

Home Group Leader's Notes

Week of March 20, 2022

John 18:1-14

Sermon Series: *This is Love*

We are beginning the chapters of John that focus on the arrest, torture, crucifixion, and resurrection of Jesus, the Christ. For some of us, this is familiar ground. It is easy to become cavalier or glance over the amazing display of the love of God. As we walk through these chapters, may I suggest that we make sure that we dwell on the deep deep love of Jesus.

Here are a few ideas:

- Choose a time to have a meal and communion together
- Choose a time to worship in song together. (If you don't have a musician to lead, you can find a plethora of options on YouTube.
- Choose a time to meet outdoors in a setting of God's creation. This might allow you to better focus on God together.

WHAT HAPPENED?

Have you been in a situation when you were completely disoriented or caught off guard? What happened? How did you react?

Jesus told the disciples what would happen. And yet, they were caught off guard in the outdoor setting by men with weapons, torches in the night, and by Judas' betrayal. The point of this conversation is to put themselves in the disciple's place to understand the gravity of what was happening to the perfect, all-loving Christ, the Son of God.

LEARN FROM GOD'S WORD, THE BIBLE

For the previous five chapters in the book of "John," Jesus was with the disciples in the upper room. They were together, safe, enjoying a meal, and sequestered away from the world. Chapter 18 is in sharp contrast. Read the first fourteen verses and consider these questions.

What is the setting? (Who, where, when)

The disciples had moved from the upper room, to a night walk under a full moon through parts of Jerusalem, and then to an enclosed area on the Mt. of Olives. There, Jesus spent time praying, the disciples were drowsy, struggling to stay alert, and then a crowd of officials and soldiers arrive with weapons and torches.

Summarize the action. What happens in this segment?

Jesus prayed, disciples slumbered, men arrive to arrest Jesus, Jesus asks them whom they seek, they arrest Jesus and take him to the chief priests, two disciples follow.

What do you notice about Jesus? How does He act?

Jesus is in complete control. He is expecting Judas and even went to a place that Judas would have known. He even asks the soldiers and officials questions that leads to his own arrest. He is RESOLUTE.

How would you contrast Jesus and Peter in this episode?

Jesus is in control, expecting and even leaning into His arrest. Peter is still trying prevent Jesus' arrest and attempting to take control. Even though Jesus told them before hand, Peter was still caught off guard.

What does Peter not understand?

That Jesus must go to the cross, that this was always God's masterplan, that Jesus is in control and obediently following His Father.

How do the arresting officials react to Jesus? Why might this be?

They are stunned and shocked, both emotionally and physically falling back. Jesus forthright acts of helping them with the process of arresting Him and protecting His disciples overwhelms them.

(Note: Annas was the prior "Chief Priest" but still considered a chief priest. Caiaphas is a son-in-law and the current "Chief Priest" under the Romans.)

What thread ties this story together?

The preordained plan of God to send Jesus who would die for the sins of people is unfolding. Clearly, Jesus is (1) not surprised, (2) in control, and (3) protecting His own. Jesus is following His Father's instruction to die for us. This is the thread.

Who seems to be in charge? Why?

Jesus is clearly in charge. He helps them ask the question, He quickly steps forward, He calls for the protection of His men, He answers with statements ("I am") that affirm the reason for which they arresting Him - that He claims to be God.

WHAT CAN WE LEARN AND APPLY THIS WEEK?

We see Jesus, resolute to go to the cross, and His disciples are off-balance and afraid. Knowing that we are called to follow Jesus, including His call to suffer, how might we respond to difficult people in the world? How should we respond when we're off-balance or afraid?

We are called to take on Christ-like character and behavior. When we Jesus' under accusation, persecution, and pressure from the world, we can pray and trust God to be like Him.

DISCUSS TOGETHER

What is significant to you in this story? Why?

The answers will vary. It takes time for people to consider and answer this question.

What do you notice about Jesus? What is His role in the arrest? How do you feel when you consider Jesus actions?

Jesus knows and loves his Father, in obedient to His mission, and willing to suffer for us. Jesus helps the captors accomplish their mission of arresting Him. Jesus intervenes for the safety of the disciples. Jesus willingly goes with the officials and soldiers.

I hate injustice – especially when it affects me. False accusation, gossip, undeserved rejection. All of these solicit a selfish response from me. I'm amazed at Jesus willingness to take on our pain and suffering.

What does Jesus' resolve in verse 11 reveal about God? What words might we use to describe Him? According to the Psalmist, how might we respond? (See Psalm 106:1-2 or 118:1-2)

John 18:11 "Shall I not drink the cup the Father has given me?"

How painful was this for the Father to see Jesus tortured and killed and suffer the cost for our sins. How painful was this for Jesus to suffer the wrath of God in our place?

Jesus love is fathomless, without comparison, amazing, etc.

Psalm 118:1-2 Give thanks to the LORD, for he is good; his love endures forever. ² Let Israel say: "His love endures forever."

Praise and thanksgiving should flow from our hearts and voices.

PLEASE PRAY. SHEPHERDS, WE SO NEED TO TRUST GOD FOR FRUIT, FOR DIRECTION, AND FOR HIS LOVE AND UNITY. PLEASE PRAY

- For the Young Adults who went away last weekend and learned more about Jesus
- For the families in Mexico who received a house
- For our church family as we move forward together
- For the world conflicts, refugees, and host countries
- For the people in your world without Jesus
- For the Elders as they pursue next steps