

Arresting The King

Read: John 18:1-11

1) Going To The Garden (v.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.

Lk. 22:39 “as was his custom”

Jesus knew what was coming, and he went to the garden anyway. “He went out” isn’t to be taken lightly. Though it seemed to the disciples like a strange dinner with a hard-to-receive and slightly confusing monologue to close things out, Jesus knew exactly what was coming.

When the disciples left, they got up, probably whispering about the unique experience they had just had.

As Jesus led them out of the city, he probably walked in silence, realizing that every step he took towards the garden was one step closer to his betrayal, arrest, beatings, and then death.

Each step was a courageous step towards the cross, which would violate his purity and separate Him from His father for the only time in all of eternity.

Make no mistake: This walk in darkness, crossing darkness (because Kidron means dark) was also a walk towards darkness (the mid-day darkness that would happen the next day when he died).

The brook Kidron:

Across the Brook Kidron:

Some say this small stream would have received the animal blood from the temple, and would be reddish from the thousands of Passover lambs. This would have been a vivid reminder to Jesus of His soon sacrifice.

“The very brook would remind him of his approaching sacrifice, for through it flowed the blood and refuse from the temple.” (Spurgeon)

The Garden:

The Kidron Valley was between the Temple Mount on the east side of the City and the Mount of Olives. The garden of Gethsemane (Matt. 26:36, Mark 14:32) was on the western side of the mountain. This garden had olive trees, and the name of the garden means ‘olive press.’

Jesus would go here often. This time, he has a **powerful prayer** that can be read in Matthew 26:36-46, Mark 14:32-42, and Luke 22:39-46.

Lesson:

Is there something that God has been calling you to do that you’ve been delaying?

Jesus was willing to step into what was dark because he knew it was what God the Father wanted of him

2) The Betrayer’s Band (v.2-3)

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.

If you’re familiar with the details of this story, we know that Judas had already decided he was going to betray Jesus.

He had gone to the religious leaders and offered to do this for money, and they gave him 30 pieces of silver. After that, it says that he looked for the right time for this arrest to happen.

The reason that he looked for the right time (and place) was because when Jesus was out and about, there was always lots of people around him. The religious leaders didn’t want to arrest him with lots of onlookers, as that could cause a riot. They wanted to make Jesus “disappear quietly.” Judas was to help make that happen.

The most recent interaction Judas had with Jesus was the washing of his feet. Jesus, the assumed King of Israel, did the job of the lowliest servant. This was after he had scolded him (and others) for talking down to Mary who had poured expensive perfume on Jesus, preparing him for his burial. Judas had had enough!

Now, after the washing of feet, and the quiet night that would often lead to a private trip to the garden of Gethsemane, Judas realized his time was now.

He, being dismissed by Jesus in John 13:27, went and ‘procured’ enough soldiers to squash any resistance that Jesus or his disciples might put up to keep this arrest from taking place.

We don’t know how many (Roman) soldiers and (temple police) officers there are, but it could have been quite a group, much more than would be needed for one man.

Matthew says it was a ‘large crowd’ in 26:47.

They came with lanterns, torches, and weapons (swords, clubs {Lk. 22:52}).

As you know, this was not the first time they tried to have Jesus arrested, but each time, they had failed.

This time would be different, they decided. They weren’t taking any chances. Jesus wouldn’t flip any tables and run. He wouldn’t disappear into a crowd. He wouldn’t confuse the temple guard into wondering why they were trying to arrest him.

Jesus was not going to go free - not this time!

And just in case the disciples - fisherman, a tax collector, and probably some farmers - tried to stop them, there were enough soldiers there to keep that from happening.

A sinless Man in an appointed garden was about to do battle with Satan’s representative (Luke 22:3). The first time this happened, the sinless man failed. The Second Adam would not fail.

Why did Judas betray Jesus? If he didn’t like what Jesus was about and what He was going to do, why didn’t he just leave?

Because he loved money. He saw a way to profit from Jesus.

Judas’ sin was idolatry.

Judas followed Jesus as long as it benefited him, but as soon as it didn’t, his true passions came to light.

This is what hardship does; it shows us who our real god is.

He abandoned Jesus for money. He gave up his spiritual convictions for cash.

3) The Character Of Christ (v.4-11)

Here, as we read through this arrest process of Jesus, we will overlay it with a few of the other gospels to get a more complete picture of what happened.

Our aim here is to see the character of Christ in this incredibly challenging situation.

1. Story
2. Truth about Jesus
3. Application

a) All-Knowing (v.4)

Then Jesus, knowing all that would happen to him, came forward and said to them, "Whom do you seek?"

Matthew and Luke both speak of Judas kissing Jesus as the soldiers and guards approached Him. This was the sign of who they were to arrest. John doesn't mention this, but most likely, Jesus' question came after Judas kissed him.

This kiss was a sign of love, of friendship, and of honor. The very act was in itself betrayal of the heart that Judas actually had for Jesus.

Then, after this kiss and Jesus' comment to Judas about it, moved around him and stood with the band of those seeking his arrest in front of him.

To our pont here, we find that none of this surprised Jesus. It wasn't that he was calm about this because he had great emotional control - which is also true - but that he already knew what would happen. He always knew what would happen. Before Jesus came to earth, he knew all that would happen to him.

Here, knowing what was coming, Jesus didn't take a step back behind his disciples or flee into the darkness of the olive grove. No. He stepped forward. He knew what was about to happen, and he leaned in and spoke up.

Jesus doesn't just know what's going to happen to Him, but he also knows what's going to happen to you.

He knows all.

The theological word for this is omniscient.

b) Fully Man (v.5a, 7)

5 They answered him, "Jesus of Nazareth." **7** So he asked them again, "Whom do you seek?" And they said, "Jesus of Nazareth."

They didn't say *'teacher, a rabbi, the man who heals people, the man who fed lots of people, the man who raised Laz from the dead recently.'* Their warrant says "Jesus of Nazareth," and they aim to arrest this man.

Even though we see and know that Jesus is all knowing, unlike mere man, He is also still fully man. He didn't float down from heaven. He didn't randomly appear on the scene from an unknown land.

Jesus had a mother and father who raised him. He had brothers and sisters. He most likely cared for his family after his father was no longer in the picture (most likely because of his death). He was known in Nazareth, in Galilee.

Why is this important?

Jesus' sacrifice on the cross is able to make a difference in our lives because he was fully man.

Because Jesus was fully man, he felt feelings like us, both emotional and physical.

Christ Jesus wasn't a spirit taking on the form of a man sometimes, or a ghost who talked to a group of 12 guys for 3 years. No, Jesus was a real person, who slept, got tired, ate, drank, laughed, cried, got angry, and wore clothes like you and me.

Hebrews 2:14-17

Since therefore the children share in flesh and blood, he himself likewise partook of the same things, that through death he might destroy the one who has the power of death, that is, the devil,¹⁵ and deliver all those who through fear of death were subject to lifelong slavery.¹⁶ For surely it is not angels that he helps, but he helps the offspring of Abraham.¹⁷ Therefore he had to be made like his brothers in every respect, so that he might become a merciful and faithful high priest in the service of God, to make propitiation for the sins of the people.

What's the point? Jesus came to this earth and became like you and I because he wanted to experience the life we do. He wants to come alongside you.

Jesus isn't far away. He's near and wants to extend mercy and grace to you. To believe otherwise is to ignore the mission of Jesus.

c) Fully God (v.5b-6)

5 Jesus said to them, "I am he (*egō eimi*)."^[a] Judas, who betrayed him, was standing with them (possibly stepped back to join the crowd he brought with him). 6 When Jesus^[b] said to them, "I am he," they drew back and fell to the ground.

If anyone there, maybe particularly for those who had heard the rumors about the miraculous things this man had done, doubted Jesus' power and authority, they were about to experience the 'other side' of Jesus.

Jesus' reply to their statement of who they are looking for just about blew their pants off!

Judas also experienced this, as he had stepped back in front of Jesus.

The disciples had already submitted to Jesus' Lordship and deity, but these men hadn't. In just two words, Jesus knocked these men off their literal feet.

He didn't shove them.

He didn't throw something at them.

He didn't use magic and cause them to fall into a trance.

He didn't scare them and cause them to trip.

His words were simply powerful enough to make them fall backwards!

Some might suggest this is a miracle, that he caused this to happen. Was it? Or is it more of a miracle that God became man and gave us the ability to hear his all-powerful words and *not* fall down when he speaks? To me, that seems like more of a miracle.

These big soldiers, holding clubs, swords, armor, and torches, fell down when the man they came to arrest said a couple of words.

What a sight!! What they must have *felt* after that!

If any soldiers thought they were in control here, Jesus made it very evident that they weren't.

The WORD of God is powerful!

When the same WORD that speaks the world into existence and created all things wants to show a hundred soldiers how small they really are, it isn't that challenging..

How has the word of God impacted you? If it hasn't, you might not have met Jesus.

How is your life continuing to change because of the Word of God? If it's not, it's probably because you're not listening.

God wants to change you...because he loves you.

How would you like to change me?

d) Protector (v.8-9)

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."

This is not the only time Jesus has said this about himself "I AM." In other times, this usually brought frustration to those listening, but this time it caused them to fall.

Why? Because Jesus wanted them to realize that what *Jesus* said would happen. He was the one in control of the situation.

After they answered his question again (*which was a bold move!*), He then says, "Since you want me, don't arrest my disciples." Jesus knew that they could have tried to do that, and that might have been the order of some of the guards, to ensure this 'following of Jesus' would come to a stop.

But if that was the intent of some, Jesus shut that down quickly.

No one there would try to argue with the instruction (not a request) to leave the disciples alone.

He gave himself up so that they could have freedom. He did that then for the disciples, and he did that for you and me.

Jesus, as we can clearly see, cares for his friends, his followers, his students, whom God had given him. This was Jesus' time to die, not their time to die, and Jesus would ensure this.

Do you know that nothing can happen to you unless God allows it?

Do you believe Jesus is your protector and provider? Stop being anxious! Believe in Jesus!

With that being known, when hard things happen, it's understandable to be asked to be released from such hardship. And also, ask how you can be changed by the hardship, not just released from it.

e) Submissive To God's Will (v.10-11)

Then Simon Peter, having a sword, drew it and struck the high priest's servant^[c] 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?"

Peter's sword: Luke 22:35-38

Jesus had told them to start carrying a sword.

Sometimes something profound is said or done, something which should cause us to pause and think, then to change our plans.

Sometimes, though something powerful is said, even when that occurs, the 'listener' acts like they missed that profound moment.

That's what we find here.

Where was Peter when Jesus said two words and everyone fell down?

Where was Peter when these shaken soldiers were told to leave the disciples alone?

Right next to Jesus...

But he somehow didn't connect the dots. And, in actuality, neither did some other disciples.

After this took place, Luke tells us that some of the disciples asked if they should attack with the sword (there were at least two disciples with swords here).

-- Carrying a small sword, like what they would have had, was not uncommon.

Before Jesus could say anything to that question, Peter pulled out his sword, jumped forward, and swung down to cut into the head of (most likely) the closest guy to him (Malchus, who was THE high priest's servant - not someone you want to make mad at you).

We are told in Luke that Jesus picks up the guy's ear and puts it back, or makes a new ear for him on the spot. Either way, the man is then healed!

And that's not all! Jesus then tells Peter something that has more theological weight than Peter would have understood at that moment. At first glance, it seems Jesus is saying that He's ready for death - which is true.

But he references a cup. What's he talking about?

The cup that he prayed about in Luke 22:42-44 was something that caused him great agony, to the point of sweating blood. What was this cup? It was the cup of God's wrath. Jesus was about to drink of God's wrath as he hung upon the cross.

Don't be mistaken - Jesus wasn't praying with such fervor in the garden because of the pain of the cross, but because he would be taking on himself God's righteous wrath for the sins of mankind.

Jesus, who has always existed in a love-relationship with God would soon be experiencing something He had never experienced before - the very thing that he came to the earth to save mankind from: the righteous wrath of God.

And, in the midst of such a duty before him, he submitted to the will of the Father. And, he called others to submit to God's will, even though it meant his pain and agony.

We find here that submission to God includes stepping into what brings us great pain, agony, and/or hardship.

Take up your cross and follow me, Jesus said. Being a Christian is not first a call to live, but to die. It is after you die, that you can live. But if you're unwilling to die, you will never live.

Like Peter, how often do **we** take matters into our own hands because Jesus isn't doing what we want him to do?

Peter acted out because he didn't believe the words and the character of Jesus. He thought that it was up to him to protect (the name of) Jesus.

Jesus doesn't need protecting; he needs our trust in Him and our obedience.

Discussion Questions

1. **Reflect on Courage:** Pastor Dooba described Jesus' walk to the garden as a "step of courage." Can you think of a time when you had to step into a challenging situation? How did your faith influence your decision?
2. **Understanding Betrayal:** Judas betrayed Jesus for money, revealing his true priorities. What are some modern "idols" that can distract us from our faith? How do we recognize and combat these in our lives?

3. **Jesus' Omniscience:** The sermon emphasized that Jesus knew all that would happen to him. How does knowing that Jesus is all-knowing and in control affect your trust in Him during uncertain times?
4. **Submission to God's Will:** Jesus submitted to the Father's will, even when it meant suffering. Discuss a time when submitting to God's will was difficult for you. What helped you to trust and follow through?
5. **The Power of Words:** When Jesus declared "I am," it demonstrated His divine authority. How do we see the power of words in our daily lives? How can we use our words to reflect God's love and authority?
6. **Community Impact:** How can our church community support each other in taking courageous steps of faith, similar to Jesus' journey to the garden? What are some specific actions we can take together?
7. **Call to Action:** Reflecting on the sermon's themes, what is one practical step you can take this week to align more closely with God's will for your life? How can the group support you in this?