

The Week Before the Cross – Week 5 – John 18:1-14

John 18:1-14: *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.*

² *Now Judas, who betrayed him, knew the place, because Jesus had often met there with his disciples. ³ So Judas came to the garden, guiding a detachment of soldiers and some officials from the chief priests and the Pharisees. They were carrying torches, lanterns and weapons.*

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.

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.”⁹ This happened so that the words he had spoken would be fulfilled: “I have not lost one of those you gave me.”*

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?”*

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. ¹⁴ Caiaphas was the one who had advised the Jewish leaders that it would be good if one man died for the people.*

INTRO to Series “The Week Before the Cross”: When Jesus returned to Jerusalem the week before the Passover, He knew the road He was taking would soon lead Him to the cross. That final week before Jesus went to Calvary contained some of the Lord’s most important teaching, miracles, and moments. In the season leading up to Easter, we’ll journey day-by-day through Jesus’ last steps before He laid down His life willingly for the sins of the world.

INTRO to **John 18:** We began Jesus’ journey to the cross with His triumphal entry into Jerusalem, which happened on the Sunday before Good Friday. Then we moved into Monday, when Jesus cursed the fig tree and then cleared the temple of the merchants and money changers. Next, we considered some of Jesus’ final teaching as He gave on Tuesday. Last week, we moved to Wednesday and Jesus being anointed by Mary before going to the cross. Now we move to Thursday, which included the Last Supper, some of Jesus’ final teaching, and His betrayal and arrest in the Garden of Gethsemane.

From Thursday into Friday, Jesus would appear before many of the authorities including Annas, Caiaphas, the Sanhedrin, Herod Antipas, and eventually the Roman Governor

Pontius Pilate...and then, Friday afternoon and evening, He was beaten and went to the cross.

I. THURSDAY: Jesus is betrayed and arrested in the Garden of Gethsemane. (vs. 1-3)

-This place and time had important symbolism: The Kidron Valley likely had blood of the sacrificial lambs from the temple mount flowing into it because of Passover.

-The Garden – Gethsemane – which means “oil press” (olive trees).

-Judas didn't just show up with the Jewish officials and some thugs carrying torches, lanterns, and weapons; a detachment of Roman soldiers was also with them. (see also **Matthew 27:46-50** below).

-The gospels constantly call Judas “betrayed,” but Jesus here still calls him “friend.”

II. As Jesus presents Himself willingly to the authorities, Jesus displays His True Authority. (vs. 4-9)

-Jesus went out towards Judas and his companions knowing fully the hateful, unjust, and cruel and things that would soon befall Him. He identified Himself immediately upon their arrival. They came with torches and lanterns as if to have to search for Him, but Jesus was not hiding. (**vs. 4**)

-The conversation:

Jesus: *“Who is it you want?”*

The Mob: *“Jesus of Nazareth”*

Jesus: *Egō Eimi.* (I AM) (see **Isaiah 42:8** and **John 8:58** below)

The Mob: Falls backwards onto the ground

Jesus: *“Who is it you want?”*

The Mob (eventually after picking themselves up): *“Jesus of Nazareth”*

Jesus: *“I told you that I am he. If you are looking for me, then let these men go.”*

-Jesus also protected the lives of His disciples to the end, just as He promised, for God had great plans for them in the future—and great plans for us through them!

III. Jesus reminds Peter (and us) that the Lord's battle is not against flesh and blood. (vs. 10-11)

-Jesus did not need Peter to defend Him in this moment, He had simply asked Peter to watch and pray and to trust in the Lord. (see also **Matthew 26:52-54** below)

-Sometimes in our zeal to "defend Jesus," we must make every effort to not do so carelessly, for the wrong motives or ends, or fail to do so in a Christlike manner!

IV. The gospel message simplified: *one man died for the people.* (vs. 12-14)

-Jesus was arrested like a violent criminal, but He did not resist (see **Matthew 26:55-56** below).

-Jesus is taken Annas, the father-in-law of the High Priest first. But eventually, Jesus will be before Caiaphas, Herod, the Sanhedrin, and eventually the Roman Governor Pontius Pilate who will render an official decision on Jesus' sentence.

-But remember, neither Annas, nor Caiaphas, nor Herod, nor the Sanhedrin, nor Pilate, nor Caesar are actually the ones in control. Jesus is in control of all, and He laid down His life willingly for us!

Other Scriptures Referenced:

Matthew 26:47-56: *While he was still speaking, Judas, one of the Twelve, arrived. With him was a large crowd armed with swords and clubs, sent from the chief priests and the elders of the people. 48 Now the betrayer had arranged a signal with them: "The one I kiss is the man; arrest him." 49 Going at once to Jesus, Judas said, "Greetings, Rabbi!" and kissed him.*

50 Jesus replied, "Do what you came for, friend."

Then the men stepped forward, seized Jesus and arrested him. 51 With that, one of Jesus' companions reached for his sword, drew it out and struck the servant of the high priest, cutting off his ear.

52 "Put your sword back in its place," Jesus said to him, "for all who draw the sword will die by the sword. 53 Do you think I cannot call on my Father, and he will at once put at my disposal more than twelve legions of angels? 54 But how then would the Scriptures be fulfilled that say it must happen in this way?"

55 In that hour Jesus said to the crowd, "Am I leading a rebellion, that you have come out with swords and clubs to capture me? Every day I sat in the temple courts teaching, and you did not arrest me. 56 But this has all taken place that the writings of the prophets might be fulfilled." Then all the disciples deserted him and fled.

Isaiah 42:8: *"I am the Lord; that is my name!
I will not yield my glory to another
or my praise to idols."*

John 8:58: *"Very truly I tell you," Jesus answered, "before Abraham was born, I am!"*

Other Quotes/Resources:

-*"With no other weapon than his own solitary voice uttering the words "I Am," He knocked down, repelled, and rendered helpless that great crowd, even with all the ferocious hatred and terror of arms . . . "I Am," He says, and throws the wicked to the ground . . . What will His power be like when He comes to reign, He who had this kind of power when He came to die? . . . And now even at the present time Christ is still saying through the Gospel, "I Am!" –Augustine*

-From Martin Luther's hymn, "A Mighty Fortress is Our God":

*The prince of darkness grim,
we tremble not for him;
his rage we can endure,
for lo! his doom is sure;
one little word shall fell him.*