

September 30, 2018

Sermon: Life Arrested
Text: John 18:1-14

Discussion Questions:

A close examination of the first fourteen verses of John reveal one clear and unmistakable truth: **Jesus is in complete control**. If there was ever a time in the history of the world when Satan appeared to have the upper hand—it was the twelve or so hours that begin with the events here in the Garden of Gethsemane and conclude at the cross. From a worldly/human perspective, the account of the arrest of Jesus by the Roman soldiers could easily have the feel of a “hunted animal” being surrounded by hundreds of armed soldiers closing in for the kill.

But nothing could be farther from the truth. Satan was not in charge this dark night. Judas was not in charge. The Jewish officials were not in charge—nor were the detachment of Roman soldiers (possibly up to 600!) that were dispatched. Jesus was in charge—as we clearly see in the text.

The events of His betrayal and arrest remind us that Jesus is indeed the Son of God and the One with all authority. He is in command, even when it appears that things are falling apart. The question each of us must deal with today is this: Is Jesus in control of you? Is Jesus Lord and Master in every area of your life?

- Following Jesus is difficult at times. Have you ever struggled to openly admit your allegiance to Jesus in front of others?
- Are there specific people or situations that make it especially difficult for you to be completely honest concerning your commitment to Christ?
- What can you do in these situations, or when you are with these people, to overcome the fear that prevents you from boldly professing your faith in Jesus?
- Do you question the goodness of God when life gets hard?

Examination:

All four Gospels include Jesus in the Garden of Gethsemane—and Judas’ arrival with the Roman soldiers & Jewish leaders. Before we focus on John’s eyewitness account, let’s look at Matthew, Mark and Luke:

- Read **Matthew 26:36-56**
 - ***Note:** Matthew and Mark’s account of Gethsemane and the arrest (**Mark 14:32-52**) are almost identical. Some of the sentences are worded slightly differently—but they are essentially the same.
 - How, specifically, does Matthew refer to Gethsemane (v. 36)?
 - What metaphor does Jesus use describing the suffering He is about to face (v. 39)?
 - What does Jesus want to happen? What does God the Father want to happen?
 - What can we make of the fact that the disciples continue to fall asleep (vv. 40, 43, 45)?

- Does Jesus wait for Judas to arrive—or does Jesus take the initiative (v. 46)?
- Who enters the Garden at this point (v. 47)? Any mention of soldiers?
- What’s the signal Judas had arranged beforehand (v. 48)? Why a kiss?
- Did Judas’ honestly think Jesus wouldn’t suspect betrayal (v. 49)?
- One place Matthew diverges from Mark is Matthew 26:50. What do you make of Jesus referring to Judas as “friend”?
- Matthew 26:52-54 is also an addition to what we read in Mark. What does Jesus say about the place of violence in His mission—as well as the presence and role of angels?
- What happens to the disciples as soon as Jesus is arrested (v. 56)? Why?
- Mark’s Gospel provides one unique detail about an unusual witness to all of these events (Mark 14:51-52). What do you think that’s all about?

Read Luke 22:39-53

- How does Luke refer to Gethsemane (v. 39)? Had Jesus been there before?
- What did Jesus encourage the disciples to do (v. 40)? Why?
- Who makes a unique appearance in Luke’s Gospel (v. 43)? Why?
- What unique detail does Luke provide regarding the suffering (v. 44)? Do you think Luke’s profession might explain why he noted this?
- What detail does Luke provide as to why the disciples keep sleeping (v. 45)?
- A second time Jesus urges the disciples to pray to avoid falling into temptation (vv. 40, 46). What temptation do you think Jesus was so concerned about?
- Who enters the Garden at this point (v. 47)? Any mention of soldiers?
- What was Jesus’ response to the show of violence (v. 51)?

• **Read John 18:1-14**

- How does John refer to Gethsemane (vv. 1, 3)? Had Jesus been there before (v. 2)?
- Why is it important to note that “Jesus went out and asked them...(v. 4)?
- How is Jesus’ response “I am He” different from, say, “Yes, it’s me” (v. 5)? Do you really think the soldiers fell to the ground when Jesus said “I am He”? Why?
- John adds a parentheses, “Judas the traitor was standing with them.” Understand that this is the first time the disciples see Judas’ true colors. How powerful do you think it was for John to see Judas “standing with them”—and not with Jesus?
- Verse 8 is not a suggestion. Who is really in charge of this situation?
- How significant is it that Jesus protected His disciples? Can you love someone and not protect them?
- What is significant about John adding the detail that the high priest’s servants name was Malchus (v. 10)?
- The disciples mind (at least Peter’s) was on war. What was Jesus’s mind on (v. 11)?

Application:

This is a very familiar story of the last days of Jesus’ life. What new thing have you learned from studying this passage? Does this give you a new perspective on Jesus and what He has come to accomplish for all people? Do you believe that Jesus is in total control of every area of your life?