



October 1, 2023

“What is True Obedience”

SS 9:30, Service at 10:30 with King's Kids.

News:

★ **Wednesday Evenings at Aletheia 6:30-8:00** ★

330 N. Somers Rd. (Mail: PO Box 10626) Kalispell, MT 59904~ (406) 755-1776

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The High Priestly Prayer of Jesus.

1) The Glory of God.

To correctly love Jesus is to _____ Him unto Salvation and beyond.

2) The Life of the Christian.

The Lord has you _____ for a purpose and it is His purpose, not yours!

3) The Unity of the Church.

Our commission and therefore our life in Christ is to be united in the _____ of the Lord as we make our highest priority His highest priority.

JOHN 18:1-11 ~

John is the only one to mention the Kidron Ravine by name hinting at I Kings 2:37.

John intentionally avoided the name of this garden to force a parallel with the Garden of _____, as well as with the third unnamed garden of Jesus' Resurrection.

Fill out the other side, detach this part of the page, and place it in the offering plate or the prayer/suggestion box in the lobby or with an Elder or Deacon of the church.

God Bless You!

The Garden of Eden was the place of... where man... and thus entered...

The Garden of Gethsemane was the place of... where man... and thus entered...

The Garden of the Resurrection was the place of... where man... and thus entered...

Judas led two distinct groups to Jesus as their informant.

The first group was the Roman cohort, a σπεῖρα (spā-řä), in Greek, which is a technical military term meaning a _____ of a Roman Legion.

The cohort was merely there to make sure that things didn't get out of hand.

The second group were essentially Jewish _____.

They worked for the High Priest to keep order in the _____ and to protect the priests and other religious officials.

Judas himself functioned as a representative of _____.

Jesus was, at all times, in complete _____ of the situation. He knew "all the things that were coming upon Him." He knew that ultimately the "sins of the whole world" would be upon Him and as a result the entire "Wrath of God," would be upon Him.

Jesus bluntly asked, "Whom are you seeking?" They answered simply, "Jesus the Nazarene," and He replied curtly, Ἐγώ εἰμι (ě-gō ā-mē), "I AM." Context implies that they fell upon their _____, heads _____, with their _____ near the ground. His "Hour" was His, not theirs.

We look at Peter and admire him for his fearless loyalty...

Had Jesus not intervened Christianity would have been over before it began.

Jesus rebuked Peter. What was wrong with Peter is what's wrong with _____ Peter, like _____, decided that he was not okay with God's plan.

No one arrested Jesus, He willingly _____ to go. What will you willingly _____?

Write a brief note – detach and place in the offering, or the prayer box, or give it to a Deacon or Elder.

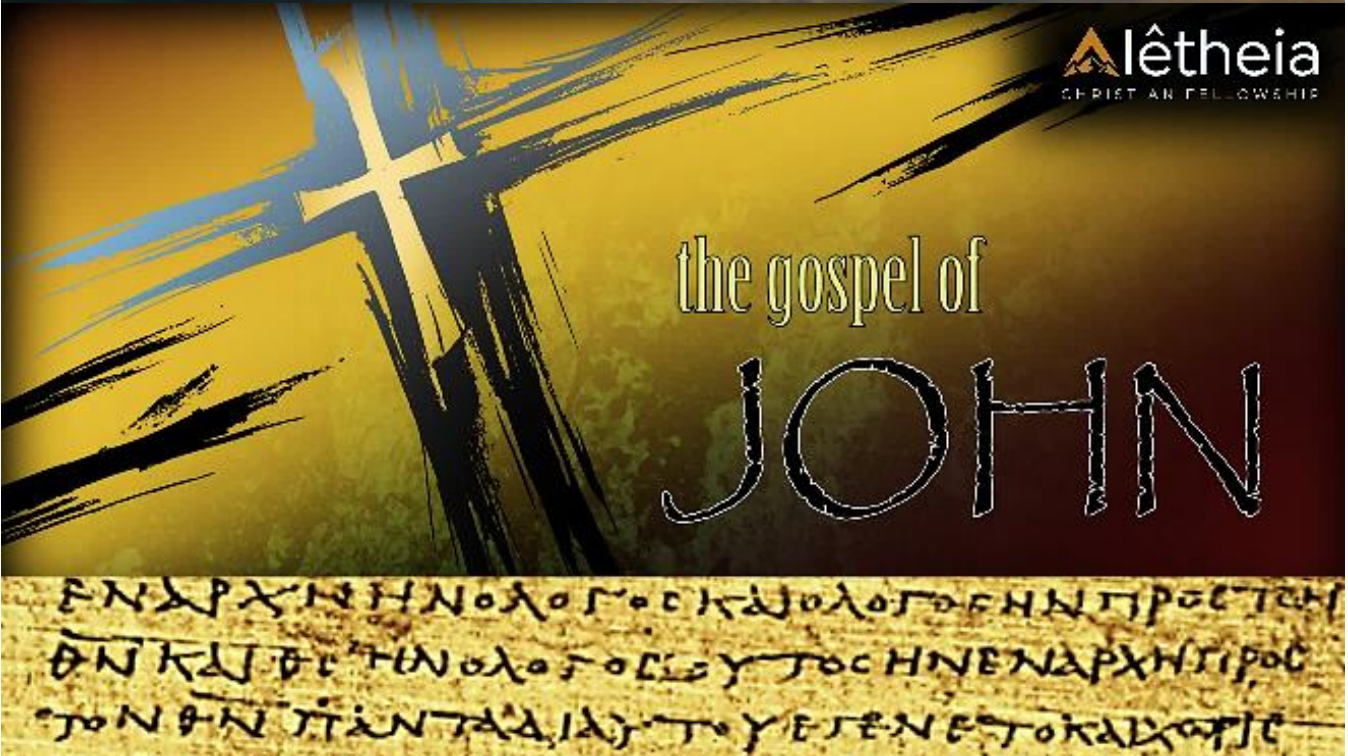
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JOHN

ΕΝΑΡΧΗ Η ΝΟΛΟΓΟΣ ΚΑΙ Ο ΛΟΓΟΣ ΕΗΝ ΠΡΟΣ ΤΟΝ
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Last week we examined the High Priestly Prayer of Jesus. The biggest takeaways were the 1) Glory of

God, 2) the Life of the Christian, and 3) the Unity of the church.



Ignatius of Loyola - "The Glory of God is humankind fully alive. To be fully alive is to truly behold God." 1) Jesus prayed for His Own Glory because He knew that the means of His glorification was His completed perfect obedience to the Father's plan of Salvation for their human family members, which was to the Father's Glory.

You could spend some time dissecting how I just said that and discover that there's a lot more to it than it seems at first blush. Anyway, the Glory of Jesus is His revelation of God to us in both what He A) taught and what He B) accomplished.

It is belief in the first, His A) teaching, which enables the second, belief in His B) work. The very nature of believing in His work leads to, and requires, an objective belief - a belief in an object, not in just a body of information, not in just a set of theories, not in just a framework of methodology, not just in a set of actions, but in a particular object. It is a belief in His person - it is the belief in Jesus Himself as the Savior. That's far different than most other religions, whether the religion of ethics, the religion of works, the religion of passion, the religion of science, or even the religion of self-aggrandizement.

Belief in the teaching of Jesus illuminated by the Holy Spirit leading a person to accept, and embrace, the work of Jesus on their behalf, is to accept the true Jesus. It is to place your trust in Him. It is to accept Him as the preincarnate Word of Almighty God made flesh, it is to accept Him as the One and Only means of Salvation, and it is to accept Him as the Lord of your life both now and forevermore.

Many people accept Jesus only as their Savior and some accept Him only as their Lord, but to accept the Holy Spirit's testimony is to fully embrace Jesus as both.

To correctly love Jesus is to be saved and to correctly love Jesus is to obey Him. The people willing to surrender their lives - their hopes, dreams, and their fears, to Jesus as the totality of their right standing before God and as the Master of their daily existence - they are the children of God basking in His presence even as we sit here now.

From our perspective right now, we are physical creatures indwelt with the Holy Spirit living on earth. From His perspective right now, we are His family eternally fellowshiping together with Him in the fullness of His glory.



2) Jesus prayed about the life of the Christian on earth and asked the Father not to take us out of the world, but to fully protect us from the world. What that means is that all Christians are in Christ and in the world at the same time. The distinction is that while all Christians were of the world as well as in it, through the rebirth of Salvation, Christians are no longer of the world, but of God.

That means that if you are a Christian, you are of God, you are in Christ, you are indwelt by the Holy Spirit, and you are eternally protected by the Father, but you are still walking on planet earth.

Those facts require a personal submission to that reality. You must embrace the Truth of those points and the way you do that is by actually living your life as though you believe, accept, and embrace them. You must live as a resident alien. You must interact with the world but do so without allowing the world to distract or taint you.

The Lord has you here for a purpose and my friends the purpose is His purpose, not yours! The Christian is supposed to live on earth as an ambassador sojourning in a foreign land among foreign people

representing the One Who sent and commissioned them.

We are not supposed to get embroiled in the distractions of that world to which we were sent, but to consistently portray the image of the One Who sent us to that world regardless of their antics.

I could give countless examples so let me briefly give three. The first is from our experience. Imagine that a person was born in Denmark and came to America when they were 15. They become a U.S. citizen and are eventually appointed Ambassador of the United States sent to their original homeland of Denmark. Living there again are they supposed to be Danish again? Are they supposed to reinter the culture there and get involved in the social and political machinations as a Dane? Are they to create a future for themselves seeking their happiness in Denmark? Aren't they supposed to use their intimate personal knowledge of Denmark and its citizens to represent to them America's interests in the most appealing way possible based upon their previous experience as a Dane and based upon their training as an American Ambassador?

Here's a Biblical example... The Apostle Paul was an extremely intelligent and well-educated Roman Citizen and high-ranking Jewish Pharisee. He was of the world and after taking a tumble from his horse and meeting Jesus became a Christian Apostle and a citizen of Heaven. He's responsible for about half of the New Testament. If you study Him carefully you will easily discern that He was opposed to many features of Roman society such as the reprehensible, yet widespread practice of human trafficking.

Slavery was everywhere. At the time almost 1/3 of the people in the Roman Empire stretching from western Iraq to eastern Wales and from northern Chad to southern Ukraine were slaves. Nearly one in three people were slaves who, under Roman Law, had no legal personhood. I quote, "A slave has no persona. He does not own his body; he has no ancestors, no name, no family, no goods of his own. He belongs entirely to the master as chattel - as a thing."

In all his extensive writings Paul never once denounced slavery. A fact that was twisted by later so-called Christians to rationalize continuing the evil practice. How do I know that Paul was adamantly opposed to slavery as a vile sin? It's because I've studied his sermons and the principles that he so

clearly laid out concerning Jesus' teaching about love for others, the image of God and the dignity of man. It makes it as undeniable as any other grievously inhumane sin.

So why didn't Paul publicly repudiate slavery? It is because Paul knew that He was an ambassador sent by Jesus with a far bigger mission than getting bogged down in the politics of the world. Paul had no interest in stirring up unnecessary controversy that would cast a shadow on Christ and the Gospel. That was the far bigger issue. Sure, slavery was horrific and without diminishing it in any way it pales in comparison to eternal death in the outer darkness where there is nothing but weeping and gnashing of teeth.

My final example for today is Jesus Himself. God made man dwelling among us as a Jew from a very Jewish and very Greek and very Roman province. Did Jesus approve of the brutal and uncompromising occupation of His homeland by Rome? Did Jesus approve of the corrupt and truly vile puppet government under King Herod Antipas? Did Jesus approve of slavery or of the oppression of women and the abuse of children all around Him? Yet Jesus avoided getting entangled in politics at all costs.

Why? He was on a far greater mission than trying to convince evil people that they should act like they were not evil. It's a fool's errand! My friends, can't you see that? Fighting evil people to get them to give up on evil is stupid.

Imagine though a scenario where the church was focused on its mission of spreading the Gospel by actually striving to represent Christ in the world. A church that actually obeys Jesus by allowing the Holy Spirit within them to cause them to love one another in self-sacrificing ways. That obedience would prove the church's fully devoted love for God, and it would be a representation of Christ in the physical world. It would give the church the credibility to teach the Gospel of Grace to the world.

Certainly, most would reject it in order to continue their evil. What else would you expect such people to do? But some would turn and be healed. They would be transformed and would join us in the Body of Christ.

Christians allow the world to distract them rather than allowing the Holy Spirit to focus them and the result is a fight between ideologies where few, if any, are saved.

If a person is not indwelt with the Holy Spirit, we should be shocked that they don't think, speak, and do evil. We should also be shocked that they would give it all up because we convince them or force them or legislate them to do so. The only way to change a human heart is for God to perform a miracle through His church - through His preachers of grace to His great Glory.

We need to submit to His plan and get busy accomplishing His mission - fulfill our commission from Him.



3) That leads to the third main takeaway from the great prayer... It is the Great Commission in the Gospel of John. As many have said, it isn't the great suggestion,

it's the Great Commission! In Christianity we have largely abandoned our commission from Christ because many of the leaders wanted to consolidate their power and the people were, by and large, extremely happy to hand over the responsibility.

We have seen that most Christians assume that the Great Commission applies to the clergy or to the church as an institution leaving the average Christian get distracted by the world as long as they keep tithing and attend services here and there. The flipside was a backlash to that nonsense that makes evangelism a purely individual responsibility largely ignoring any authority of, or need for, the church.

Either path is misguided and because nearly all of Christianity is practicing one or the other there is no true obedience to Christ and therefore there is very little joy of the Lord.

The joy of the Lord, which is the deep contentment of knowing in your heart that God has got you, is missing, or is diminished, because we know that we're not living as foreign ambassadors, but as native citizens, most of the time.

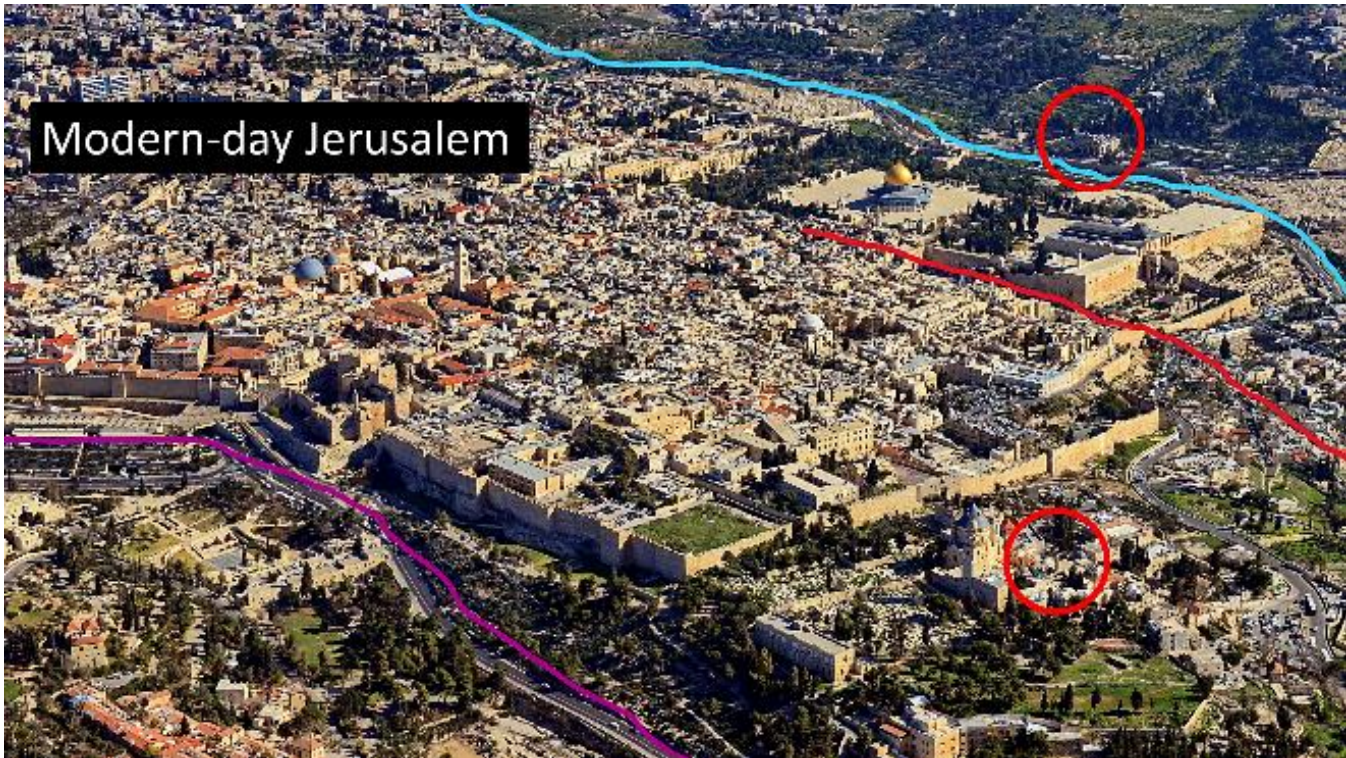
Jesus said that if we obey Him, we will be overfilled with His joy... Overfilled with the assurance that we are forever His, that we are following Him, and that it will all be good.

That was the Prayer of Jesus. That His church, meaning all of His true followers would actively participate in His glory - His glory that comes from saving human souls. That's our marching orders, our mandate, our mission, our commission and therefore our life in Christ and in should unite us in the joy of the Lord as we put our highest priority on His highest priority.



John 18:1–11, 1When Jesus had spoken these words, He went away with His disciples across the ravine of

the Kidron, where there was a garden which He entered with His disciples. 2Now Judas, who was betraying Him, also knew the place, because Jesus had often met there with His disciples. 3So Judas, having obtained the Roman cohort and officers from the chief priests and the Pharisees, came there with lanterns, torches, and weapons. 4Jesus therefore, knowing all the things that were coming upon Him, came out into the open and said to them, "Whom are you seeking?" 5They answered Him, "Jesus the Nazarene." He said to them, "I am He." And Judas also, who was betraying Him, was standing with them. 6Now then, when He said to them, "I am He," they drew back and fell to the ground. 7He then asked them again, "Whom are you seeking?" And they said, "Jesus the Nazarene." 8Jesus answered, "I told you that I am He; so if you are seeking Me, let these men go on their way." 9This took place so that the word which He spoke would be fulfilled: "Of those whom You have given Me I lost not one." 10Then Simon Peter, since he had a sword, drew it and struck the high priest's slave, and cut off his right ear; and the slave's name was Malchus. 11So Jesus said to Peter, "Put the sword into the sheath; the cup which the Father has given Me, am I not to drink it?"



Out from Jerusalem across the Kidron and into the Garden of Gethsemane. It's less than one mile. Hinnom & Zion, Tyropoeon & Moria, Kidron & Olives. The three valleys form the Hebrew letter shin. Shin functions as an abbreviation for Sabbath meaning rest, Shaddai meaning God, and Shalom meaning peace... Rest in God's peace. There's your trivia of the day.

John is the only one to mention the Kidron by name and the way that he does it brings to mind the exact same phrasing found in I Kings 2:37, "For on the day you leave and cross the ravine of the Kidron, you will know for certain that you will assuredly die." The context is quite different, but the outcome is the same.

John also intentionally avoided the name of the garden, Gethsemane, to force a remembrance parallel with the very first garden called Eden, as well as with the third unnamed garden of Jesus' Resurrection that we will see soon enough.

The Garden of Eden was the place of abundance and eternal life, where man betrayed God and death entered the scene. This Garden of Gethsemane was the place of deprivation and eternal death, where man betrayed God again, but this time it would be God Who died as a result. We will see in the next chapter that there is a third garden which is where Jesus was Resurrected - where God conquered the effect of man's betrayal and life reentered the scene once and for all. Bible scholar Ed Klink succinctly put it this way, "The first garden was the place where death was born out of life; the (final) garden was the place where life was born out of death."

It's quite interesting that God walked in the Garden of Eden as the true Gardener and in chapter 20 we will see Mary Magdalene mistake the Resurrected Jesus for the gardener.





Fairly accurate painting... Judas led two distinct groups to Jesus as their informant, or guide, but certainly not in any official capacity as their leader, or chief. Judas

was nothing more than a paid backstabbing rat showing the authorities where to look.



The first group of authorities was the Roman cohort, a σπεῖρα (spā-rä), in Greek, which is a technical military term meaning a tenth of a Roman Legion. In the early days of the professional Roman military a legion, commanded by a Legate, consisted of 6,000 soldiers. They were divided into 10 cohorts, each with 600 men commanded by a Tribune. Each cohort consisted of 6 centuries of 100 soldiers commanded by a Centurion. The emperor Augustus shortly before Jesus was born streamlined the century to require only 80 men. Thus, a Legion with 60 centuries became 4,800 soldiers instead of 6,000 and the typical cohort became 480 men instead of 600. At the time of this incident a cohort

was 480 men. Sometimes the term would be used in a non-technical sense to describe any size of detachment from a legion, but almost never to describe less than 100 men as that detachment size would be called a Century. Generally speaking, John was describing a unit size between 150 and 500 Roman soldiers.

People usually object to the number, especially given their passive role seemingly subservient to the other group. The contemporary Jewish historian Josephus wrote that the population of Jerusalem swelled to two million people during the Passover.

As I've mentioned repeatedly, the primary goal of Rome was to keep peace in their lands so that the taxes, goods, and services flowed uninterrupted and with minimal overhead in cost and vexation.

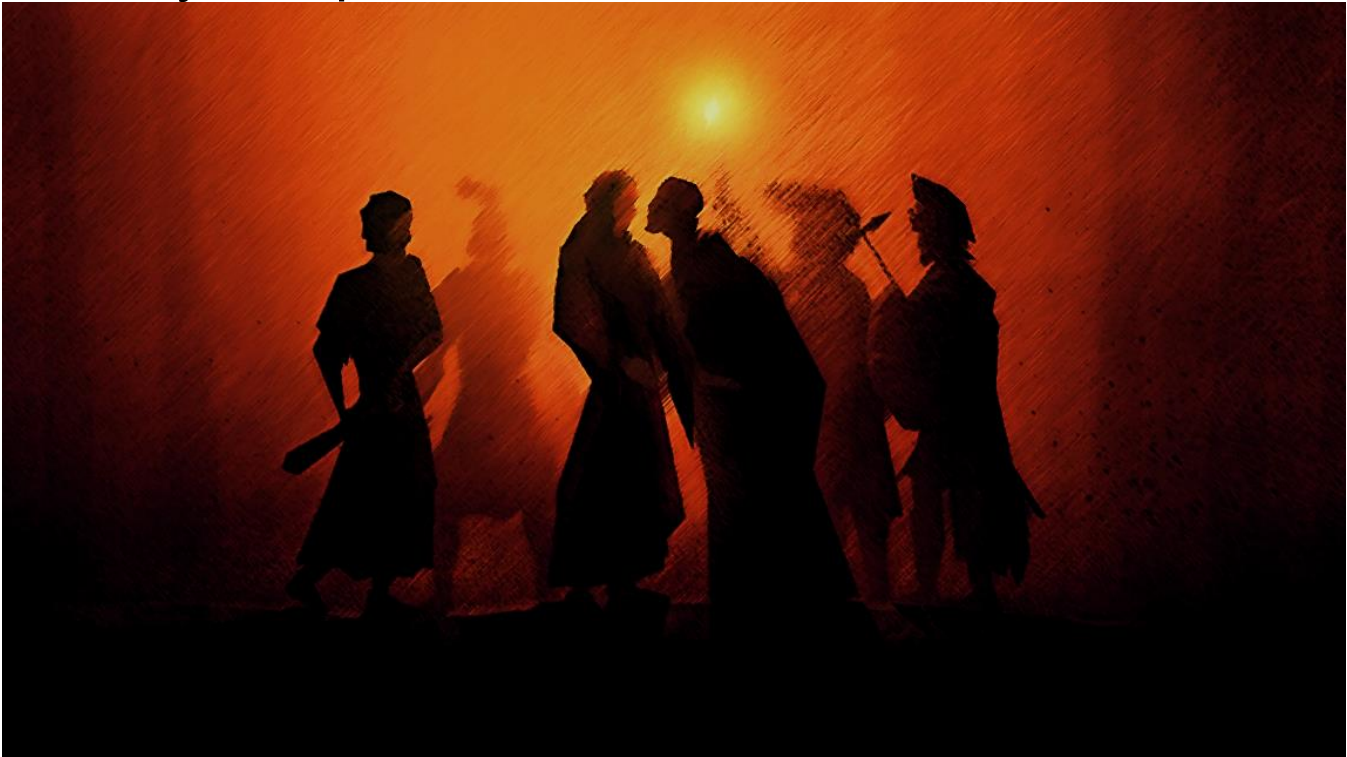
During the big holidays and especially the Passover the Roman Governor would make the trek from His headquarters in Caesarea to His command center in Jerusalem bringing with him several cohorts of Roman soldiers to augment the several cohorts stationed in the city. During the Passover Pontius Pilate had thousands of soldiers at his command.

Pilate was well aware of the commotion of the crowds surrounding Jesus' Triumphal Entry into the city several days earlier and it would have been easy for the High Priest to convince him that Jesus and His large band of followers posed a very grave threat to the peaceful conclusion of the week-long festival. It was nothing for him to send a few hundred soldiers to ensure that the High Priest's arrest of Jesus didn't provoke a riot or full-blown battle.

The cohort was merely there to make sure that things didn't get out of hand - they had no interest in helping Judas or the other group with their plans - they were there as a show of force to keep relative peace.



The second group were essentially Jewish police. They worked for the High Priest to keep order in the Temple and to protect the priests and other religious officials. They were led by a representative of the High Priest and were the ones who were there to take Jesus into custody and present Him before the Jewish court.



Judas functioned as a representative of Satan, he who had taken him over. It was the supernatural forces, the religious forces, and the political forces - truly all the world forces arrayed against Jesus.

Nevertheless, John was very careful to show throughout that it was Jesus Who was, at all times, in complete control of the situation. He specifically knew “all the things that were coming upon Him.” “Upon” is

an interesting choice of words. Jesus knew that ultimately the “sins of the whole world” would be upon Him and as a result the entire “Wrath of God,” would be upon Him.



Instead of waiting for them to initiate, Jesus boldly stepped out and bluntly asked “Whom are you seeking?” It’s an interesting question and not at all what you would ask unless you already knew precisely what they wanted and whom they sought. Of course, Jesus didn’t need to ask them anything, He already knew better than they did what they were after and that was the point. He wasn’t asking for Himself, He was asking for them. He wanted the mob to define and understand their own objective.

He wanted them to specify the parameters of their mission so that they didn't feel any need to pursue His disciples.

They answered His question of whom simply, "Jesus the Nazarene," and He replied curtly, Ἐγώ εἰμι (ě-gō ā-mē), "I AM." It's another informal, "I AM" statement from Jesus declaring His divinity. If anyone wants to argue the point, explain their reaction. The whole assembly of a few hundred men, religious officials, professional soldiers, and Temple police, armed with swords and clubs drew back and fell down. Context implies that they fell upon their knees, heads bowed, with their faces near the ground. As the Bible declares, "At the name of Jesus every knee will bow, of those who are in heaven and on earth and under the earth, and that every tongue will confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father" (Philippians 2:10&11). It can be a voluntary act, but if not, it will be involuntary. A person can bow now, or after it is too late. The Divinity and Deity of Jesus was on full display. His "Hour" was His, not theirs.

Then they went through the whole process a second time and for a second time Jesus said Ἐγώ εἰμι (ě-gō ā-mē), "I AM." This time it came in the middle of a long sentence which made it far easier to dismiss as merely

meaning what the translators have gone with here in verse 8, “I told you that I am He.” Much easier to miss the whole “I AM,” thing that way. Jesus immediately continued with a bit of logic essentially, since you’re looking for Me and you’ve found Me, you have no need to bother anyone else. It’s actually a command, Jesus ordered the few hundred men to leave my guys alone.

They were ready to obey without question and even after all of this it seems that none of them paused and reconsidered what they were doing. They all moved on rationalizing it all away because it didn’t fit their narrative. That’s sadly fascinating. A few hundred men all experience the same involuntary genuflection and unquestioningly obey His command and then go on as though nothing happened. Hundreds of hardened men came to arrest one man and it turned out that they were vastly outnumbered by Him.

In handling things, the way that He did, Jesus had ensured that His disciples could slip away without interference... But then here comes proud Peter to try to overturn His work and wreck the day.

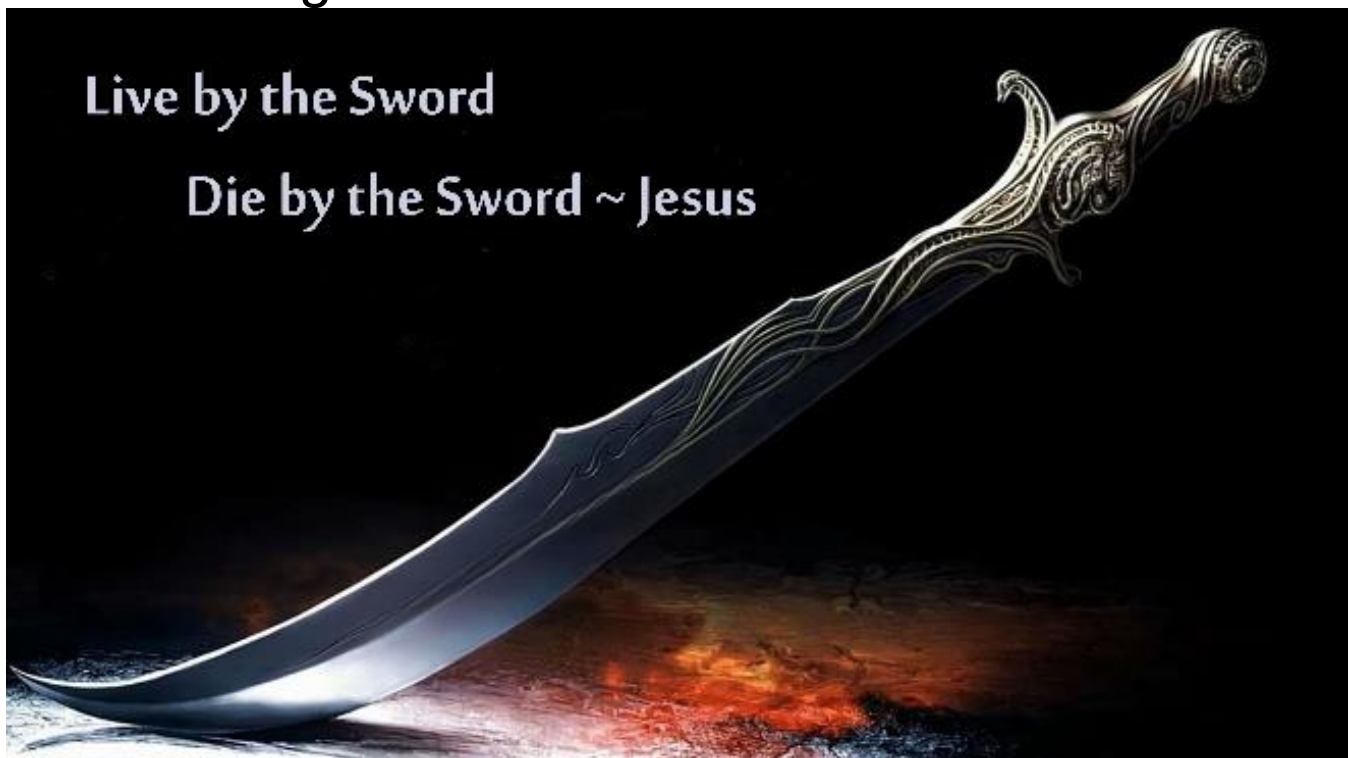
We look at Peter and admire him for his fearless loyalty. He said that he was willing to die with Jesus

and it looks like he was as good as his word. What a guy.



Unfortunately, that seemingly laudable character came from a place of personal pride. His willingness to die in glorious battle as a valiant martyr was pride. His loyal devotion to the Lord come what may was actually disloyalty due to pride. His refusal to listen to Jesus talk negatively about His impending death, or to submit to Jesus washing his feet, or to watch Jesus quietly go with the arresting party was the result of Peter thinking highly of Peter, not Peter thinking highly of the Lord. It's an "I'll save the day and make it how I think it should be" mentality. Peter was unwilling to let the Lord be the Lord and simply trust Him.

Had Jesus not intervened in Peter's misguided attempt to play hero, every one of the Apostles would have been butchered that night and as a result the remaining disciples would have been hunted as members of a known rebellion. Christianity would have been over before it began.



Think that I'm being too hard on Peter? It's nothing compared to Jesus' reaction. Jesus thoroughly chastised Peter. He didn't say, "Well thanks buddy for looking after Me, but now is not the time." Jesus abruptly commanded Peter to put his sword back into its sheath. It is an order that should have an exclamation point in English as it does in the NIV, NET, and the Holman Bible, which translates the intention well with, "Sheathe your sword!" Luke's Gospel makes

it very clear with the terse imperative “Stop! No more of this.”

Why don't all translators make it clear here in John that it is a sharp and intense command by using an exclamation point? Greek can give that intention without resorting to punctuation. The meaning is there, but the exclamation point isn't, so many leave it out in English as well. It's the difference between translating the words and translating the meaning. There are pluses and minuses to both methods.

Then Jesus followed that up with a devastating rebuke. It basically means, “After all that I've taught, and all that I've done - after all the time that we've spent together - do you think for one moment that I would not willingly go through with what the Father has asked of Me? Good grief Peter, what's wrong with you?” What was wrong with Peter is what's wrong with all of us to one degree or another, in one way or another. Peter decided that he was not okay with God's plan. He did not approve of God's course of action, and he was going to do something about it. Examine your own heart for that same elevation of your ideas, plans, and opinions over those of the Lord's. Matthew gives us this extra detail of Jesus saying to Peter “do you think that I cannot appeal to My Father, and He will at once

put at My disposal more than twelve legions of angels? How then would the Scriptures be fulfilled, which say that it must happen this way?" It's the same as when Jesus had earlier chastised Peter in Matthew 16:23, "But Jesus turned and said to Peter, "Get behind Me, Satan! You are a stumbling block to Me; for you are not setting your mind on God's purposes, but men's." Seeing things from a human point of view rather than God's point of view.



Fortunately, Jesus once again proved that He was God made man and before anyone else got hurt He stopped the battle in its tracks. He stopped everyone from any further action. The police and certainly the soldiers were spring-loaded to jump into violent action at the slightest provocation. Well hacking someone in the

head with a machete certainly fits the bill. Yet, solely because of Jesus' intervention everyone just froze while He did His thing, thus avoiding the dreaded Custer's Last Stand scenario.

We know from the other accounts that Jesus immediately healed the High Priest's slave Malchus. It's remarkable that John gave us so much seemingly unnecessary detail about the ear cutting incident. Naming Peter as the perpetrator, naming his victim and giving us information about Malchus' owner.

There are a lot of theories why, but they are all just speculation and none are certain. What we do know is that the details greatly enhance the credibility of the eye-witness account and give support to the church tradition that Malchus became a Christian.

If Jesus puts your ear back on your head, I suppose it seems reasonable that you'd believe in Him. Yet, what we know, is that Jesus has done far more for many who still refuse to believe.



No one arrested Jesus, He willingly chose to go with the vastly outnumbered mob because that was what the Father asked. What will you willingly choose when asked by Jesus?



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