

All right. Let's open our Bibles this morning to Mark 14:43 as we continue with Mark through the gospels.

John Mark wrote this gospel as a result of talking with Peter. Peter had led him to the Lord, had shared with him all that Jesus had done, and it really is the gospel according to Peter in many ways. But Mark was fascinated by the fact that Jesus came to serve. In fact, he doesn't record many sermons of Jesus but lots of His actions - in the morning, at night, when inconvenienced, when heavily resisted - and how the Lord continued to serve and reach out. And so that's his look at Jesus and his calling upon us to follow His example. Be servants of all as well.

Well, we are currently at the last couple of hours before the cross, maybe a half a day or so. The last supper has ended on Thursday night (or Friday morning according to the Jewish calendar), and Judas has been sent to do what he was planning to do - to do it quickly; and he's been sent out, filled with the devil (as John says), ready to do his betraying work. Meanwhile, Jesus had finished speaking with the boys at the dinner, had established communion, and, on the walk over to the Mount of Olives (a mile and a half or so, down and through the Kidron Valley, up to the other side), John 13, 14, 15 and 16 take place. The Lord gives them lots to think about that, again, doesn't fit into Mark's plan to communicate to us Jesus the Servant, but it would be good for you to read, certainly. And Jesus went to a Garden, a Garden that maybe is most significant by the fact that Judas knew where it was. In fact, the Bible tells us that several times. It was a place that he was aware of. Because Jesus didn't go to hide; He went there to be found. The time had come for Him to give His life. Mark wants to be sure you understand two things - He did it willingly, and He had come for that purpose; and, as a Servant, He had come to give His life on behalf of our life.

So last week, beginning in verse 32 for about eleven verses or so, we looked at the agony that Jesus suffered in the Garden. He had taken His boys with Him. Eight of them He had left near the gate to the Garden. Three of them - His kind of inner circle - He had taken with Him further in. He had invited them to watch and pray with Him for an hour, and you remember that every hour they were fast asleep, and the Lord came back to wake them only to kind of encourage them, and

it did them no good. They were sad. It had been a hard night. The things that the Lord was saying were upsetting. And so they didn't stay awake. But Jesus struggled here in His flesh, and Luke is very quick to tell us because he talks about Jesus the Man - how hard it was for Him to face the cross; not the physical aspects, not even the betrayal as much as the ultimate sacrifice of being separated from the Father. Sin separates. And because He wanted you to not be separated, He would take sin and be separated, and it really is the crux of the suffering at Calvary. More than anything else, it's the Psalm 22, "My God, why have You forsaken Me?" And so we spent last week looking at this sacrifice, how the Lord was willing to lay down His life; but He prayed, "Father, if there's any other way, if I don't have to be separated from You," the value that He placed upon His relationship with His Father is pretty important for us to learn from. Because we have that relationship now, too, in Him, and we don't want to just set that aside for any reason that comes along. Jesus staggered at the drinking of the cup because it was God's wrath which caused separation. So He spent hours praying, passionately praying, praying the same prayer, sweating great drops of blood, intense, as He faced the consequences of our sin. And, by the time that we get to this morning, the Lord is prepared, He's ready. He's ready in prayer. He's ready for the struggle. He's ready for the sacrifice. "He would become sin, though He knew no sin, so we could be made right with God" (2 Corinthians 5:21). The lesson's pretty easy at Gethsemane - Jesus was not going to resist arrest. He had come for this purpose. And though He could have walked away, Mark's focus is He doesn't. Our God makes this choice on our behalf. He pays the price. It's the reason that He came. And you can write over these verses - He will not resist. He could have. He did not.

We ended last week with the Lord, after three hours of prayer, saying to the disciples, "Get up. The time has come for Me to be betrayed into the hands of sinners. So arise. Here's My betrayer." Verse 43 tells us, "And immediately, while He was still speaking, Judas, one of the twelve, with a great multitude with swords and clubs, came from the chief priests and the scribes and the elders." We don't know how long Jesus might have let the boys sleep after that third hour - don't have any way of knowing. But we do know that the Lord knew Judas was coming and that he was leading the pack, if you will. And notice the words in verse 23 - he was "one of the twelve." Makes it even worse, doesn't it? He was "one of the twelve," but he wasn't coming alone. He brought, we read here, "a great multitude." John, in chapter 18:3, uses the word "detachment." It's the word for "cohort," if you will, and it is the typical word for a tenth of a Roman legion. So that would suggest

that Judas was able to get from the Romans 600 men - soldiers - to come with him to arrest this Jesus. They would have been staying in the Antonia Fortress, nearby on the Temple Mount. They would have been in town because these feast days tended to be the worst times, and they had the most trouble. And so they came along with the temple police, the priests, the elders, the scribes, Gentiles and Jews. Maybe 1,000 folks showed up - a great multitude, indeed, to arrest one Man. But I don't think Judas underestimated Jesus' ability to escape. He watched Him walk through crowds plenty of times when they wanted to grab Him, and they could not.

But here's Judas, "one of the twelve." We spent a couple of weeks ago on the last supper, talking about how much the Lord had loved His enemy. In fact, He had loved him so much and never given a hint that Judas was different. When Judas went out that night to do what he was told to do quickly, no one suggested, "I'll bet Judas is the betrayer." The Lord loved him; doesn't mean he's not responsible for his actions, but God's heart is that way towards His enemies. So should ours be. There was really no indication of anything. He was a crook, this Judas. He pilfered regularly from the offerings. He had a different outlook of how things (he thought) should go. And he had met earlier in the week with the Sanhedrin, back in Matthew 26. He'd gone out earlier that evening to say, "I know where He's going." And so he does it quickly. But I don't think he knew how Jesus might react - whether He would try to run or resist or needed to be found or fight back or walk on water. He didn't know. Disappear. In any case, he came well-armed; overkill, truthfully, more folks than he would ever needed. And, had he known the heart of Jesus, he wouldn't have had to do any of that. But he didn't know. But you can write - He would not resist arrest.

Now this Garden arrest fell right into the hands of the planners. The Sanhedrin, back in verse 2 of this chapter, had asked about making sure that it could be with as little public notice as possible. Imagine (and if you've been to Israel, you can probably imagine it) if you sit in the Garden of Gethsemane on the Mount of Olives, you have a clear view of the Temple Mount and the gate - about a mile away across this very large valley. There's no way that you can't hear what's coming. In the middle of the night, with a full moon because it's the Passover, 1,000 men crossing the valley, with clanging swords and soldiers stepping and lantern and torches and armor glistening, and the moon - this was no sneak attack. I would think if the Lord wanted to get away, He'd just go, "I hear stuff comin', and I'm gone." But Judas had done all that he could to try to make sure this was going to happen.

We are told, in verse 44, "Now His betrayer had given them" (these men) "a signal, saying, 'Whomever I kiss, He is the One; seize Him and lead Him away safely.' As soon as he had come, immediately he went up to Him and said to Him, 'Rabbi, Rabbi!' and kissed Him. Then they laid their hands on Him and took Him." Judas had established a sign with his posse. "I want to kiss this fella, and He's the One that you want to grab." It amazes me, and maybe you as well, that, after three and a half years of opening the eyes of the blind and raising the dead even, not everyone would know who He was. But Rome took very little interest in things, as far as spirituality is concerned, and he had to point Him out. The majority here were Roman soldiers. Jesus was not one to take public notice. It fascinated me, as a young Christian, to think that Jesus had to be pointed out. I thought Jesus glowed in the dark. I had a little night light in my room, as a kid, where Jesus glowed in the dark. So, I was a little upset that now they had to point Him out. But he betrays Him with a kiss. He doesn't say, "I'll just stand next to Him, I'll do like this or like this or give you the old hand signal." No. He wants to point Him out with this phony expression of love, which is what he's been doing since the beginning. And so he gives Him a kiss. I read one time that the contraction of your lips - because of the enlargement of your heart. That's a kiss. Well that wasn't true for Judas, certainly. I always think of Proverbs 27:6. It says, "Faithful are the wounds of a friend, but the kisses of an enemy are deceitful." Here's the interesting thing. The word "kiss," here, is not the normal one, which is the word "*phileo*," brotherly love, if you will. But it's an intense word that means to kiss fervently, as someone who might kiss a relative that they haven't seen for a long time. Judas was playing this up completely. "Oh, Jesus, I'm so glad to see you again!" He draws near, and he cries out, "Teacher," or, "Rabbi," and Jesus' response (not recorded by Mark but by Matthew and Luke) - Jesus said, "Friend, why are you here? And would you really betray Me with a passionate kiss?" with a kiss that you might give a family member. Now, the Bible doesn't give us inflection. It would be so good to hear the Lord speaking them rather than having just to read them. But I have to believe that His words were from a broken heart because Judas can now show us how low a heart can go, how far can you go away from the Lord. Jesus, on the other hand, shows you how high a heart can rise. He calls him His friend, still letting him know, "Hey, I know everything that you're doing and everything that you've planned." Just the opposite sides of the spectrum. Betrayal is always hurtful, but Jesus knew it was coming, He understood it was coming His way. He recognized it. He told the disciples, "I'm about to be betrayed" well before he got here.

So Jesus didn't only ask us to love our enemies, He showed us how - which is an amazing picture. I want to read to you, and if you want you can flip over with me for just a minute to John 18 - because Mark leaves something out, and I'm not sure why. But I think it's important that we watch this portion of Jesus' interaction with this big crowd. But we'll start in chapter 18 of John, verse 4, where he says this, "Jesus therefore, knowing all things that would come upon Him, went forward and said to them, 'Whom are you seeking?' " The omniscience of God - in charge, He's going to stay that way. In fact, I think as we go through the trials over the next few weeks, one of the things that you walk away saying, "The Lord's in charge. Man plans. They can be as wicked as can be. The Lord's still in charge." Isn't that good to know? Because sometimes I think we feel like, "Gosh, I could do the will of the Lord if it wasn't for so and so." Well, so and so really doesn't matter if the Lord's in charge. And that's certainly the case here.

So Jesus, knowing it was time, knew where He was headed. He stepped forward. He said to these men, "Who are you looking for?" Now He had two purposes for doing so. Number one was He wanted to be sure that the men with Him, the boys with Him, would be let go. This was a mob, these were folks who thought they were in charge. It would have been really easy to just round up all the guys. He wanted to be sure they got away. And second of all, He wants us to be sure that we know that He wasn't going to resist; that He could have, that He had every capability of just walking away. But He didn't. That no one was going to take His life from Him. He was going to lay it down.

Well, we read in verse 5, "They answered Him, 'Jesus of Nazareth.' Jesus said to them, 'I am *He*' " - and hopefully that "He" in your Bible is in italics. "And Judas, who betrayed Him, also stood with them." The words "I am," ("*ego eimi*" in Greek), are used nine different times in John as Jesus uses them to identify with the "I AM" of Exodus 3:14. It is that declaration of God, "I AM WHO I AM. Tell them I AM sent you, Moses." And in every place that He uses it, the people that hear Him understand what He's saying - are angry that He would claim to be God. "*Ego eimi*." And twice He asserts His Person, if you will, and declares by His actions that He is indeed the Lord. Standing next to Him as He makes that declaration, "I AM the Messiah, the Lord God," stands Judas - numbered with the crowd, fitting in with the wrong crowd, a traitor, siding against the great I AM. I can't wait to watch this on video - I know I'm going to get to see it in heaven. Jesus' two words, "*Ego eimi*" had great power. Not only did Jesus know what was coming, but He had power over men. Because we read in verse 6, "Now when He said to them, 'I am *He*,'

they drew back and fell to the ground." See, this is the coolest thing ever, isn't it? A thousand guys flying backwards, landing on their backsides. I imagine that was kind of noisy - all these things hitting the ground and torches flying. Sometimes people talk about being slain in the Spirit. Well, there you go. Slain in the Spirit. I think if I was one of the apostles at this point, I might stand up a little bit more cocky - stick my chin out, maybe. "Don't mess with my Jesus," and, "I'm with Him." But the Lord makes it very clear in His actions, if you will, that He would not be going with him if it wasn't the will of His Father and His own will that He would save us. He did not resist arrest. But He does reinforce what He had said back in John 10:17 earlier. "No man takes it from Me, but I lay it down of Myself. I have power to lay it down, and I have power to take it again. This command I have received from My Father." So with all of the plotting and deception and backroom meetings and betrayals and armaments, everything falls short. Everything is powerless against the Lord whom we serve. Nothing that they've put together - even with 1,000 of them - could face Jesus, an unarmed Jesus, and get away with it. They'd come for a peasant masquerading, they thought, as a Messiah. But they found a Man whose words packed quite a punch.

I would hope, and the Bible says nothing about it, that somebody in that crowd went, "All right. I think I'm done fighting Him, I think I'll join Him. Judas might have made the wrong choice." But we don't have any record of that whatsoever. But as they are picking themselves up off the ground, verse 7 says, "Then He asked them again, 'Whom are you seeking?' " Dazed, maybe slow to get up. "Who are you looking for?" Except this time the word "asked" is imperative. In the first place when the Lord asked who they were looking for, it was just a word in passing; there wasn't a demand attached to it, it isn't written as a demand. But this was a demand. "Look, I asked you who you're looking for." And I'll bet this time not everyone spoke up. Maybe they all braced themselves. (Pastor Jack whispers) "Jesus, Jesus," which I suspect would be the way that they would do that. "We're looking for Him."

Well Jesus, then, in verse 8 said, " 'I have told you *ego eimi*, that I am *He*. Therefore, if you seek Me, let these go their way,' that the saying might be fulfilled which He spoke, 'Of those whom You gave Me I have lost none.' " So Jesus is in charge. Don't you love the fact they came to arrest Him, and He's giving orders? "You have to let these guys go, and I'll go with you." If only the apostles had been in tune enough to hear what was going on. "Let these go." "All right. That's our word from the Lord to hit the trails." But not these guys.

Well go back to Mark again so that we can stay with our passage as much as we can. In verse 46 it says, "Then they laid their hands on Him and took Him. And one of those who stood by drew his sword and struck the servant of the high priest, and cut off his ear." Instead of leaving, these guys now speak up. Luke 22:49 says that one of them said to Jesus, "Do You want us to fight?" John 18:10 will tell us that Peter didn't bother to ask. Luke tells us that the boys only had two swords between them. Peter had one. Whoever asked should they fight had the other. Peter is obviously the zealot who quickly jumps in there, if you will. You can't help but be impressed on the one hand by those guys. I mean, "I'll take 1,000 guys on with a sword." That's not a good idea. I don't care who you are, that's dumb. But there's this great love, remarkable zeal, very little knowledge or insight into the Lord's plans. These are men's men, but they're not brilliant men just yet. Yet pretty soon the Holy Spirit would fall upon them.

So Peter doesn't wait for an answer - John 18:10. He takes a swing at the guy standing closest to Jesus, who happened to be a guy named Malchus, who was a friend of the high priest. And however he got to his ear - I don't know if he tried to swing down at his head, and he missed or he tried to swing horizontally, and he ducked - but he got an ear, he got an earful. That's for sure. And Peter - I think about Peter. He's been sleeping for hours. He's made lots of promises to the Lord. He's done some pretty dumb things. He wipes sleep from his eyes. He eats adrenalin for breakfast. And then, as a fisherman, he thinks he's pretty good with a sword. And he's none of that. He went for the head, he got an ear. Nothing more dangerous than a fisherman with a sword. I can imagine - I don't know - that there was probably this sickening sound of 600 guys pulling their swords from their scabbards. "Oh, you want to fight." In a moment, Peter undoes what Jesus had secured - their safe passage out of that Garden. But back in verse 29, Peter had made some big promises. "I'm not leavin'. Even if these guys bail out, I'm not leavin'." And I think he needed to show Jesus he meant business.

But look how easy it is for us to be out of step with the Lord when we think we're serving Him. Sometimes I think we interpret taking risks as being spiritual. Or manliness as being loyal. But that's not always the case because this is a pretty manly thing to do, pretty risky thing to do. On the other hand, you have to like Peter. I'm not sure I'd like to hang around with him every day. I think you'd end up in jail on some disorderly conduct problem because Peter just doesn't think much. But on the other hand, he's a loyal guy, isn't he? It's just your flesh isn't very good at serving the Lord. We're probably better off listening to what God has to say.

And Peter was going to find out it's much harder to live for the Lord than to die for Him in some blaze of glory, which, I guess, is what he was thinking about doing. Jesus said to Peter (in Luke 22:51), "Just let this go for now." The words that are translated are "permit this even now." But it literally means, "Look, Peter, this isn't the time." And, according to the other gospels, Jesus actually picked up the ear and stuck it back on the guy's head which, again, would have told me that maybe He's the guy to follow. "Let's see. I've landed on my backside. He's reattached an ear. I'm goin' with Him. Judas hasn't shown me nothin'." I don't know if that happened or not. But Luke is the doctor who just, in comments, says He put his ear back on his bloody head, and I'd have to imagine the doctor was pretty impressed.

Now if Peter had just prayed with Jesus for the last three hours, he wouldn't have been in this position at all. Right? The Lord was very clear about how He was going to save and why He had come. Peter talks when he should be listening. He sleeps when he should be praying. Now he's fighting when he should have been surrendering. He's not in a good position. But he's everything that we don't want to be in that regard. He was fighting the wrong enemy with the wrong weapon, and his flesh was involved, and he can't expect to win. So Satan's the enemy, and God's Word is our defense and our offensive weapon, for that matter. Had he just taken hold of that, I think he would have been fine.

But notice that Jesus demonstrates to us very clearly that it's the Word of God which brings life. So Peter's trust was in the wrong place, for now in the wrong place. "Some trust in chariots," the Bible says (Psalm 20:7), "and some in horses; but we will remember the name of the LORD our God." So zeal without knowledge - not very good.

Fortunately Jesus steps in, and He says to Peter (Matthew 26:52), "Just put your sword back in its place. If you're going to live by the sword, you're going to die by the sword. If I wanted to, I could ask My Father, and He would send Me twelve legions of angels. If that's what I wanted, I could get defensive help here. But then how would the Scriptures be fulfilled that must take place?" And so the Lord says, "Peter, it's unprofitable. You live by it, you die by it. It is unnecessary. I can get twelve legions." By the way, that's 72,000 angels. Angels! That means everyone there could have had 6,000 to protect them. "So I can get help.....dude." I'm pretty sure that's in there. And it's pretty unenlightened. It's unprofitable, it's unnecessary, it's unenlightened. "Look, I'm here for this purpose. I'm going willingly. It isn't that we can't fight." In fact, Jesus would say to Pilate, down the

road here this evening (John 18:36), "If I was the king of this world, and I was taking over now, My servants would fight for Me." It's not a lack of zeal or willingness, it's just a lack of purpose.

Well this is the last miracle that Jesus does on the earth, in His body. He takes this ear and sticks it back on the high priest's servant's head. Only John records their names. By then, both of them are dead. Everyone else just makes mention of it without mentioning who. I like the fact that the Lord's last miracle was to correct a mistake of a blundering disciple. Because I can relate to that. I think the Lord has fixed many an ear that I've cut off trying to serve the Lord.

But none of the crowd seems to be moved. Nobody seems to change sides. They are there to arrest Him. They aren't moved by the evidence. But the lesson continues. He just won't resist arrest.

We read in verse 48, "Then Jesus answered and said to them, 'Have you come out, as against a robber, with swords and clubs to take Me? I was daily with you in the temple teaching, and you did not seize Me. But the Scriptures must be fulfilled.' Then they all forsook Him and fled." Jesus, speaking to these men, now kind of goes on the offensive. And He calls into question their tactics because He wanted to reach them. That's why He's come. He didn't come to prove Himself right over them; He came to give life to those who will hear Him. And so, in the middle of the night to arrest Him with so many people - like a common criminal who's on the run, armed to the gills, He doesn't try to justify Himself, but He loves them. And He wants to call attention to their actions to reveal their hearts. Maybe He can get to their souls. And He says to them, "That's pretty cowardly that you'd come out here in the middle of the night. I'm not a crook. I'm not on the run. Every day you could have found Me. Tomorrow morning or yesterday morning or Wednesday morning or Tuesday or Monday. I've been in town all week. You might've heard. I was out sharing with everyone. I'm not in hiding. You could have arrested Me in the temple." But they didn't want to. They wanted to keep it quiet because the crowds loved Jesus, for the most part. But He says to them, "So that the Scriptures might be fulfilled, I've come this way. I know that this is what's happening." In fact, Luke 22:53 records Jesus saying, "You didn't seize Me in the temple. But this is your hour, and this is the hour of the power of darkness." This is Satan's best play. This is hell's greatest move. This is what they'd planned for and hoped for. This was the hour that the enemy would seek to take out the Light of the world by looking for Him with lanterns and torches under the cover of night.

Well, I don't know if they listened. I know that the Lord cares. At the last minute He can get you, He'll try to get you. But the boys got it, and they ran. They were taking Jesus away, and the boys turned and fled - just as back in verse 27 the Lord had said, "You're all going to flee tonight because of Me. You're all going to run because of Me."

I don't know (because we're not told), but I suspect in heaven every angel leaned forward. "Hey, they're touching Jesus. You want us to go help Him?" Don't you think? The Father didn't send them. The order didn't come. He came for this purpose. But I can imagine the angels were not good with this.

Well Mark ends this portion (before he gets to the trials) by saying, verse 51, "Now a certain young man followed Him, having a linen cloth thrown around his naked body. And the young men laid hold of him, and he left the linen cloth and fled from them naked." The young man is not identified in any of the gospels. It is universally believed to be John Mark because he writes this of himself. And so he got away as the first biblical streaker. It is also the reason most commentators believe that the Passover dinner was had at his family's home. If you'll read Acts 12, it is there where the early church met, it is there where you will find John Mark and his family. If that's so, all that means is John Mark followed them out of the house towards the Garden, and being a young guy - maybe 12, 13 years old - he just wanted to (nosy) see what was going on. The fact that he's wearing a linen wrap would suggest that he came from a wealthy family. And if that's the case, he kind of got dressed quickly - just grabbed it and tried to follow them. But he's not going to be able to follow for long. And they try to grab him. He's not part of the group because that's kind of what's in the air, isn't it? Mob mentality. He gets away, but he has to leave his linen wrap behind.

So off Jesus goes. He doesn't cry foul. He doesn't use His power to save Himself. He doesn't argue, if you will, for His case. In fact, He will be declared innocent so quickly that He'll have very little to say. Six trials will follow over the next three or four hours - three of them religious ones, before the religious Jews; three of them before the Roman rulers. Again and again, we will be told He's innocent. And again and again, we'll see Jesus unwilling to take Himself out of the mix. He has come for that purpose. He'll only call things out and speak to the things that are said when it comes to the ability to try to reach those who are trying to kill Him. It is the heart of God's love. That's what He does. And before we end up to the

cross, and by 6:00 in the morning, Pilate will hand Him over to be killed. And by 9:00 a.m., He'll be on the cross.

So here's the lesson - He didn't resist. He didn't resist. He wanted you with Him. He wants you to be forgiven. He wants you to look forward to one day spending eternity with Him. That's the cost He had to pay. But He did it willingly. He's the Servant of all.

Submitted by Maureen Dickson

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