

John 18:1-27

~ Jesus: Lord of His Own Arrest ~

Introduction

In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. ² He was in the beginning with God. ³ All things were made through Him...And the Word became flesh and dwelt among us, and we have seen His glory, glory as of the only Son from the Father, full of grace and truth.... No one has ever seen God; the only God, who is at the Father's side, He has made him known.... Jesus did many other signs in the presence of the disciples, which are not written in this book; but these are written so that you may believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of [the living] God, and that by believing you may have life in His name....

So, who is Jesus Christ really?

It's interesting that in our culture today – if you asked the very **same question** – you will get a **whole host** of various and diverse opinions:

Jesus Christ is a good moral teacher!

Jesus Christ was a revolutionary leader!

Jesus was as a radical Marxist!

Jesus Christ was a religious lunatic!

Jesus Christ was a psychotic mad-man!

Jesus Christ was a fraudulent liar!

*Jesus Christ was a **good moral person**!*

Jesus Christ was a helpless victim!

On and on and on they go **NOT having a clue** about the Person and work of Jesus Christ – because most of these people have never even read **an inch** of the Holy Bible!

Read the Bible

But see as you open up the Scriptures – and as you study the Gospels – and you **come to meet** the Person and work of Christ – **what you will discover** is that:

Contrary to popular opinion – Jesus was **NOT** a helpless & hopeless victim being handed over to the Romans!

Contrary to popular opinion – He is **NOT** a desperate & dim-witted individual helplessly **being deceived** by the religious civil leaders!

Contrary to popular opinion Jesus Christ is **NOT** the result of a **cruel and helpless fate** – **placidly playing ball** as the Romans **bound** Him and **beat** Him hand and foot!

Lord of glory

But contrary to popular opinion **as you read your bible** – what you **will discover** is that Jesus Christ is the **ultimate King of glory!**

The one who **perfectly plans** and **predestines** every single event of this **entire universe!**

The one who meticulously plants His sovereign hand into every **nook**, and **cranny**, and **crevice**, of this created world!

Because He's the One who created the world and sustains it by His very power!

So much so that John the author of this Gospel – records for us **the very moment** Jesus decides to put His glory on display by **arresting the ones** who had come to arrest Him!

So, who is Jesus Christ really?

Point number 1:

Jesus Christ is Lord of His own arrest

Verse 1:

After Jesus had said these things [referring to the Upper Room]. He went out with His disciples across the Kidron Valley...

Now the way that this worked was that at the Temple Mount in Jerusalem **there was a drain** that came out toward the East wall (flowing from the Temple Mount) **all the way down** into the Kidron Brook! ¹

Now we don't know how many lambs were slaughtered at the Temple in the time of Passover – but we do have a census taken **30 years after** the time of Christ – and at that census there were about 256,000 lambs sacrificed at Passover!

256,000 sacrificial lambs!

It's not hard to image that as Jesus and His men are **trekking through** this bloodied red crimson river – Jesus understands that all of those sacrifices and lambs that were slain **on behalf of His people** are ultimately pointing to this very night where the true Lamb of God was to be slaughtered and killed for sins!

***And so** 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...*

Opening Gambit

By the accounting of most scholars – this would have been **just after one o'clock** roughly on Friday morning!

According to plan Jesus and His men had **finished eating** the meal – the famous Passover Feast that John records 3 times in His Gospel!

¹ <https://www.gospelgazette.com/gazette/1999/jul/page19.shtml>

It was **during that event** that Jesus had cryptically **told them** that one of **His very own men** was going to **betray Him!**

Judas then cryptically leaves the room – goes to the **officials** – and betrays Jesus for **30 pieces of silver!**

And while that betrayal is taking place – Jesus and His men are leaving the Upper Room – and **heading East** across the Kidron Valley!

Rising to the East and just on **this side** of the mountain is the Mount of Olives...

And on its slope stands a Garden – a **very familiar** Olive Grove which John never takes time to mention...

But one in which Luke **frequently records** under the name:

*Gethsemane!*²

A word in Hebrew which simply refers to an olive press – this is a place that Jesus **frequently went** to visit!

Many of the Gospels record this as the place in which:

Jesus would frequently go after a long and busy day of healing the crowds!

Often He would retreat to be with His heavenly Father – to pray with His Disciples:

This location was **very familiar** to these men!

² *Jesus made many visits to the Mount of Olives (Luke 21:37). In fact, it was “usual” for Him to go there when in the vicinity of Jerusalem (Luke 22:39). Every time Jesus visited Lazarus and Mary and Martha, He was on the Mount of Olives, for their village of Bethany was situated on the eastern slope. The road from Bethany to Jerusalem lay over Olivet. [See also <https://www.gotquestions.org/Mount-of-Olives.html> and <https://www.publishpeace.net/p/nine-times-jesus-retreated-to-be>].*

Perfectly Planned

But **more importantly** this was a location familiar to Judas Iscariot the one who would betray Him!

Verse 2:

*So Judas, who betrayed Him, **also knew the place**, because Jesus often met there with His disciples*

The gospel of Luke says:

That as Jesus came out of Jerusalem, He went to the Mount of Olives:

As was His custom to do...

So this is a place that **Judas frequently knew** that Jesus was going to visit!

And this is a place that His **disciples knew** that Jesus frequently was going to visit!

And **most importantly** this is a place that **Jesus knows** that **Judas knew:**

That Jesus was frequently going to visit!

This is **NOT** some random location – or secluded rendezvous for Jesus to plan His daring escape – this is the **precise location** of Jesus Christ **perfectly planning** the soldiers to come and to take Him away to His ultimate death!

One pastor says:

*You can piece this scene together quite easily when you consider a number of facts – first from the time Judas is dismissed from the upper room in **John chapter 13** – to the time that Jesus leaves the upper room in **John 18** approximately 3 hours or so have passed!*

*During that time Jesus could have easily changed the location, He could have chosen a different olive grove, or taken His men out of the city and into the country...giving Him **plenty of time** to escape!*

*In which case the plan of Judas would have backfired – the Roman soldiers would have found Jesus to be gone – and Judas would have found himself the direct bullseye of **the wrath of the Jewish leaders...***

*Who at this point had **already paid him** quite handsomely for this betrayal!*

All it required was a **slight change** of behaviour – a visit to a **different Garden** – a journey to a **different location** – and Judas would have been the target of the Roman soldiers and met the wrath of their swords!

His Hour

Now you tell me friends – does this sound like the beginning of the story of a **helpless & hopeless** victim?

The betrayal of a person who **never once sees** or knows the situation at hand?

Or does this sound like the one that John records in John chapter 1 as being with the Father in eternity past?

The One who **with infinite knowledge** & wisdom perfectly planned every single event this very night because as He had **just prayed** in the previous section:

Father the hour has come to glorify your son!

Judas & Crew

Verse 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...

Does that sound overly strange to you friends?

Does something seem **off to you** about this?

Roman legionnaires marching alongside the **Chief Priests** who were made up primarily of the **Sadducees** – marching alongside a group of **Pharisees**!

But if you know the Gospel of John – you know that the Pharisees **hate** the Sadducees – and the Sadducees **hate** the Pharisees – and **both groups** vehemently hate the Romans!

And **all 3 groups** are **overly suspicious** of Jesus and His disciples!

Unity in the world

You see when people are united together **against the Son of God** in their **hatred & rebellion** – they **don't often care** who's marching alongside with them!

And this is **all the more reason** for Christians who are united in Christ to **maintain that unity** – lest the world be united together in a **far greater way** in its hatred and rebellion toward Jesus Christ!

Legion

And so this is a very **strange group** of united individuals – but **more importantly** this is a **very large group** of united individuals!

Did you notice John calls this:

A company of Roman soldiers...

The KJV has:

A band of men...

Most literally this would have been ***one tenth of a Roman Legion*** – a Roman Legion was 6,000 men!

So one tenth of a Roman Legion would be about 600 men!

600 men coming to arrest **one feeble Rabii** who never once did anything wrong?

600 men armed with swords, shields, and weapons – *coming to arrest the humble and lowly Prince of peace?*

600 men carrying torches and flames – *coming to arrest the very Light of the world!*

They were expecting Jesus to fight – or to run – they were covering every exit – every basis – thinking of every scenario!

Arrested by Jesus

Turns out they **didn't need to** – Verse 4:

*Then Jesus, **knowing everything** that was about to happen to Him...*

NOTICE:

HE WENT OUT AND MET THEM!

HE WENT OUT TO APPROACH THEM!

He's **NOT** cowering in the darkness – He is **NOT** scurrying down the mountain:

He comes out to meet them!

He comes out and confronts them!

They **weren't** arresting Jesus – Jesus was arresting them!

He's the one who's ultimately in charge!

He's the one who ultimately demands!

Which is why He demands of them in verse 4:

Who is it that you're seeking?!?!

And again, in verse 7:

Who is it that you're seeking?!?!

Jesus is **constantly on** the front foot of this entire conversation because Jesus has ultimate authority!

Judas

Verse 5:

Jesus of Nazareth [they reply]. And Judas, who betrayed Him, was standing there with them....

Judas was standing there with them!

It wasn't **but a few hours ago** that Judas was breaking bread with these men in the Upper Room!

He had allowed Jesus to wash his dirty feet!

To untie his filthy sandals!

He was standing in that Upper Room **listening to Jesus** blessing the meal – explaining the Scriptures
– breaking the bread!

Dead in Sin

And **here he is** – not **but a few hours later** – standing on the other side of the Garden – betraying his Lord for 30 pieces of silver!

Don't ever think that apostasy isn't real friends!

Don't ever think that **you are beyond** betraying Jesus Christ!

The Gospel of Matthew says that:

Judas betrayed Jesus with a kiss!

Mark's account says that:

He kissed Jesus fervently!

There were several greetings in the Jewish culture – a kiss being the **most intimate** greeting to give to a friend!

One pastor says:

*It's bad enough to betray a close companion – even more to sell Jesus to the Romans – but the **greatest stupidity** is to think that you can mockingly kiss the face of God incarnate and get away it!*

Judas was one of the **most privilege men** ever to exist in all of human history!

He had spent the last **3 and half years** witnessing His miracles – listening to His sermons – parroting His prayers – standing with Jesus – talking to Jesus – listening to Jesus:

Only to **give Him over** for 30 pieces of silver!

Oh, Friends if ever there was a picture/an image of a man who was:

Dead in his sins!

Judas is that image!

Proximity to Jesus

And I think this demonstrates **something profound** for us to consider – that:

Proximity to Jesus Christ (closeness to Jesus) – in **no way guarantees** having peace with God Himself!

It means that:

You can say all of the right things – you can act in all of the right ways – you can come to church – take communion – sing with God’s people:

But if your **heart & mind** are **NOT** transformed by the sound preaching of the gospel – then your faith is ultimately in vain!

Your soul is in vain!

And you are **bent on harbouring sin** – & unconfessed evil that **will ultimately** cause you to fall in the very same that Judas fell this night!

And that’s a warning to us all friends!

Proximity to Jesus **in no way guarantees** having peace with Jesus!

And so let me just remind you friends:

You in this **room today** are people (like Judas) who are **so close** to the truth!

You **hear it** every single Sunday!

You **see it** in every single baptism!

You **experience it** every single communion!

You’re **apart of it** every time you stand & pray!

And so lest you be like Judas this very night – take John’s word as a warning to us all!

That the darkness of this very night is **seen most clearly** as a darkness in the heart of Judas!

Fell down

And so we read there in verse 4 Jesus saying to these men:

Who are you seeking?

Jesus of Nazareth – they reply!

And so Jesus responds in verse 5:

I am He!

Verse 6:

So when Jesus had told them, “I am He,” they stepped back and fell down to the ground...

Jewish Superstition

Now it’s interesting to me the amount of theories that are out there **trying to explain** the soldiers fall!

Some believe that because Jesus is using the phrase *Ego Eimi* – which is the Old Testament name for God in Exodus 3!

Jesus is committing blasphemy – **according to these Jews** no man can say the name of God when referring to self and still think that they’re able to live!

And so these men **upon hearing** the divine name step back in superstition believing that Jesus would be **struck down dead** on the spot!

Struck down by God for blaspheming the holy name & taking it upon His lips!

So that’s one possibility!

Glory Flash

Others will say that because Jesus was **rendering divine judgment** upon the nation of Israel for rejecting their Messiah:

*Falling over backwards is generally seen as the way in which God **promotes divine judgment** on people!*

Isaiah 28:13 says:

*The word of the LORD will become to them [speaking of Israel]: order upon order, line upon line; a little here, and a little there, so that they go on **stumbling backwards** to be injured, captured, and snared...*

Psalms 27:2:

*When evildoers came against me to devour my flesh, my foes and my enemies **stumbled and fell...***

So maybe Jesus was **rendering divine judgment** for their rejection!

We don't ultimately know!

Divine Power

But I think the **best answer** is the **most basic** answer!

And I think the **most basic** answer is to say that:

Jesus was presenting Himself as the **divine Person** of God!

Jesus Himself was revealing to them the **divine power** of God!

And showing them the **divine nature** of God!

And when men are met with the **raw sovereign authority** of the King – that authority renders them helpless/hopeless/ and dumb so that they fall to their knees in worship!

Philippians chapter 2 says that:

At the name of Jesus Christ every knee should bow, in heaven and on earth and under the earth, and every tongue confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father...

I think we get a taste of Philippians 2 here!

I like how one commentator puts this in his commentary – he says:

*Just as Isaiah, when He saw the King in His glory, said, 'Woe is me, for I am undone!' and just as Moses could not look upon the Face, but could only see the back parts of His being, so too here the one stray beam of manifest divinity shot through the crevice of His humanity, was enough to prostrate with a strange awe even those rude and insensitive men. And when He had said the words 'I am He,' there was something that made them feel, '**This is One** before whom violence cowers abashed, and in whose presence impurity must hide its face...*

Who's really in Control

And so in **2 simple words** Jesus drops the most **power army** to the ground demonstrating His sovereign authority!

Which is why He says to them in verse 7:

*Then Jesus **asked them again**, who is it that you're seeking?*

Jesus of Nazareth, they reply.

Verse 8:

*I told you that I am He...So if you're looking for me, **let these men go!***

For those of you **playing in the Greek** that was **NOT** a request from the Son of God!

He is **NOT** asking that they be let go – He is **demanding** that they be let go!

This was a direct command!

This was a divine imperative!

And if you've ever been arrested in your life – or maybe you've seen those shows on tv where people are **getting arrested** by the cops – generally speaking:

If you're the one who's being arrested – you're generally **NOT** the one making demands of your captors!

If people are coming to arrest, you – to put you **in jail** – and to put you **on trial** you're **NOT** really parlaying with them!

But see John tells us the reason why – verse 9:

This was to fulfill the words He had spoken to them: I have not lost one of those you have given to me...

Jesus is giving Himself up – so that they may go free!

Jesus gives Himself **over to death** – so that His disciples **may have life!**

And so this is foreshadowing the very message of the gospel – this is foreshadowing the very message of the cross:

That Christ our King as the substitutionary Lamb of God stands in our place as our substitute in order that those who were given to Him by the Father may go free!

Jesus is the Good Shepherd!

He is the great I am!

He is the one who never loses any of His sheep!

Simon Peter

And Simon Peter **nearly messes** the whole thing up in verse 10!

I mean look at Peter once again **trying to make a mess** of Jesus' plans in verse 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.). And at that, Jesus said to Peter, "Put your sword away! Am I not to drink the cup the Father has given to me?"

Now if you're wondering why Peter all of a sudden **got the urge** to cut off Malchus' ear – the **simple answer** is that:

He missed

Peter was **NOT** in the business of removing people's ears!

Peter was aiming for his head!

See Peter is **feeling pretty bold** at this point – because he had just witnessed Jesus level an entire army with **2 simple words!**

So Peter swings – Malchus ducks:

And Peter **nearly turns** the entire plan of salvation up on its perfectly planned head!

Synoptics

Now John **doesn't record** what the other Gospels say when it comes to the drawing of Peter's sword – Luke says that:

Jesus touches Malchus' ear and instantly heals him!

Matthew records Jesus as saying to Peter:

Those who live by the sword shall die by the sword...

And Mark I mean he **doesn't even bother** recording the words **spoken to Peter!**

John

But see John **is intentional** – he wants us to see that Jesus Christ is *the Lamb of God!*

And so He says there in verse 11:

Shall I not drink the cup that my Father has given me to drink?

In the Old Testament the cup was a metaphor for God's divine judgment!

It was a way to speak of His divine wrath!

This is the cup that **all 3 gospels** record Jesus as saying:

Let this cup pass from my lips nevertheless NOT my will but your will be done!

But see John **doesn't record** any of that!

Because He has a particular purpose!

And so He records Jesus as being fully **able** and **willing** to bear the cup – because:

Jesus is the Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world!

He is the light of the world who's come to extinguish the darkness!

He is the Good Shepherd who lays down his life for the sheep!

But see Jesus **cannot do any of that** with Peter acting so foolishly!

And so He says there in verse 11:

*Peter put away your sword... put back your weapons... for shall I **NOT** drink the cup that my Father has given me to drink!*

Jesus Christ is Lord & King of His very own arrest!

So that's point number 1!

Jesus Christ is **fully in control** even with His own arrest!

Point 2

Second:

Jesus Christ is in control even of His people's faith

We read there in verse 12 of a **rapid change** in the scene:

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 [you remember] was the one who had advised the Jews that it would be better for one man to die for the people...

Rather than the people dying for one man!

Remember Caiaphas was concerned that the Romans would come and take away their authority in the Temple and so he's been plotting this night **ever since** John chapter 11!

Denial #1

And then we get to Peter's **first denial** in verse 15:

So Simon Peter was following Jesus, as was another disciple – (we assume that's John at this point)...

And so this disciple was an acquaintance of the high priest; who went in with Jesus into the high priest's courtyard. 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. Then the servant girl who was the doorkeeper said to Peter, "You aren't one of this man's disciples too, are you?"

And Peter who **just had all of that courage** back in Gethsemane looks at this little servant girl and says:

Absolutely NOT – I am NOT one of His disciples!

Now this is Peter who said to Jesus:

I will never deny you!

This is Peter who said to Jesus:

I will never fall away!

This is Peter who said to Jesus:

I am willing to go to prison and to give my life for you!

Self-Confidence

And here we come to yet **another important lesson** found in God's word:

Self-confidence and pride **always leads us** further away from Jesus

See Peter's problem and really the problem he's had the entire time as a disciple of Jesus is that:

He's always imagined that Jesus needed his attention – his intelligence – his power – his strength!

He's always imagined that **Jesus needed** Peter to **die for Him!**

And this is what happens you see when we let **self-confident** –arrogance and pride take the place of
humble servitude!

He **didn't want** Jesus washing his feet – He **didn't want** Jesus going to the cross – He **didn't want**
Jesus being taken away!

Because He didn't understand the nature of Jesus' death!

And once he had made the **first step in distancing himself** from Jesus – it made his other 2 denials all the **more easier to do**:

Because **that's what sin does!**

Sin **erodes** our Christian courage – it **tanks** our Christian confidence – and it makes **obedience to Jesus** difficult!

And that's what Peter is facing here!

He's taken the first plunge into sin – which aids his first denial!

Jesus before Annas

And then the scene **changes back** to Jesus...

See often you in the Gospels **you will have** these sandwiches that highlight the **meat of meaning** in the middle – so in this case you have:

Peter denies Jesus – Jesus **bearing witness** before the high priest – Peter denying Jesus
Or if you like:

1. A lying witness – **3.** The true and faithful witness – **2.** A lying witness!

Peter after all of his bravado shows himself to be fumbling – and Jesus who will be beaten and crucified shows Himself to be all knowing and in control!

And so standing before Annas and his servants **in verse 19** – John writes:

The high priest questioned Jesus about His disciples and about His teaching...

Verse 20 Jesus says:

I have spoken openly to the world, I have always taught in the synagogue and in the temple, where all the Jews gather, and I haven't spoken anything in secret. Why do you question me? Question those who heard what I told them. Look, they know what I have said...

But when He had said these things, one of the officials standing by slapped Jesus, saying, Is this the way you answer the high priest?

And Jesus answered:

If I have spoken wrongly, give evidence about the wrong; but if rightly, why do you hit me?

Then Annas sent Him bound to Caiaphas the high priest...

2 High Priests

Now just to clear up **any confusion** here about Annas & Caiaphas both being referred to as high priests – a few things are necessary to say:

1. In Israel once a man had served in that position as the high priest they **retained** that title **even after** they step down from office!

So much like the U.S Presidents today – we still refer to Present **Nixon** – President **Carter** – President **Obama** and so forth!

These men still had the title of high priest **even after** they had stepped down from office!

2. Second you served as high priest pretty much until the day you die!

But the confusion comes because Annas the former high priest was **still living** at this point – and Caiaphas was voting in by the Romans in 15 A.D. so I don't know if they shared the duties of high priest or they **deferred to Caiaphas** as the current high priest – but they **both still held** the title and **some power** at this point!

3. And then thirdly **both** of these men **seemed to live** in the **same temple complex** in Jerusalem or in the same vicinity which could get super confusing!

Public Witness

Anyway, it was **these men** says John who had arrested Jesus and **brought Him bound** before this council of Jewish men!

But see Jesus knows that something's **NOT right** about this trial!

In a formal Jewish hearing any accusations that were brought to the council of men **had to be verified** by at least 2 or 3 public eye witnesses!

This was true in the Old Testament system – and it's **still true** in the time of Jesus' ministry!

Which is why He says there in **verse 20**:

Shouldn't we get some more witnesses in here?

Like shouldn't we have some men who heard me in the temple?

Where all the Jews gather?

Where I spoke openly to the world?

Like there are a bunch of witnesses who can testify to the questions you're asking!

*Because according to the law you really **shouldn't be asking me** to serve as a **witness to myself** rather you should be bringing in 2 or 3 more witnesses **who can testify** to my teaching!*

And so **even in this moment** of this **unjust trial** and kangaroo court –Jesus is **unwilling** to disobey God's Law!

Jesus is unwilling to break God's law even in the face of injustice!

So you have Peter denying Jesus!

Jesus testifying to God!

And now in the **final scene** Peter again denies Jesus!

Denial #2/3

Verse 25:

Now Simon Peter was standing and warming himself [by that fire he had found earlier in the night]. And they said to him, “You aren’t one of His disciples too, are you? He denied it and said, “I am not.”²⁶ And 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. And immediately a rooster crowed...

Application #1

We don’t have time to get into **all of the ways** Jesus is sovereign over Peter’s denial – I wish we could talk about all of the things:

1. The nature of sin!
2. Christian confession!
3. The joy of repentance!
4. The joy of restoration!
5. The joy of persecution!

But **for the sake of time** let me just give you **3 brief thoughts** that I think are going to help us as we finish up!

1st Corinthians chapter 10 says:

Therefore, let anyone who thinks he stands take heed lest he fall...

That’s the first lesson I want us to see!

Take heed brothers and sisters of the temptation of sin!

Peter did NOT heed the words of Jesus!

heed!

Jesus had told Peter that He would deny Him 3 times and Peter still **did NOT heed** that warning of Christ!

You would think that **if you were told** that tomorrow afternoon at 3pm you were going to commit a **colossal/ sin** against God that:

You would do **everything in your power** as a Christian to avoid it!

As a Christian:

You would **NOT** go to that place!

You would **NOT** go with those friends!

You would **NOT** give an inch to the flesh!

You would think that with this amount of warning on the **part of Jesus** Peter surely would have taken heed to this!

But He didn't!

He didn't!

Peter still denies Jesus!

And that gives us something of the nature of sin – that:

Sin is crouching at the door, and it's desire is for you!

But we **must rule over** our sin!

We must **give heed** to this warning!

Be killing sin or sin will be killing you!

We must take every **precaution necessary** to live in the power of the Spirit!

So that's the first lesson I want us to see:

You who think that you stand take heed lest you fall...

Application #2

Second – I think this scene demonstrates:

The extend of just how far a genuine Christian can fall

I'm not sure if you're aware of this but:

Christians are capable of committing all manner of **colossal** and **heinous** sins!

The bible is clear on this friends:

Sin gets at the best of men!

Sin ruins the best of ministries!

Sin can destroy the godliest of people!

We **learnt that recently** this month with a famous Reformed pastor...

Sin has no **limits** – it has no **bounds** – no **restrictions**!

Sin gets into **every heart** and **every soul** of this world!

Noah was a drunk who slept with his daughters!

Abraham was a liar who tried giving up his wife to the authorities!

King David was an adulterous King!

A murderous King!

A lying King!

Every single judge in the book of Judges is corrupt!

The lesson is that:

If Peter – who was the leader of the Apostles – the one whom Christ says *I will build my church* – the one who **saw the glory** of God revealed to him on the Mount – Peter the one who says that he was an eyewitness of His majestic glory:

If Peter **could deny Jesus** to His face and in His presence – then we too can **definitely fall** like him!

Christians (genuine Christians) can fall into even the most heinous & evil sins!

The difference is their repentance

And that's what I want to finish with here this today!

Application #3

Application number #3 – Peter's denial demonstrates that:

The grace of God extends to even the worst of sins

That there is **no sin greater** than the cross of Jesus Christ!

And if there's anything we can learn from the story of Peter's denial it's that:

Jesus doesn't give up on those who fail Him!

*It's the Gospel of **second** chances – and **third** chances and **fourth** chances!*

Jesus promised His father that He would NOT lose one of them!

He's in the Garden promising these things!

And so His prayer in the Garden extends **even to** Peter's denial!

If He's Lord over His own arrest – then He's **certainly Lord** of Peter's denial!

Of His disciples' faith!

Of those who fail Him daily!

And He forgives **even the worst** of His children's sins!

Weathervane

I don't know if you've ever seen those weathervanes with a rooster attached to it!

Weathervanes were put on building to determine which way the wind is blowing!

But did you know that the rooster **first began** on the top of church buildings – because in the day **the steeple** was the tallest place in town – and so Churches started putting weathervanes on steeples!

But the rooster was there first!

Now there's **all sorts of reasons** for this – people will tell you it's because:

The rooster was a mark of vigilance!

The protestants wanted to distance themselves from Rome!

It was a sign of a new day!

But originally it goes back **to this scene** in the Gospel – to this story – with Peter denying Jesus!

It was a **daily reminder** of His grace – a **daily reminder** of His love – a **daily reminder** of the cross of Christ!

That Jesus forgives even the worst of sinners!

The Rooster

I imagine Peter **after this event** – Peter would have **woken up** everyday to the sound of a rooster crow – at his home – in his street – in his neighbourhood!

Every single day Peter would have woken up to be **daily reminded** of this!

Of his sin!

His denial!

His cowardice!

& hypocrisy!

Everyday he would have had this sin thrown in his face because a rooster crowed!

And every single day Peter **would also remember:**

The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ!

And I imagine that Peter everyday would have woken up saying to Jesus:

Thank you for the gospel!

Thank you for the cross!

Thank you for dying in my place!

For NOT giving up on me!

*Thank you for giving me a 3rd, 4th, 5th, 6th chance **to repent** and labour for you!*

Gospel Call

Maybe that's you here this morning friends:

Maybe there's a sin in your life that you feel is the unforgivable sin!

Something you've done!

Or said!

Or thought!

A sin that's brought up in your face **every single day!**

And every single day is **a new day** for you to wake up thanking Jesus Christ for the cross!

To wake up and to say to Jesus:

Thank you for your love!

Thank you for your grace!

Thank you for the Gospel of second – third – and fourth chances!

Conclusion

In Luke's account of Peter's denial it says that:

Jesus catches Peter's eyes

The Lord turned and looked straight at Peter. And then Peter remembered the word the Lord had spoken to him: Before the rooster crows today, you will deny me three times...

And I think that looked communicated to Peter **both:**

1. The depth of his sorrow!
2. And the reality that Jesus still loved Him!

And that's really what I want us to see in our text this morning – this passage reminds us that:

In the face of absolute betrayal, Jesus exemplifies unwavering love, absolute control, and unending grace to the worst of His disciples...

Maybe that's the lesson that you needed to hear today!

John 18:1-27

Discussion Questions

[Read John 18:1-27].

Main Point: *In the face of absolute betrayal, Jesus exemplifies unwavering love, absolute control, and unending grace to the worst of His disciples...*

Q1. Before you begin [Read John 1:29; 3:14-15; 10:14-18; 12:32-33]. What do these verses ultimately conclude? – Why was it the mission of Jesus to go to the cross? [See **John 3:16-17; John 17:1-5**].

Q2. [Read verses 1-11]. Why did Jesus go to a place that He knew Judas would find Him? – What effect did Jesus have on the group that came to arrest Him? – Explain what you think is happening in verse 6.

Q3. [Read verses 9-11]. What do these verses demonstrate about the heart of Christ toward His people? – Why is verse 9 such a comfort? – What does verse 11 demonstrate about sin, salvation, and the wrath of a Holy God?

Q4. [Read verses 12-27]. Who is the main character in these verses? – What is John doing by putting Jesus in between the 3 denials of Peter? – Why is this good news for us?

Q5. What does Peter's denial teach us **about ourselves**? – What does Peter's denial teach us **about sin**? – What does Peter's denial teach us about **the gospel**?

Q6. How do you think non-Christians consider the cross of Christ? – How do these verses help explain away their erroneous notions? – Share any other thoughts you have about this text.