
INTRODUCTION

Imagine giving up your life to follow a singular person because he has done amazing miracles in front of you. He has given sight to blind people, healed sick people, and raised two people from the dead. He has also confronted the religious leaders and taught with an authority that has not been seen amongst your people for a long time.

This person, Jesus, claimed a lot of things. He claimed not only to be the Son of God, but in so doing claimed to be Yahweh himself, the covenant God of Israel. He claimed to be the great “I AM” on several occasions. He claimed to be the Messiah, foretold in the Old Testament.

And now, you’re entering the Passover celebration week, and even though Jesus has attempted to prepare your heart for his coming death, you’re just not ready. You finish supper on a cool Thursday evening in springtime. Then, Jesus directs everyone to a garden to pray.

All of a sudden, inexplicable things start happening: One of your fellow-disciples betrays Jesus for money, the Roman guards come and arrest Jesus, they hold a trial over night, lying witnesses attest that Jesus has blasphemed God, and Jesus is sent to higher and higher rulers until he meets Pilate. So far, your Thursday to Friday has not gone according to plan. You haven’t slept, your leader is arrested, and you have to hide your face so that you won’t be seen as being a league with a criminal!

These are the circumstances surrounding the disciples. You can understand why they might be fearful. You can get why Peter might have denied any association with Jesus. You can attempt to slip on the sandals of the disciples and see that dissolution had probably set in on Saturday. More than that, they feel hopeless and abandoned and are afraid for their lives.

This is the story we are entering into for our last series in the Gospel of John. Before you skip to John 20, dive into the story the way it unfolded for the disciples.

DISCUSSION 1

Jesus is Betrayed (vv. 1-11)

1. This chapter begins with “When Jesus had spoken these words . . .” Skim back over John 17. What does chapter 17 tell us about Jesus’s thought process as he entered into his betrayal and arrest?
2. What does this passage tell us about God’s control over Jesus’s betrayal and arrest? What other passages in scripture help us see this as part of God’s larger narrative?
3. What does this passage tell us about the disciples’ reactions to Jesus’s betrayal and arrest? How do these reactions differ from Jesus’s? Why are they different?
4. In what practical ways does this speak to your life?

DISCUSSION 2

Jesus is Condemned (vv. 12-14)

1. What do you think Caiaphas meant when he said “it would be expedient that one man should die for the people”?
2. Read Isaiah 53:7 and John 1:29. How do these passages give new light to this statement by Caiaphas, different than how he meant it?
3. What does this tell us about how God accomplishes his purposes?

DISCUSSION 3

Jesus is Denied (vv. 15-27)

1. What do you think caused Peter to deny Jesus?
2. Read John 13:36-37. What does this reveal about Peter's view of himself, and how does that differ from how he truly is?
3. In what ways can we be deceived like Peter was?

FAMILY DISCIPLESHIP QUESTIONS

1. Discuss a time when the kids had to trust something a parent was doing, even though they didn't understand it. Talk about it from the parent's perspective as well as the child's perspective. Why should we trust God even more than a parent? How can we see this in light of John 18:1-27?
2. Spend time thanking God that he is good and accomplishes his purposes. Ask him to give you a greater trust for him. Thank him for the salvation that came at such a cost.
3. Tell about a time when you thought you could do something, and maybe even boasted about it, but ended up failing. How did that make you feel? Peter thought he would not deny Jesus, but he did. What can we learn from Peter?

APPLICATION

- Take time this week to think about the areas of life in which you may be prideful. Write down several ways in which you think you have a better plan than he does, or several areas in which you think you would never fail. Pray over these things, repenting of potential sin, and asking God to give you a greater understanding, peace, and trust over the things he is doing.
- Listen or read the lyrics to "Come Behold the Wonderous Mystery." Think upon these lyrics in light of our text this week, as well as in light of Jesus's death and resurrection to come in the following weeks.