

Mark focuses on the actions of Judas and the arrest of Jesus.

This is also the last mention of Judas in Mark's Gospel.

Now, before we read the text, I have to mention that we're familiar with the terms "innocent until proven guilty."

The Jews had a similar legal system.

They had many laws in place where someone had to be overwhelmingly proven guilty before they were punished.

Well, except for Jesus. All bets are off for the holy one of God.

As we read and study Jesus' arrest today and the trials over the next several Sundays—

I want you to be aware of some of the blatant laws that were broken.

In fact, the Jews broke 22 of their own laws in the arrest and trial the three separate trials of Jesus.

Let me give you the top ten.

1. There was to be no arrest if a bribe was involved.
2. The religious leaders were not allowed to participate in an arrest.
3. There were to be no trials before the morning sacrifice or after sunset.
4. There were to be no secret trials, only public trials.

5. There were to be two or three witnesses, and their testimonies had to agree on every detail.
6. The high priest was forbidden to tear his garments during a trial.
7. The religious leaders could not initiate the charges; they could only investigate them.
8. The trial and the guilty verdict had to be separated by at least 24 hours.
9. The sentence could only be pronounced three days after the guilty verdict.
10. A guilty person was not to be scourged or beaten before his execution.

All that to say this, nearly every detail of Jesus' arrest and trial violates the rules prescribed in Jewish law.

Why? Why was the arrest, trial, and execution of Jesus of Nazareth so blatantly manipulated?

Let's find out!

Please stand for the reading and honoring of God's Word.

SCRIPTURE: Mark 14:43-52 CSB

Mark 14:41— Then he came a third time and said to them, "Are you still sleeping and resting? Enough! The time has come. See, the Son of Man is betrayed into the hands of sinners.

Mark 14:42— Get up; let's go. See, my betrayer is near."

Mark 14:43— While he was still speaking, Judas, one of the Twelve, suddenly arrived. With him was a mob, with swords and clubs, from the chief priests, the scribes, and the elders.

Mark 14:44— His betrayer had given them a signal. "The one I kiss," he said, "he's the one; arrest him and take him away under guard."

+ **Mark 14:45**— So when he came, immediately he went up to Jesus and said, "Rabbi!" and kissed him.

+ **Mark 14:46**— They took hold of him and arrested him.

+ **Mark 14:47**— One of those who stood by drew his sword, struck the high priest's servant, and cut off his ear.

+ **Mark 14:48**— Jesus said to them, "Have you come out with swords and clubs, as if I were a criminal, to capture me?"

+ **Mark 14:49**— Every day I was among you, teaching in the temple, and you didn't arrest me. But the Scriptures must be fulfilled."

+ **Mark 14:50**— Then they all deserted him and ran away.

+ **Mark 14:51**— Now a certain young man, wearing nothing but a linen cloth, was following him. They caught hold of him,

+ **Mark 14:52**— but he left the linen cloth behind and ran away naked.

+ **PRAY:**

Help me understand the meaning of your precepts so that I can meditate on your wonders. (Psalm 119:27)

+ **EXEGESIS:**

Mark 14:43— While ^{Judas} he was still speaking, Judas, [one of the Twelve], suddenly arrived. With him was a mob, with swords and clubs, from the chief priests, the scribes, and the elders.

Matthew, Mark, and Luke all go out of their way to say **Judas, one of the Twelve.**

He's one of us!

Judas is one of the world's greatest mysteries.

How is it that someone who Jesus handpicked—

Someone who spent three years with the Son of God—

Someone who also preached the Gospel and even performed miracles like the other Disciples—

Turns around and hates Jesus as much as the Pharisees, Sadducees, and Scribes?

The other eleven Disciples can not get over this—

Judas is one of The Twelve!

Each Gospel writer is overly gracious here.

Don't you have some choice names for the Judas' who betrayed you?

Mark 14:43— *While he was still speaking, Judas, one of the Twelve, suddenly arrived.*

So it's at this moment where the eleven Disciples realize who the betrayer is.

They didn't have any idea who Jesus was talking about during the Passover meal.

Judas is the ultimate hypocrite—He had everybody fooled, but Jesus.

So the Disciples see Judas, and they must be beside themselves.

Why?

Because Judas brought an army.

Mark 14:43— *With him was a mob, with swords and clubs, from the chief priests, the scribes, and the elders.*

So when Jesus told Judas to go do what he must do during the Passover meal — *“do it quickly.”* (John 13:27)

Judas went to the religious leaders,

Then the religious leaders brought Judas to Pilate.

And it was there where Judas convinced Pilate with lies and slander that Jesus of Nazareth is a dangerous revolutionary.

Convincing Pilate probably didn't take much effort.

Can you hear Judas say, *“Remember, just a few days ago, where tens of thousands of people hailed Jesus as the Messiah as He entered Jerusalem.”*

We call that Jesus' Triumphant Entry today.

Of course Pilate, didn't know that.

What Pilate did know is that he just squashed a political revolutionary named Barrabas.

So, Pilate is not going to take any chances—he sends a Roman cohort to arrest Jesus.

A legion was 6,000 soldiers— and a cohort consisted of six hundred.

Scripture says that...*The mob has swords and clubs.*

Your translation may say a great multitude or crowd of people.

These people are also armed.

Swords are regular weapons for the Roman soldiers.

Clubs are weapons that the Temple Police would use.

So we know that the Temple Police are there, however, we don't know how many.

Regardless, make no doubt about it; this mob was well-trained and well-armed.

Can you picture the reality of what's happening?

There's a group of 600 Roman soldiers plus an unknown number of Temple Police.

Both Jewish and Gentile, carrying swords and clubs to arrest one man.

What does that tell you?

It tells us they were terrified of Jesus.

This mob also doesn't just include soldiers but also religious leaders—and a lot of them.

In fact, look at the wording—

Mark 14:43—... the chief priests, the scribes, and the elders.

Each group has a definite article—all three religious groups are there.

Why is this important?

Because these groups hated one another—but Mark is making a point—it's the hatred of Jesus that unifies them.

Now think about that—it's the hatred of God—that unifies religious people.

Even more baffling than that is that Jews and Gentiles are united for a common cause as well.

All of mankind is united to kill the Lord God Almighty.

The religious leaders think they have the perfect plan.

And Pilate has guaranteed that there is not going to be a riot.

He is ready to squash any resistance with deadly force.

Mark 14:44— *His betrayer had given them a signal. "The one I kiss," he said, "he's the one; arrest him and take him away under guard."*

How wicked is this?

We talked last week about how our actions prove what we believe about God... how's this action, for example?

Why such a dramatic blasphemous signal?

First, it reveals the detestable darkness of Judas' heart.

Secondly, don't the religious leaders know what Jesus looks like?

Well, yes and no.

Jesus looked and dressed just like any other Jewish man.

But, it is in the middle of the night.

And if you think Cottonwood is dark at night, first-century Israel would have been scary dark.

It would have been nearly impossible for the soldiers to pick Jesus out from His disciples.

That's why according to John 18:3, the mob also carried torches and lanterns.

They carried torches and lanterns because they thought that they would be on a foot chase after Jesus.

Plus, the religious leaders were probably ready for one of the Disciples to act as a stand-in or an imposter while Jesus ran away.

Mark 14:45— So when he (Judas) came, immediately he went up to Jesus and said, "Rabbi!" and kissed him.

Don't you hate when people act like nothing is wrong in the relationship?

That's what Judas does here.

The picture is that Judas is delighted to see his "teacher."

Even though Judas calls Jesus "Rabbi," his actions prove that he didn't learn a thing from Jesus.

cf. Luke 22:48— but Jesus said to him, "Judas, are you betraying the Son of Man with a kiss?"

Jesus calls Judas out—and Judas still kisses Him.

A kiss was a sign of affection, honor, respect that could be administered in different ways.

For example, slaves kissed their master's feet.

Subordinates kissed the hands of their superiors.

And equals kissed cheeks.

Judas most likely kissed Jesus on His cheek.

Evidently, Judas considers himself equal with God—go figure.

Remember the story of the burning bush?

+ **cf. Exodus 33:18**—Then Moses said, "Please, let me see your glory."

+ **cf. Exodus 33:19**—God said, ^{theophany} (AKA, The preincarnate Jesus Christ) "I will cause all my goodness to pass in front of you, and I will proclaim the name 'the Lord' before you. I will be gracious to whom I will be gracious, and I will have compassion on whom I will have compassion."

+ **cf. Exodus 33:20**—But he added, "You cannot see my face, for humans cannot see me and live."

And yet, Judas betrays God by not just looking at God's face but kissing it.
Secondly, ~~kissing Jesus on the cheek~~, it's not shocking that Judas ignores the social protocols of his day.

Because a disciple doesn't kiss his teacher.

A Rabbi first kisses his disciples, and then the disciple returns the kiss.

The Greek text reads, "kissed him much."

Judas embraced Jesus and then kissed him repeatedly.

The picture here is when the prodigal son returns and his father kisses him. (Luke 15:20)

Wow, Judas is quite the actor, isn't he?

Somebody give this guy an Academy Award.

Judas wants everything to appear normal up to the last second when soldiers rush in to arrest Jesus.

Pause... because we have quite the scene, don't we?

Think about this...it's the middle of a spring night. (1am-3am)

The Passover moon is full.

The clouds are reflecting the moon's light.

John's Gospel tells us it's a cold night. (John 18:18).

Here they are in the middle of an olive grove with the olive trees casting creepy shadows all over the garden.

It's the darkest part of the night, where Judas betrays Jesus with a kiss.

Mark doesn't mention what happens next.

We have to turn to the Gospel of John to find out. Jesus then asks...

cf. John 18:4— "Who is it that you're seeking?"

In other words, "What does it say on your arrest warrant?"

+ cf. **John 18:5**— "Jesus of Nazareth," they answered.

"I am he," Jesus told them.

+ cf. **John 18:6**— When Jesus told them, "I am he," they stepped back and fell to the ground.

In other words, Jesus said the words, *egō eimi* (eh-me!)— I AM.

Jesus is obviously proclaiming His deity to the mob—but specifically and especially to the Jews.

The words "I AM" ^{Also} first appear the story of Moses and the burning bush.

Moses encounters a holy God (once again, the preincarnate Jesus Christ) and has a conversation with Him. ^{theophany}

When Moses asked what God's name is, Jesus simply said, "I AM WHO I AM."
(Exodus 3:14)

And from that time forward, I AM (Tetragrammaton) became the special name the Jews used for God.

How do we know that this name is special?

Because we see the consequences of the name itself.

We see the holiness of God's name in real-time.

+ cf. **John 18:6**— When Jesus told them, "I am he," they stepped back and fell to the ground.

Can you imagine that?

Watching nearly 600 Roman soldiers PLUS Temple police PLUS religious leaders fall to the ground simultaneously.

There could have been up to one thousand people that night to arrest Jesus.

I tend to wonder if a glimmer of Jesus' glory from the Transfiguration shot out causing holy terror.

+ cf. **John 18:7**— Then he asked them again, "Who is it that you're seeking?"

As marines and navy seals and politicians are still on the ground, Jesus confronts them!

As they pick themselves off the ground, do you think anyone wants to answer this question again?

Can't you just see people doing this?

What's the message to you and me so far today?

What's Jesus' message to His Church from the Word of God?

What does this Scripture passage teach the world?

It teaches that nobody arrested Jesus.

If Jesus didn't want to be arrested that night, no one could have seized Him.

The message to everyone is that Jesus is the one in charge at this moment.

Not the ~~Romans~~ ^{soldiers}, Pilate the politician or the religious mucky mucks—no one.

Jesus is only arrested because of His submission to the Father's plan.

+ **cf. John 18:7**— Then Jesus asked them again, "Who is it that you're seeking?" "Jesus of Nazareth," they said.

+ **cf. John 18:8**— "I told you I am he," Jesus replied.

Jesus proved his divinity the first time He answered.

Now, He's proving His humanity by letting them know that He is the one they are searching for.

Back to our text in Mark...

+ **Mark 14:46**— They took hold of him and arrested/seized him.

Mark does not record any response from Jesus at this point.

But we can take an educated guess that Jesus offers no resistance and shows no anger.

Judas vanishes from the story | but not our memory.

Verse 46 literally text reads, the Romans "*laid hands on him.*"

We have a lot of ironies that begin here.

The irony at this moment is that Jesus has been laying His hands-on people for the past three years— why?

To heal them or to give a blessing. (Mark 5:23; 6:5; 7:32; 8:25,10:16)

The Romans lay hands on Jesus violently, seize Him and started tying him up.

They arrest Him.

Question: What's the charge? What did Jesus do?

The charge is His holiness. We can't have God Himself walking around humanity.

Mark 14:47— *One of those who stood by drew his sword, struck the high priest's servant, and cut off his ear.*

If we don't know who Mark is talking about, we could all take an educated guess that this is Peter. John's Gospel confirms it.

Peter's sword is not really a sword but a large ceremonial knife.

It is not anything like the swords of the Roman soldiers.

But, in typical fashion, Peter uses it as a big Roman sword and starts swinging this thing around.

Now, let's keep in mind Peter's resume.

Peter is a professional fisherman turned seminary student.

How much weapon training and self-defense classes do you think Peter's taken over the years?

On the other hand, the Roman soldiers are so well trained at using their swords that they can split their enemy's helmets and skulls at the same time with one blow.

They know precisely how to slit someone's throat or plunge a dagger into someone's heart.

This is so important to understand—the Romans speak one language, and that is violence.

Regardless, Peter doesn't think through his plan nor the consequences, and he pulls

out his knife, goes for the throat of the ^{Malchus} high priest's servant, misses, and lops off his ear!

Interesting little tidbit in verse 47—the picture is that Peter ripped off this man's ear instead of cutting it off.

How? Because his knife was so dull!

Imagine the scene: On one side were 600 ~~hundreds~~ of Roman soldiers.

In addition, who knows how many Temple police and many others, all carrying swords and weapons.

On the other side was— Peter with his short dull knife.

Dr. Luke tells us that Jesus steps in and heals the man's ear.

By the way, Jesus also saves Peter's life that night.

If Jesus wouldn't have healed Malchus' ear, there is no doubt the soldiers would have killed Peter. (We'll learn why in a moment.)

Pause... What do you think was going through Peter's mind for him to pull this crazy stunt?

Can you imagine being pulled over by the Cottonwood Police Department, and all of a sudden, the sheriff's department arrives, and then the state police and finally the FBI...

And before you know, you've got one hundred officers around you with guns drawn.

You decide your take out your pocket knife that is as dull as a letter opener and goes after one of them?

How's that going to work out for you? (Gary)

What was Peter thinking? Or was he not thinking at all.

Now before you answer....

Keep in mind what Peter just saw Jesus do.

He heard Jesus, with two words, "I AM" —and those two words put all these soldiers flat on their back.

So is it possible at this moment, with all these soldiers and politicians around...

That Peter still thinks that Jesus, as the Messiah, will overthrow Rome and free the Jews from oppression?

Yeah, that thought is a very good possibility.

Can't you picture Peter, screaming at Jesus, "Say it again!"

*wd Peter pulling out his knife
until Jesus says this... Jesus doesn't say "I AM" because
Jesus is not a magician - Mission*

+ cf. **Matthew 26:52**— Then Jesus told him, "Put your sword back in its place because all who take up the sword will perish by the sword.

Oh no, Jesus confirms the OT law of capital punishment.

Peter, if you kill someone - you too will be killed.
+ cf. **Matthew 26:53**— Or do you think that I cannot call on my Father, and he will provide me here and now with more than twelve legions of angels?

A Roman legion was made up of 6,000 soldiers.

And Jesus says, "*Peter, I've got twelve legions of angels.*" — $12 \times 6,000 = 72,000$ angels—ready and waiting.

↳ Not Soldiers

Not only that Scripture tells us in 2 Kings 19:35 ~~tells us~~ that one ~~single~~ angel killed 185,000 soldiers in a single night.

Not to shabby, but Jesus says, "*I'm not going to call them.*"

Why? Because Jesus is in the center of His Father's will.

God the Father uses man's hate of Him to save them.

Now some of you may be asking, what's Peter doing with a weapon anyway?

Well, carrying a sword for protection during the Passover was common.

The first century is incredibly violent.

Not only that, but Luke's Gospel tells us that Jesus encouraged his disciples to buy swords. (Luke 22:36)

That's a different sermon for another day!

Now, Peter had good intentions to protect Jesus, but Jesus doesn't want protecting!

Peter's good intentions could have been disastrous for the Church.

What would have happened if the soldiers decided to kill Jesus right then and there because of Peter's actions?

No cross and no salvation, and everybody is going to hell—and that is Satan's plan.

Now we keep saying that the 12 Disciples represent us today as Jesus Disciples.

How many times have you stepped in the middle of God's work ^{to} around you and got in His way because you didn't think things through?

Once again, this narrative shows us how we all have a bad case of the normals.

KEYPOINT 1:

At times, we all have a sincere but misplaced loyalty to Jesus.

Jesus' Disciples were prepared to die *for* him, but they were not prepared to die *with* him.

And that, my friends, makes a massive difference in how you view Jesus.

Mark 14:48— Jesus said to them, "Have you come out with swords and clubs, *as if I were a criminal, to capture me?*"

The idea here is that they think Jesus is someone who is violent and will try to escape at any cost.

Mark 14:49— Every day I was among you, teaching in the temple, and you didn't arrest me. But the Scriptures *must be fulfilled.*"

The temple is the most public place in all of Israel.

Jesus is exposing their hypocrisy.

Jesus, at this moment, is physically tied up.

He has his hands behind His back with soldiers' hands on Him.

Other soldiers have swords and clubs in his face—and Jesus at the same time—is calling these men... cowards.

And they know their cowards because His question exposed their fear of the people.

Mark 14:49— *But the Scriptures must be fulfilled.*"

Jesus' statement is an act of submission to the Father's plan.

His arrest sets in motion a supernatural set of dominoes that must happen for our salvation to take place.

cf. Luke 22:53— *Every day while I was with you in the temple, you never laid a hand on me. But this is your hour—and the dominion of darkness.*"

This is the moment that Jesus anticipated in the Garden of Gethsemane.

Jesus is now ready to face the wrath of man and the wrath of God.

And it's in this moment where...

Mark 14:50— *Then they all deserted him and ran away.*

The Disciples faith completely collapses.

When the disciples realized that Jesus was not going to defend Himself, they all fled just as the OT prophesied and Jesus reiterated.

Not even Peter proved to be the exception to the prophecy like he promised.

Mark 14:51— *Now a certain young man, wearing nothing but a linen cloth, was following him. They caught hold of him,*

Mark 14:52— but he left the linen cloth behind and ran away naked.

Pause...who cares about this guy? 

We just read the incomprehensible story of sinful people seizing and arresting the One True Living God—and now Mark tells us this?!

What do verses 51 and 52 have to do with anything?

Did we miss something here?

Is there a page ripped out of our Bibles?

Why does Mark insert such a trivial detail into the betrayal and arrest of Jesus Christ?

Some people have suggested that this naked man is Mark—our Gospel writer himself. ^{Himself}

This was a common way for writers to insert themselves into the narrative without stating their names.

John does this several times in the Gospel of John and his epistle 1 John—***“The one Jesus loved.”***

The only problem with this “author insertion” theory is that nothing in the text indicates that this is actually Mark.

Other people say that Mark’s point in verses 51 and 52 emphasizes the isolation and betrayal of all the Disciples at that moment.

Because Jesus is now facing his destiny alone—just as Scripture says.

Others believe that this last scene is a picture of the Gospel spreading out in every direction—even though everything looks hopeless.

But, once again, those ideas are all based on speculation.

Speculation is never a good characteristic when interrupting Scripture.

Let's look at what we know...

Mark 14:51— Now a certain young man, wearing nothing but a linen cloth, was following him. They caught hold of him,

Mark 14:52— but he left the linen cloth behind and ran away naked.

This man wore linen a covering under his tunic.

Only the wealthy were able to do that—so this man was a person of wealth.

And because this man was dressed this way we know that ~~this man~~^{he} left his home in a hurry.

We know this because he doesn't have his outer garment (tunic) on and it's cold.

He most likely lived in Jerusalem because that's where the soldiers came from.

We know the soldiers left the city and walked toward the Mount of Olives.

The soldieries possibly pass by his home, and he wakes up when he hears all the commotion from the mob of soldiers and decides to see what is going on.

Verse 52 says that he ran away naked.

Is that detail important? ...

Yes, it's the key to understand these two verses.

What does nakedness represent in Scripture?

In the garden of Eden, the man and the woman were naked but without shame—

Until they chose to sin.

When they chose to sin, they became very aware of their nudity.

So they covered themselves—and we've been hiding from our shame ever since.

How do you and I— apart from God— deal with sin and shame?

We hide and cover it up —just like Adam and Eve.

But is that the solution?

No, hiding and covering things up is a temporary band aid.

So, is this anonymous naked man—running away from Jesus— a trivial detail in this story?

Here's Why...
No, when God speaks of bringing judgment against the guilty, He does it by exposing their sin and stripping them of their clothes.

cf. Amos 2:16—*Even the most courageous of the warriors will flee naked on that day— this is the Lord's declaration.*

The book of Revelation connects the dots from God's judgment to nakedness.

cf. Revelation 3:17—For you say, 'I'm rich; I have become wealthy and need nothing,' and you don't realize that you are wretched, pitiful, poor, blind, and naked.

Wow, is that a message to the American Church

In other words, we are physically bankrupt and spiritually dead. And that is a bad combination.

cf. Revelation 16:15—~~"Look, I am coming like a thief.~~ Blessed is the one who is alert and remains clothed, so that he may not go around naked and people see his shame."

The concept of clothing and nakedness is at the heart of understanding what Jesus is doing at this moment. *As he's being arrested.*

PREACH:

God had to buy us back—it's called redemption. He redeemed us.

His perfect life for our pathetic life.

The only way any of us will be able to stand in the presence of a holy God—

Is for us to be stripped of our filthy rags that we call good works and put on garments of Christ's righteousness.

Verses 51 and 52 of this man running away from God is the heart of the Gospel.

Even though we didn't want God, God wanted us.

It is God who has provided a covering for our sin, shame, and nakedness.

Verse 52 talks about this man's nakedness twice.

Mark 14:52— but he left the linen cloth behind and ran away naked.

Now, remember these men and women that we read about in Scripture are also a picture of us.

We've all abandoned Jesus.

Under the same circumstances and same conditions, we, too—apart from God Himself— would leave everything behind to save our own skin.

How do we know this to be true?

cf. Romans 3:10—*There is no one righteous, not even one.*

cf. Romans 3:11— *There is no one who understands;
there is no one who seeks God.*

cf. Romans 3:12— *All have turned away;
all alike have become worthless.
There is no one who does what is good,
not even one.*

This anonymous naked man running away from Jesus— is a picture of me and you.

And yet, Jesus stayed.

It goes to prove that if we could lose our salvation we would.

Jesus is faithful. We are faithless.

The timing of this sermon could not be more appropriate for today.

The whole world is experiencing the judgement of God through Covid.

We are now living under the judgment of God and will be tested and tried like never before in our lifetime.

You thought not having enough toilet paper, just wait.

Dear friends, we now live in an age to where the church will have to prove that we are who we say we are—Christians. *Just like the Disciples*

If we believe— what we say we believe about God — then we need to act like it as these consequences come.

Because the Gospel does not promise hope for a better tomorrow.

This is not your best life now.

The Gospel does promise, however, hope for a better life after you die.

The reason that you're here today, in church, is to worship God and to experience God verse by verse.

And because you're here, you are preparing for these trials.

Just as Jesus was preparing His Disciples
Your preparing for your personal Gethsemane.

And those who prepare for trials first— endure best.

As the church, we MUST endure together.
As American's we generally think that we've got it all under control...

As Christians, we realize we don't.

~~Every church, especially now, needs a pastor to feed them the Word of God.~~

~~The pastor needs the church for everything else.~~

Dear friends, let me remind you that you are temporary citizens of this great country.

Permanent

AND you are citizens of the Kingdom of Heaven.

You have nothing to fear as the world continues to freak out.

But you do have a choice.

Will you stay awake and pray *like we learned last week?*

Or will you kiss the church and flee *like the Disciples This week?*

That's A decision we'll all have to make.

PRAYER

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