

Jesus Betrayed and Denied
John 18:1-27 - 3.01.2020 - Ryan Patty

Good Morning Christ Community! Thankful to be here with you this morning and to preach God's Word to you. If you have your Bible go ahead and open up to the book of John, chapter 18. There are many events surrounding the cross, many events that lead up to it and today we look at two of those events, two events that occurred by two of Jesus' followers, two of his own disciples. This morning we will look at how Jesus was betrayed and denied. So there is a warning in these events for us today, a warning against the temptations that lead to betrayal and denial, but more than anything, there is hope, and there is love, because unlike the disciples, even in his loneliest moments, Jesus doesn't betray us, and he doesn't deny us, and this is great news!

If you are taking notes or want to follow along, our two main settings or scenes are listed in the bulletin insert. We have the Betrayal, and the Denial. Within these settings, however, we have glorious truths of Jesus we need to see.

Let's look at the text and see

1. The Betrayal

After Jesus had said these things, he went out with his disciples across the Kidron Valley, where there was a garden, and he and his disciples went into it. **2** Judas, who betrayed him, also knew the place, because Jesus often met there with his disciples. **3** So Judas took a company of soldiers and some officials from the chief priests and the Pharisees and came there with lanterns, torches, and weapons. **4** Then Jesus, knowing everything that was about to happen to him, went out and said to them, “Who is it that you’re seeking?” **5** “Jesus of Nazareth,” they answered. “I am he,” Jesus told them. Judas, who betrayed him, was also standing with them. **6** When Jesus told them, “I am he,” they stepped back and fell to the ground. **7** Then he asked them again, “Who is it that you’re seeking?” “Jesus of Nazareth,” they said. **8** “I told you I am he,” Jesus replied. “So if you’re looking for me, let these men go.” **9** This was to fulfill the words he had said: “I have not lost one of those you have given me.” **10** Then Simon Peter, who had a sword, drew it, struck the high priest’s servant, and cut off his right ear. (The servant’s name was Malchus.) **11** At that, Jesus said to Peter, “Put your sword away! Am I not to drink the cup the Father has given me?”

PRAY

Few things in the history of Christianity bring up emotions of anger, sadness, and shock like the betrayal of Judas. How could someone who professed to love Jesus like him, who followed him, was a disciple of Him, allow himself to love money and prestige more than loving Jesus? Allow himself to be overcome by Satan? So let’s set the scene, we are in the Garden. IF you remember, *Judas departed from their meal in the upper room in chapter 13*. And in the meantime, Jesus has been telling his disciples what will take place, and what to expect with his departure. So here in Ch. 18, Christ and his disciples have left the upper room, have gone across a valley, and find themselves in the garden of Gethsemane, an area that most likely was a walled enclosure type garden. A private place that John tells us that Jesus and his disciples often went through. And it’s here that Judas comes with Roman soldiers, with chief priests, and with some pharisees to betray Jesus because he knew the place, Jesus again had “often met” with them there. Betrayed in a garden. *It reminds us of another betrayal, doesn’t it? The first betrayal we should say, one that also took place in a garden, the greatest of betrayals. Where God “often met” with his children, walking alongside them in the cool of the day. And they rebel against him, they become rebels against their king. Adam and Eve betray God, their very own Father. And here with Judas we have a picture of something so similar. He had obeyed Jesus’ command to follow Him, he had acknowledged Jesus to be the Christ, the messiah, He had even had his feet washed by Jesus as a sign of love and service, then he rebels against his king, the only Savior of the world.* He has become disillusioned. He betrays him. Betrays him for money. Such a heinous act of disloyalty.

So the question comes, what separates us from Judas? He had left everything to follow Jesus. He had been disciplined by him, traveled with him, listened to his teachings day in and day out, week after week, year after year. He had been there for others, probably helped others in Jesus' name, prayed for others, even loved others. But all the while he had misunderstood what kind of king Jesus really is. What his kingdom entails. That sacrifice, love, and service are the hallmark traits of a disciple, not notoriety, prestige, and wealth.

- **So we need to consider our desires, and our expectations about Jesus.**
- **Our desires:** What do you truly long for in this world? What do you fantasize about in your quiet moments? What is that deepest desire of your heart. What is your greatest dream for yourself, for your family? Is it happiness? The perfect family that always gets along? What if you can't get pregnant? What if you are laid off from your job? Does the deepest desire revolve around money? What can it do for you? To be free from debt? Maybe even buy that dream house you've always wanted? Is it recognition at work? The list goes on, what is your deepest desire? If it could be yours, would you turn your back on Jesus?
- **How about expectations?** Do you have subtle expectations for Jesus? Things you expect him to do since you follow him? What things are you expecting Jesus to protect you from having to experience in this life? I know expectations I have had to wrestle through in the past. Fears of losing my wife, fears of losing a child. Could I say in those moments that the Lord is my rock, that he is good enough, that my expectations are still met? What expectations have you placed on Christ? What are you expecting from him?
- Misguided expectations and desires that triumph over our love for Jesus will lead us to disillusionment, and even possibly betrayal. We have to guard against good desires, even good expectations in and of themselves, that take the throne in our hearts. For whatever is on the throne of your heart, from their these desires and expectations will come. So we have to get our hearts and minds right about who Jesus is and why he has come, or we too could betray him.

But in the midst of this betrayal there are three glorious truths that we should see about Jesus, three truths that remind our hearts of who he is and hopefully cause us to rejoice in him all the more. And the first is this:

1. Jesus is in control

Jesus is completely in control of everything that is occurring. He's not caught by surprise at this betrayal, for in ch. 13 he was expecting it. He even foretold it. No, he is in control of all the events. But to the unbelieving eye, maybe even the doubting eye, even to our eyes, he didn't seem to be in control. Everything seemed to be falling apart. One late scholar, H. G. Wells, wrote the following: "the world is like a great stage production produced and managed by God. As the curtain rises, the set is perfect, a treat to every eye. The characters are resplendent. Everything goes well until the leading man steps on the hem of the leading lady's gown, causing her to trip over a chair, which knocks over a lamp, which pushes a table into a wall, which in turn knocks over the scenery, which brings everything down on the heads of the actors. Meanwhile, behind the scenes God is running around, shouting orders, pulling strings, trying desperately to restore order from chaos. But, alas, he is unable to do so! Poor God!"

Poor God?! Are we to pity God here? According to Wells there is a limited God in the arrest and crucifixion. There is a God reacting to human wishes and wills, rather than accomplishing his own. Poor God?! This is not the God we see in our text. Jesus here is not dismayed, not reacting, he is in complete control. He understands the plan of God the Father and is executing that plan to its final fulfillment. V. 4 tells us that Jesus knew everything that was about to happen to him. John is purposeful in this Gospel about presenting Jesus as completely in control. He is sovereign over all. Judas' betrayal, those who accompanied him to arrest Jesus, all of it our Lord Jesus knew, and yet he still allowed it. Still went humbly to the cross.

- Some of you have been hurt deeply by betrayal, maybe by a spouse, a loved one, or a friend. Some of you might feel the sting of what Judas did just a little bit more. But imagine if you knew it was coming! Imagine if you knew the exact moment it would happen, even when the heart had succumbed to the desire. Could you still love the person as Jesus did? Could you still treat them with kindness, even compassion? Jesus' control over all things, his sovereignty over all things, give us immense hope in the midst of hardships, in the midst of sufferings, and even in the midst of betrayals. Because our Lord continued to love even those who would betray him. So yes he's in complete control but also, He's truly God.

2. Jesus is truly God

Now before your mind says, "duh Pastor Ryan, you all have been telling us this!" Guard your heart against that. The fact that Jesus is truly God affects every single part of our faith, and I want you to see the subtleties within the text. Look at v. 4 on, **4 Then Jesus, knowing everything that was about to happen to him, went out and said to them, "Who is it that you're seeking?"** **5 "Jesus of Nazareth," they answered. "I am he," Jesus told them. Judas, who betrayed him,**

was also standing with them. **6** When Jesus told them, “I am he,” they stepped back and fell to the ground. **7** Then he asked them again, “Who is it that you’re seeking?” “Jesus of Nazareth,” they said. **8** “I told you I am he,” Jesus replied. Notice what happens in the text. Jesus is expecting them, and he asks, who is it you’re seeking? They say Jesus, and he says I am he. Actually in the Greek it just says, I am. Three times it’s stated, twice by Jesus and once in a recap by John. This is God incarnate. The God-man. Jesus who is truly human and truly God standing before these men and not hiding, not shrinking from them, but standing before them as he did in John chapter 8, saying I am! I am. The biblical imagery is clear. He’s the man they are looking for, and He’s the God they cannot see because their eyes are still blind. Notice what happens when the men, who come in the middle of the night with no witnesses and ask where Jesus is, and he says I am, they fall down! They fall back on one another. Are they surprised here? I am sure of it. But I love what else we see, without even realizing it they fall down, a biblical symbol of worship, when confronted with the divine name of I am. They fall down, they bow the knee, just as one day everyone, whether in submission or in rebellion, will do the same. It is the divine son of God who is giving himself up voluntarily. Jesus’ deity is still on full display, even through this betrayal. Thirdly we see that.

3. Jesus is our sacrifice

8 “I told you I am he,” Jesus replied. “So if you’re looking for me, let these men go.” **9** This was to fulfill the words he had said: “I have not lost one of those you have given me.” **10** Then Simon Peter, who had a sword, drew it, struck the high priest’s servant, and cut off his right ear. (The servant’s name was Malchus.) **11** At that, Jesus said to Peter, “Put your sword away! Am I not to drink the cup the Father has given me?”

Jesus here, still filled with compassion, still filled with love, still desiring to watch over those who are his, tells the men, you’re only seeking one man. Let these others go. Let the disciples go. It’s me you want. But Peter, who we will get to in a minute, is zealous, he cares for his Lord, he wants to protect Jesus, there was most likely some jostling, some shoving, the disciples are being surrounded, and so he takes a swipe at a servant with his blade and cuts the ear off. Peter’s misunderstanding of Jesus was clear here. He still doesn’t understand what type of king Jesus is. Still doesn’t understand that he has come to conquer the power and penalty of sin. A sword can’t do that. A sword can’t conquer sin; it can’t conquer death. No amount of anything else, be it swords, money, or good deeds can change the fact that we all have sinned, and the wages of sin is death. You might be here and consider yourself a good person, consider yourself to maybe mess up here and there but overall you’re better than others, you’re not as bad as others. Allow me to tell you where you misunderstand. You misunderstand the severity of sin. You misunderstand that those things you don’t deem to be “that serious” are that serious before an infinite, Holy God. You’ve broken his law, you have sinned

against your creator, and therefore you need a Sacrifice. But Peter still doesn't understand This. He doesn't want Jesus to be the sacrifice, he doesn't want Jesus to be arrested, or to die, but He HAS to, He HAS to be our sacrifice.

"Put your sword away! Am I not to drink the cup the Father has given me?" Without realizing it, Peter was working against Jesus in this moment. He had to go to the cross. He alone was to drink the cup. And what is this cup he is talking about? It's a biblical metaphor for the very wrath of God. Jeremiah, Isaiah, Ezekiel, and Habakkuk all point to the metaphorical language of God's wrath being poured out from a cup. In Jeremiah 25 we read,"

- Jeremiah 25:15 - "**15** This is what the Lord, the God of Israel, said to me: "Take this cup of the wine of wrath from my hand and make all the nations to whom I am sending you drink from it."
- This wrath is poured out because of the sins of his people. This cup imagery is what Jesus is getting at. He has a mission! He has to take the cup the father has prepared for him because he has come to save his people! But also in the OT, this cup imagery can speak of blessing, of even salvation!
- Psalm 116: 12-13 - **12** How can I repay the Lord for all the good he has done for me? **13** I will take the cup of salvation and call on the name of the Lord.
- In other words, Jesus took the divine cup of wrath, the very wrath that should have been poured out on us, and stood in our place as our sacrifice so that we could drink the cup of salvation; he took the cup of wrath, so that we can take the cup of salvation. It's an amazing exchange that only Jesus can fulfil, and as our sacrifice he does just that.

But secondly, this morning, we need to look at the denial.

2. The Denial (John 18)

12 Then the company of soldiers, the commander, and the Jewish officials arrested Jesus and tied him up. **13** First they led him to Annas, since he was the father-in-law of Caiaphas, who was high priest that year. **14** Caiaphas was the one who had advised the Jews that it would be better for one man to die for the people. **15** Simon Peter was following Jesus, as was another disciple. That disciple was an acquaintance of the high priest; so he went with Jesus into the high priest's courtyard. **16** But Peter remained standing outside by the door. So the other disciple, the one known to the high priest, went out and spoke to the girl who was the doorkeeper and brought Peter in. **17** Then the servant girl who was the doorkeeper said to Peter, "You aren't one of this man's disciples too, are you?" "I am not," he said. **18** Now the servants and the officials had made a charcoal fire, because it was cold. They were standing there warming themselves, and Peter was standing with them, warming himself. **19** The high priest questioned Jesus about his disciples and about his teaching. **20** "I have spoken openly to the world," Jesus answered him. "I have always taught in the synagogue and in the temple, where all the Jews congregate, and I haven't spoken anything in secret. **21** Why do you question me? Question those who heard what I told them. Look, they know what I said." **22** When he had said these things, one of the officials standing by slapped Jesus, saying, "Is this the way you answer the high priest?" **23** "If I have spoken wrongly," Jesus answered him, "give evidence about the wrong; but if rightly, why do you hit me?" **24** Then Annas sent him bound to Caiaphas the high priest. **25** Now Simon Peter was standing and warming himself. They said to him, "You aren't one of his disciples too, are you?" He denied it and said, "I am not." **26** One of the high priest's servants, a relative of the man whose ear Peter had cut off, said, "Didn't I see you with him in the garden?" **27** Peter denied it again. Immediately a rooster crowed.

Now the way in which John is writing here can be a little confusing, so allow me to explain. Think of a movie with two scenes happening at the same time. Inside the building, we are seeing how Annas is questioning Jesus and how Jesus is answering truthfully in all things. But outside this building there is a courtyard, and here is where the denials of Peter take place. So John gives us this back and forth, and it's purposeful, *in order that they might be compared!* In order that we see how Jesus faces questions of his identity with truthfulness and boldness, and Peter, sadly, lies and denies Christ.

What I want us to see this morning, is that just like in our sin we are prone to betraying our Lord, so also can we be prone to denying him. We need to see the comparison that John is setting up for us. A comparison of how we are, you and I, in our sin vs. how the Lord Jesus is in his righteousness.

1. Man is selfish, but Jesus loves and protects.

What has happened to Peter? Peter the zealot who chops a man's ear off moments before is now Peter the coward who lies when questioned by a young girl? What changed?! Loss of hope I am sure. Expectations and desires like we

looked at with Judas weren't met. Peter here denies the Lord, because he was fearful yes, because he was afraid for sure, but also because of selfishness. He could only think of himself in the moment. So when a young servant girl questions him, and when others stand around the fire and question him, he denies being a follower of Jesus. He denies the Lord because he could only see his dilemma and not his deliverer. Denies the Lord because he is fearful instead of faithful. What if they know he's with Jesus? Would he be arrested too? I'm sure the scenarios were running through his head. Meanwhile, Jesus is inside getting questioned. V. 19 tells us there were questions about his disciples, and about his teachings. "How many followers? Who are they? How strong are they?" In essence, what charge can we bring against you...

"I have spoken openly to the world," Jesus tells them. I have always taught in synagogues and the temple, where all Jews come together. You can question anyone who heard me! He doesn't give up his disciples, he doesn't betray anyone. He speaks only truth. He loves and protects those who have followed him, even if they are denying him right outside in the courtyard.

2. Man hides from the truth, but Jesus embodies the truth.

Peter is questioned and lies three times. Remember his bravado that was recorded for us in Mark 14? Peter told him, "even if everyone falls away, I will not! Jesus replied, truly I tell you before the rooster crows you will deny me three times." Peter replied, "Even if I have to die with you, I will never deny you." And here he is denying Jesus, hiding from the truth, lying about his identity to save himself. Meanwhile Jesus is inside embodying truth. After an official slaps him for his manner of speech, Jesus replies, "If I have spoken wrongly", if I have lied, if I am not speaking truthfully, then give evidence! But since I am speaking truthfully, why do you hit me?" The truth is what Jesus embodies here. He is struck while his hands are bound. This official hits him because he most likely feels it will make superiors happy. The truth of it is that they can't see the embodied truth of God right in front of them. Jesus here is standing up to his questioners and denying nothing, while Peter is outside cowering before his questioners and denying everything (Brn).

3. Man is helpless, but Jesus is our Saviour.

The refrain throughout the entire Bible is this: ***We are helpless to save ourselves, we need someone to save us.*** In our Western and individualistic minds, we don't like that. Something within us recoils a bit at that. "I can take care of myself! I can pull myself up, I can make it! I don't need anyone's help!" But our loving and gracious God would tell you that you do. From the betrayal in the Garden, and the repeated failings of leaders and kings, to the repeated refrain of the prophets, one message rings out loud and clear: We need a Saviour. We need someone to redeem and rescue us. Someone to stand in our place before God. Only God can take care of this problem, only God can provide our

redemption, only God can save us. And praise him, he does! He sends his Son Jesus to redeem you and save you, out of the love he has for you!

- John 3:16 - 16 For God loved the world in this way: He gave his one and only Son, so that everyone who believes in him will not perish but have eternal life.
- Romans 5:8 - 8 But God proves his own love for us in that while we were still sinners, Christ died for us.

So some of you might be here this morning, and you aren't a Christian. Maybe you think of yourself as in this middleground, you go to church here and there, you enjoy being around nice people, but you have yet to fully commit. I want to tell you that there is no middle ground. Romans 1 makes it clear that even in the general knowledge of creation there is enough evidence for God that you are deemed guilty for your sin. What we looked at in the betrayal of Judas is still true for you. In your sin you have betrayed the living God. You are living your life in rebellion to him. Whether you recognize it or not, you think you are good enough. But hear my plea, that you are not! Your self-righteousness before God almighty is nowhere near enough. You need a redeemer, you need a saviour, you need Jesus Christ. **When you believe in him, when you believe that his sacrifice is what you need, then your sins are washed away, his righteousness is given to you, and you stand as a saved and redeemed child of God.** So would you believe? Would you trust that he is enough? He beckons you to follow him, so would you?

But for the Christian, the believer here. Those who have professed Christ as Lord and are seeking to follow after him, maybe you resonate with Peter here. Maybe you haven't denied being a follower of Christ to a coworker or family member, but maybe you are experiencing some failures in your walk. Some area of sin that you are still clinging to that you feel overcome by. There are many factors one can look at in what made Peter deny Jesus that night, but I want to encourage you within the midst of your own temptations is to be reminded of what happened to Peter. **He was restored! Although he was marked by his denial, he was not defined by it. Although he failed, his faith remained. He repented and was restored.** When Jesus died for you, he knew who he was dying for. He knew of your sins and your failures, yet he did it anyway. He died for failures, he paid the penalty for all of our sins, even when we stumble. So repent when you do! Martin Luther, the great reformer who went to task with the abuses of the Catholic church, penned his 95 theses and posted them to the door of the church in Wittenberg, Germany, the very first one of his theses was this: When our Lord and Master Jesus Christ said, "Repent" (Mt 4:17), he willed the entire life of believers to be one of repentance."

Don't let your failures, your stumbles, your mistakes deter your faith. Look to Jesus! The one who died and redeemed you. **When we fail, he is faithful. When we deny, he delivers. When we repent, he restores.** May the failure in each of us take heart in that truth this morning. Pray with me.