



THE GOSPEL OF JOHN: LESSON 19

"COME AND SEE"

It is with mixed emotions that I write this lesson on John 18. In this chapter, we witness the arrest of Christ, the denial of Peter, and Jesus' trial before Pilate. Our hearts break as we watch the greatest crime in history, as some call it; the arrest and murder of the Son of God by the sons of men. Imagine ... trying to arrest God. But at the same time our hearts rejoice as we realize the love Jesus has for us, as He willingly and obediently drinks the cup of suffering that has been poured for Him.

John's record of the next twelve hours is remarkably different than that of the other Gospel writers. John only gives us a glimpse of the agony, questioning, and torture our Lord suffered for us. John completely leaves out Jesus' anguish in the Garden before His arrest, the bloody sweat dripping from His brow, and the angel in the garden that came to strengthen Him. He doesn't mention "the betraying kiss," the desertion of all the disciples, the false witnesses, Pilate's hand-washing, his wife's message, the command to Simon to carry the cross, the earthquake, the repentance of one of the thieves that was crucified next to Jesus, and many other details. It's important to remember that each Gospel writer had a specific purpose for writing. John's Gospel was the last written, and his goal was not to give more historical facts about the person of Christ. John's purpose was to emphasize the deity of Jesus Christ. While the other accounts of His death revealed Jesus' humanity by showing the reader the pain and agony He endured, John wants to focus on the glorification and majesty of the Son of God. He paints us the picture of Jesus being fully in control of everything that was happening. While the other writers mention Judas' kiss, John doesn't even mention it, not wanting to distract us from the aggressive and authoritative actions of Jesus. The kiss didn't "give" Jesus away, Jesus stepped forward and offered up Himself. These accounts never contradict each other, but give us a better and more complete picture of the events that took place.

I suggest that you approach this chapter with a holy reverence and awe. Study at a time where you won't be disturbed or distracted. The next two chapters will grip your heart as you are reminded of the price that was paid for our souls by Jesus. It's easy to forget the cost of God's plan for the salvation of His children.

First Day

1. Instead of reading the entire chapter, this week we will be taking sections at a time. I want to be able to piece together the additional facts from the other accounts and not get overwhelmed or lost in our text. Please read John 18:1-11. **Observe and list the facts you find.** Make sure you mention where the story takes place, the main characters, the repeated thoughts or phrases, or any key words.
2. Read Matthew 26:47-56 and list any additional facts or information given about the arrest of Jesus.
3. Read Mark 14:43-53 and list any added detail given.
4. Read Luke 22:47-53. Any other details?

5. How do all the accounts complete the picture for us?

6. What was happening just prior to His arrest? Read Matthew 26:36-46, Mark 14:32-42, and Luke 22:39-46. Describe what happened in your own words.

7. What do we learn about Jesus from His prayer time in the Garden before His arrest?

8. What do we learn about the disciples? Can you relate to them at all? What can you learn from this section for yourself?

9. Let's end today with one more question. Have you ever been asleep when you should have been praying? Have you ever been talking when you should have been listening? Have you ever drawn your sword when you should have held your peace? Yes, I think we can all relate...

Memory Verse of the Week: "Jesus answered, 'You say rightly that I am King. For this cause I was born and for this cause I have come into the world, that I should bear witness to the truth. Everyone who is of the truth hears My voice.'" John 18:37b

Second Day

Review your memory verse. Do you hear His voice?

Jesus leads His disciples out of Jerusalem to the western slopes of the Mount of Olives, where many Jerusalem residents had private gardens. Jesus and His disciples would often go the Garden of Gethsemane to pray and be alone, so Judas was very familiar with it. Gethsemane means "oil press," which is where olives were pressed and crushed for their oil. It's very significant that Jesus was arrested here.

To get to the garden, they would have to go down the steep valley and cross the channel of the brook Kidron, which was between the city wall and the Mount of Olives. The word "Kidron" means "dusky and gloomy." William Barclay, in The Gospel of John, writes something very interesting: "As they crossed the Kidron, a very symbolic thing must have happened. All the Passover lambs were killed in the Temple, and the blood of the lambs was poured out on the altar as an offering to God. The number of lambs which were slain for the Passover was immense. On one occasion, thirty years later than the time of Jesus, a census was taken and the number was 256,000. We may imagine what the Temple courts were like when the blood of all these lambs was dashed onto the altar. From the altar there was a channel down to the brook Kidron, and through that channel the blood of the Passover lambs drained away. When Jesus crossed the brook Kidron it would still be red with the blood of the lambs which had been sacrificed. And surely as He did, the thought of Jesus' own sacrifice would be vivid in His mind."

1. Please read John 18:1-11. Who came after Jesus? What did they bring with them? Why do you think they brought so many men to arrest one man?

Exactly how many men came with Judas, we don't know. We know the phrase a "detachment of troops" refers to a Roman cohort, which can be anywhere from 200 to 1,000 men. These soldiers stayed at the Antonia Fortress near the temple complex to maintain security and order, especially

during the Jewish feasts. The Jewish Sanhedrin also sent some Temple guards along for the ride. It is thought by some that the troops brought lamps and torches because they believed Jesus would be hiding, and they would have to search Him out. It was most likely a full moon, and close to daylight. They certainly didn't expect Him to come out of the shadows and turn Himself in.

2. Why do you think Jesus asks twice, "Whom are you seeking?"

3. When Jesus said, "I Am," how did they react? Why do you think they reacted this way?

4. Who was in control? How can you tell?

5. Peter had a "Peter moment." What does he do? Why do you think he did it?

"The Greek word John used for sword denotes a long dagger, not a full-sized sword. It was not legal to carry weapons during feasts and a dagger could be concealed." (Leon Morris) Why was Peter even carrying a sword?

The disciples, especially Peter, just finished declaring their unflinching love for Jesus (Matthew 26:32-35). Peter had said, "I will never be made to stumble, I will never deny You, even if I have to die with You!" We know that Peter spoke and acted impetuously quite often. We know that Jesus told Peter in John 13:38 that he would deny Him three times. Although Peter was not supposed to draw his sword on Malchus, attempting to thwart

God's will, I can't help but admire his momentary courage to try to protect Jesus. Later in our chapter we see his cowardice and failure, but here we do see his courage. I wonder what we would have done if we were there. (It's interesting to note that John is the only Gospel writer that names Peter and Malchus.)

6. Jesus heals the man's ear completely. What does this show us about Jesus? How does this act show Jesus' grace upon Peter as well?

7. A. M. Hunter said, "The Shepherd went to meet the wolf to save His flock." How does this section reveal the love Jesus has for His own? (John 10:15)

8. How does this section reveal Jesus' authority? (Give verses.) His courage? His obedience?

In the Old Testament, the "cup" is associated with divinely appointed suffering, wrath, and judgment. "Drinking the cup" means to go through with the difficult experience that is coming. The Father Himself prepared Jesus' cup, and Jesus would not resist the Father's will. He would finish the work He was here to do. Earlier, Jesus had prayed, "O My Father, if it be possible, let this cup pass from Me; nevertheless, not as I will, but as Thou will" (Matthew 26:39). Warren Wiersbe writes: "The cup represented the suffering He would endure and the separation from the Father that He would experience on the cross. He prayed this prayer three times; evidence that His whole being was sensitive to the price He would pay for our salvation. His holy soul must have been stirred to the depths when He contemplated being made sin!"

By "drinking His cup," Jesus was accepting, submitting to, and obeying the will of the Father. Each of us has a "cup to drink." Are you submitting to His will?

9. What "cup" has been placed before you to drink? Maybe it's the cup of suffering, or pain, or disease? Maybe it's the cup of being misunderstood, or the cup of false accusations. We all have different cups to drink. What can we learn from Jesus' prayer in Matthew 26:39? Are you willing to submit to His will? Do you believe His ways are perfect?

I want to share a paragraph with you that was written by Ray Stedman, in God's Loving Word. He said, "Before we judge Peter too harshly, we have to confess that there are times when we, too, 'lop off an ear' now and then in a misguided attempt to serve our Lord. It might be a sharp word to someone in the church who does not do things as we think they should be done. It might be an argument with a friend or family member, in which we try to debate rather than love that person into the kingdom. There are many ways that we lop off ears of those around us, both Christians and non-Christians, in an attempt to defend our Lord with worldly methods. As Jesus makes clear to Peter, which is no way to serve Him."

10. Have you "lopped off any ears" lately? Will you stop now and pray for Jesus to heal the wounds? What should you do to fix it?

Jesus willingly obeyed the Father's will, willingly gave His life for His sheep. His obedience to the Father's will is an incredible example to us. I pray that we would follow in His footsteps and obey God's will, whether we understand it, or even like it. Ladies, Jesus is our **"Reason to Rejoice."**

Third Day

What's your memory verse? Are you walking in the truth?

1. Read John 18:12-27. It seems like Peter's forceful action called the troops to action. They move forward and arrest Him. What else did they do?

John tells us that Jesus was taken first to Annas, pointing out that he was the father-in-law of Caiaphas, the high priest. He had been the high priest some years before, from A.D. 6 to 15, but had been removed from office by the Romans because of his corrupt behavior. Although not presently in office, he was thought of by many as the "power behind the throne." He had a large amount of influence over his son-in-law.

Let's pause for a moment and put things in order. Because none of the Gospels record all of the trials and interrogations that Jesus underwent between perhaps 3 A.M. and noon on Friday, Irving Jensen, in his commentary on John, lists them for us.

Jewish trials

1. Interrogation by Annas (John 18:12-14, 19-23)
2. Informal trial by Sanhedrin before dawn (Matthew 26:57-68; Mark 14:53-65; Luke 22:54, 63-65; John 18:24)
3. Formal trial after dawn (Matthew 27:1; Mark 15:1; Luke 22:66-71)

Roman trials

1. First appearance before Pilate (Matthew 27:2, 11-14; Mark 15:1-5; Luke 23:1-5; John 18:28-38)
2. Before Herod Antipas (Luke 23:8-12)
3. Final appearance before Pilate (Matthew 27:15-26; Mark 15:6-15; Luke 23:13-25, John 18:39-19:16a)

Verse 15-18 give us a glimpse of what was going on outside the courtyard, while Jesus was taken inside. Many speculate that the "other disciple" noted in verse 15 is John himself. Because he knew details and names, he not only was an eye witness, but if he knew the name of the

servant of the high priest (Malchus), he may have been familiar with him as well. Although this is widely believed, no one knows for sure.

2. Read John 18:15-18, Matthew 26:69-75, Mark 14:66-72, and Luke 22:55-62. Briefly describe Peter's behavior.

3. The "other" disciple gets Peter admission into the courtyard. Peter immediately denies knowing Jesus. (Denial #1) Why do you think he did that? What happened to the courage he showed only a moment before?

4. Have you ever denied knowing Jesus, or being one of His children? Have you ever been afraid of being identified as one of His? Can you share it?

5. As Peter warmed himself by the fire, Jesus was being interrogated. Read verses 19-23. Contrast Peter's behavior with Jesus'. (i.e.: lie vs. truth; coward vs. hero)

Annas begins his questioning in an illegal fashion. Jewish law regulates that a prisoner must be asked no question that by answering, he would admit any kind of guilt. In other words, you can't testify against yourself. The accused was supposed to be considered innocent until two independent witnesses had given collaborating testimony.

6. How did Jesus respond to the questioning? How do his answers show that He was familiar with the Jewish law?

Annas didn't get the response he wanted, so he sent Jesus bound to the official high priest, Caiaphas. Perhaps Jesus had to pass through the courtyard again, the servants observing Him once more. Maybe this is what prompted the questioning of Peter again.

7. What happened when Peter was questioned two more times? According to the other accounts, what did Peter do when he heard the rooster crow?
8. Luke 22:61 tells us that the Lord turned and looked at Peter. How do you think Peter felt at that moment? What "look" do you think was in Jesus' eyes?
9. After Peter realized what he had done, he went out into the streets of Jerusalem and wept bitterly. Peter was a repentive and broken man. How do you respond when the Holy Spirit points out your sin? Are you "sorry" you got caught or are you "sorry" you've grieved the Lord? How do you respond to conviction?
10. Have you been guilty lately of denying the Lord, not only in your words, but in your actions? (Explain how we can deny the Lord in actions.)

I pray that we learn many lessons from Peter (poor thing). He is always the example of failure, yet he is also the example of repentance and restoration, as we will read later. Peter loved the Lord with all his heart, yet he still failed miserably. The Lord knows that each one of us will fail in our devotion to Him. Can we learn from the example of Peter to continue on, receiving forgiveness and moving forward in boldness? The Holy Spirit came upon the disciples on Pentecost (Acts 2) and Peter stood and preached with power, as 3,000 souls received the Lord. Peter learned he didn't need a sword, but only the Spirit!

William Barclay said this about Peter: "We must remember how much Peter loved Jesus. The others ran; Peter alone stood by Him. Peter loved Jesus so much that he could not leave Him. True, Peter failed, but he failed in a situation into which only a faithful lover of Jesus would ever have come. Think what Peter had done. He alone drew his sword against fearful odds in the garden; he alone followed Him out to see the end. He was the one brave man. The first thing to remember about Peter is not his failure, but the courage that kept him near to Jesus when everyone else had run away. The tremendous thing about Peter was that his failure was a failure that could only have happened to a man of superlative courage. True, Peter failed; but he failed in a situation that none of the other disciples dared to face. He failed, not because he was a coward, but because he was a brave man." I think Jesus saw Peter's heart, saw his love for Him, saw his desire to be devoted to Him, and his desire to follow Him to death. That's the look that I think was in Jesus' eyes as He turned and looked at Peter.

Fourth Day

Work on your memory verse.

1. Read John 18:28-40.

They now lead Jesus to the Praetorium which was the headquarters of the commanding officer of the Roman Military or Military Governor, which was Pilate. They didn't want to enter because they believed they might "become morally polluted by entering the residence of a Gentile" (John MacArthur) Isn't it strange that they are so concerned with becoming polluted, yet don't care if they are committing evil against God Himself.

2. Pilate comes out to talk to them. What accusation do the Jews have against Jesus in verse 30?

Pilate tells them to judge the man themselves, according to their own law. They can't, they say, because they want Him killed. Remember at this time, the Jews were subject to the Romans. Although they allowed them a good amount of self-government, Rome had taken away from the Jews the power and right of capital punishment. This is why they had to bring Jesus before Pilate. If they had actually killed Him themselves, they would have done it by stoning (Leviticus 24:16). This is the point of verse 32; that everything was happening so Jesus' words would be fulfilled. In John 12:32, Jesus said that if He was lifted up (crucifixion), He would draw all men to Himself. If prophesy was to be fulfilled, He must be crucified, not stoned, and die a Roman death. (Luke's account tells us that Pilate questioned Jesus once, then sent Him to Herod, who sent Him back to Pilate. John omits the trial before Herod.) According to Raymond E. Brown, in The Gospel According to John, "Furthermore, the Sanhedrin didn't want Jesus stoned as a false prophet; they wanted Him crucified as a political criminal. The Jews equated crucifixion with hanging, and 'anyone who is hung on a tree is under God's curse' (Deuteronomy 21:23). Stoning might make Jesus appear to be a martyred prophet, but hanging/crucifixion would prove that God had rejected Him."

3. Pilate then asks Jesus if He is the King of the Jews? How does Jesus respond, in verse 34?

4. Pilate continues his questioning. In your own words, explain Jesus' answer in verses 36-37.

5. In verses 38-40, Pilate tried again to get out of taking this case. What does he suggest to the Jews? (Read Luke 23:13-25 and Matthew 27:15-25) Explain what he's talking about. Who do the Jews want released instead of Jesus?

Pilate was the Roman-appointed governor over the Jews, taking over in A.D. 26. He was in full control of the military and judicial administration of the province. This land had many problems and needed to be kept in order. It seems clear that Pilate believed Jesus was innocent. First he tried to refuse the case, then he sent Jesus to Herod. He then tries to release Him because of their feast. His wife even warns him not to have anything to do with this man (Matthew 27:19). In Matthew 27:15-25, Pilate realized that the Jews weren't budging and began to fear because a tumult was rising. Pilate washed his hands before the crowd, saying that Jesus' blood would be on their head, declaring himself innocent of this man's murder. He also scourged Jesus to please the people. Pilate refused to stand up to the Jewish people and do what was right (Mark 15:15). As a governor, he was a failure. He tried to place responsibility on someone else. He compromised. He feared man. Unfortunately, as William Barclay said, "It was Pilate's decision to make his own decision, and not to attempt to make the crowd make his decision for him. No man can evade that personal verdict and that personal decision in regard to Jesus Christ." He is responsible as he caves in to political pressure.

6. What warnings do we hear, loud and clear, from Pilate's actions?

7. Are you ever tempted to consider public opinion over the truth of the Gospel? In what forms does this temptation come?

8. Can you explain, once more, why the Jews were so set on having Jesus put to death?

9. What specifically spoke to your heart in this section?

We'll end here for today. We looked at Peter, Pilate, and the Jews. Tomorrow we're going to focus on Jesus and the majesty of who He is. Spend some time in prayer today, thanking Jesus for what He endured for you.

Fifth Day

Write out your verse from memory.

1. Read John 18:27-40 again. In the beginning of the chapter, we observed that Jesus was in control at His own arrest. How about now? Who seems to be in control of this trial?
2. Jesus tells Pilate why He came into the world, in verse 37. Why?
3. Jesus said, "Everyone who is of the truth hears My voice." How can you apply that to yourself?
4. How does Jesus handle Himself during the interrogation?

5. Jesus, knowingly and deliberately, accepted the injustice and abuse, even though He had the power to retaliate. How is His behavior a model for you and me?

6. By the way, what happened to Judas? Read Matthew 27:3-10 and Acts 1:18-19. Contrast Judas' denial of Christ with Peter's.

7. Write your thoughts concerning this chapter. How did it move you? How did it challenge you? How did it sadden you?

I want to end by sharing some insights by Warren Wiersbe from The Bible Exposition Commentary. He states that the best way to see the truths in this chapter is to pay attention to the symbols that are involved. He believes there are 5 such symbols in this chapter.

1. **The Garden:** "Obedience" (John 18:1) Jesus knew what lay ahead of Him, but He willingly went to the Garden in obedience to the Father's will.
2. **The Kiss:** "Treachery" (John 18:2-9) Judas' kiss was one of the basest acts of treachery recorded anywhere in sacred or secular history. He pretended to know and love the Lord as He betrayed Christ.

3. **The Sword:** "Rebellion" (John 18:10) Peter's sword symbolizes rebellion against the will of God. Peter fought the wrong enemy, used the wrong weapon, had the wrong motive, and accomplished the wrong result. He was openly resisting the will of God and hindering the work that Jesus came to accomplish.
4. **The Cup:** "Submission" (John 18:11-14) Peter held a sword in his hand, but our Lord had a cup in His hand. Peter was resisting God's will but Jesus was accepting God's will. We should never fear the "cup" that the Father hands to us.
5. **The Fire:** "Denial" (John 18:15-27) Peter gradually moved into a place of temptation and sin. He stood with the enemy by the fire (18:16, 18), and later sat with the enemy (Luke 22:55). Soon he would deny the Lord three times.

I hope these symbols will help you understand and remember what this chapter is all about. Chapter 19 will pick up right where we left off, taking us all the way to the death and burial of Jesus. But don't fret, ladies, hope comes in chapter 20 as we read about the resurrection of our Lord. I can't wait!

"For I delivered to you first of all that which I also received: that Christ died for our sins according to the Scriptures, and that He was buried, and that He rose again the third day according to the Scriptures."

1 Corinthians 15:3-4

