

Bibles???

The Word of God is the Absolute Truth and the Final Authority

This past Wednesday night, I overheard a conversation among a few of the ladies here where they brought up the famous O.J. Simpson car chase.

And I realized how time flies as this took place over 23 years ago.

I remember every detail about the event like if it was yesterday.

I was having a late lunch at a diner watching TV when they showed the breaking news of the chase.

The amount of California Highway Patrol vehicles chasing this white Bronco up the 405 freeway was amazing.

I sat there for an hour watching it at the diner – I couldn't take my eyes off of it, I didn't want to miss a thing. Eventually, I rushed home and watched it there –

It is a moment in history where I am pretty sure that we all have a story to tell of what we were doing the afternoon of the Bronco chase and the arrest of OJ Simpson.

This morning, our text takes us to the most famous arrest in history, the arrest of Jesus Christ at the Garden of Gethsemane 2000 years ago.

There were no cameras to capture all the drama that occurred that day. However, we do have the inspired Word of God that gives us the play by play from four different points of view.

His arrest was unwarranted, unlike OJ – Jesus was innocent of everything that He was accused of.

Let's pray...

[Mar 14:43-52 NKJV] 43 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. 44 Now His betrayer had given them a signal, saying, "Whomever I kiss, He is the One; seize Him and lead [Him] away safely." 45 As soon as he had come, immediately he went up to Him and said to Him, "Rabbi, Rabbi!" and kissed Him. 46 Then they laid their hands on Him and took Him. 47 And one of those who stood by drew his sword and struck the servant of the high priest, and cut off his ear. 48 Then Jesus answered and said to them, "Have you come out, as against a robber, with swords and clubs to take Me? 49 "I was daily with you in the temple teaching, and you did not seize Me. But the Scriptures must be fulfilled." 50 Then they all forsook Him and fled. 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, 52 and he left the linen cloth and fled from them naked.

I want us to turn to the book of Acts 8.

I want to make sure that we grasp what is going on in our text this morning.

[Act 8:26-35 NKJV] 26 Now an angel of the Lord spoke to Philip, saying, "Arise and go toward the south along the road which goes down from Jerusalem to Gaza." This is desert. 27 So he arose and went. And behold, a man of Ethiopia, a eunuch of great authority under Candace the queen of the Ethiopians, who had charge of all her treasury, and had come to Jerusalem to worship, 28 was returning. And sitting in his chariot, he was reading Isaiah the prophet. 29 Then the Spirit said to Philip, "Go near and overtake this chariot." 30 So Philip ran to him, and heard him reading the prophet Isaiah, and said, "Do you understand what you are reading?" 31 And he said, "How can I, unless someone guides me?" And he asked Philip to come up and sit with him. 32 The place in the Scripture which he read was this: "He was led as a sheep to the

slaughter; And as a lamb before its shearer is silent, So He opened not His mouth. 33 In His humiliation His justice was taken away, And who will declare His generation? For His life is taken from the earth." 34 So the eunuch answered Philip and said, "I ask you, of whom does the prophet say this, of himself or of some other man?" 35 Then Philip opened his mouth, and beginning at this Scripture, preached Jesus to him.

As I was working on my study this week, the Lord placed on my heart to emphasize the magnitude and significance of what is occurring in our text this morning.

I want to make sure that like Philip, I preach Jesus to you.

The events that we have been studying over the last few weeks here in the Gospel of Mark – absolutely had to occur.

The betrayal of Jesus by Judas – had to occur

The battle that Jesus endured in the Garden of Gethsemane – knowing that He would willingly have to endure all of man's sin upon His shoulders while He hung on the cross, knowing that at that moment, He would be separated from God, had to occur.

The arrest mentioned in our text today – had to occur.

And in the upcoming weeks, we will see the kangaroo court that is set up by the religious rulers, we will see Jesus beaten and ultimately nailed to the cross – again, all of them had to occur to fulfill the word of God – to demonstrate His love for you and me.

Now, last week, we finished our study as Jesus was praying in the Garden of Gethsemane and you remember that Peter, James and John were having problems staying awake – so we left off with Jesus announcing to them that Judas, His betrayer, was approaching. His arrest was imminent.

[Mar 14:43 NKJV] 43 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.

A few weeks ago, we learned that Judas is the one that initiated the contact with religious rulers to betray Jesus.

They didn't go to him, Judas went to them and one of the other gospels points out that agreed upon payment was 30 pieces of silver – the cost of a lowly slave. That is the price that Judas betrayed Jesus for.

So here in verse 43, we see Judas leading a great multitude to the whereabouts of Jesus.

In John's gospel, he records that Judas led a detachment.

And a detachment consisted of 600 men. This doesn't include the religious rulers and the temple guards that came with them.

Now, why would they show up with over 600 men to arrest Jesus???

There are two reasons.

1. The first reason that they bring the multitude to arrest Jesus is that they wanted to make sure that Jesus didn't get away. Over and over again in the gospels, Jesus had evaded their capture.

When Jesus made the statement that He was greater than Moses – they wanted to stone Him. When Jesus made the statement that He was God – they wanted to stone Him and when Jesus pointed out their hypocrisy and how spiritual bankrupt they were – they wanted to kill Him. However, Jesus would always find a way to escape.

2. The second reason that they bring a multitude to arrest Jesus is that they were worried about the reaction of the people.

Remember, the greatest threat to the religious rulers was that the people would revolt against them and therefore they would lose their position of authority over them. This was what drove the religious rulers to kill Jesus.

[Jhn 11:45-53 NKJV] 45 Then many of the Jews who had come to Mary, and had seen the things Jesus did, believed in Him. 46 But some of them went away to the Pharisees and told them the things Jesus did. 47 Then the chief priests and the Pharisees gathered a council and said, "What shall we do? For this Man works many signs. 48 "If we let Him alone like this, everyone will believe in Him, and the Romans will come and take away both our place and nation." 49 And one of them, Caiaphas, being high priest that year, said to them, "You know nothing at all, 50 "nor do you consider that it is expedient for us that one man should die for the people, and not that the whole

nation should perish." 51 Now this he did not say on his own [authority]; but being high priest that year he prophesied that Jesus would die for the nation, 52 and not for that nation only, but also that He would gather together in one the children of God who were scattered abroad. 53 Then, from that day on, they plotted to put Him to death.

The detachment came to arrest Jesus with swords and clubs.

- "Swords" were the weapons of the Roman soldiers who were dispatched to arrest Jesus.
- "Clubs" were the weapons that the Temple police were allowed, by Rome, to carry.

"The chief priests and the scribes and the elders" meant this was an officially sanctioned action by the Jewish ruling council, the Sanhedrin. Think of them as issuing the arrest warrant that was being served on Jesus Christ.

[Mar 14:44 NKJV] 44 Now His betrayer had given them a signal, saying, "Whomever I kiss, He is the One; seize Him and lead [Him] away safely."

I am pretty sure that we have all seen movies or TV programs that depict an undercover operative.

There's always some kind of signal - a key word or phrase, or some type of gesture.

And the gesture that was agreed upon by Judas and the religious rulers was that Judas would kiss Jesus therefore identifying to everyone who Jesus was.

It was customary for a disciple to greet his teacher with a kiss. It could be on the cheek, or the forehead, or on the hand.

It would be natural for Judas, who left during dinner and had been gone for several hours, to return and greet Jesus with a kiss.

Notice that Judas didn't tell the multitudes that Jesus was the one with the halo over His head or that He was the one that was glowing, Jesus looked like the other 12 disciples.

He didn't have blue eyes or speak with a British accent.

Turn with me to Isaiah 53,

This is a chapter we are going to be looking at over and over again for the next few Sundays as it speaks of the suffering servant.

Look at verse 2. I am going to be reading from the NLT.

[Isa 53:2 NLT] 2 My servant grew up in the LORD's presence like a tender green shoot, like a root in dry ground. There was nothing beautiful or majestic about his appearance, nothing to attract us to him.

I asked you to make a note of the word "safely" that Judas uses at the end of verse 44.

The Greek word that is used would be better translated as “securely”, as to not be able to escape.

You see, Judas isn’t concerned for the safety of Jesus – he is concerned that Jesus will once again elude being captured.

[Mar 14:45 NKJV] 45 As soon as he had come, immediately he went up to Him and said to Him, "Rabbi, Rabbi!" and kissed Him.

Now, Matthew adds something very interesting to this account.

You don’t have to turn there – I will go ahead and read it there.

Make a note of the scripture reference though.

[Mat 26:49-50 NKJV] 49 Immediately he went up to Jesus and said, "Greetings, Rabbi!" and kissed Him. 50 But Jesus said to him, "Friend, why have you come?" Then they came and laid hands on Jesus and took Him.

In Matthews account, it appears that Jesus is giving Judas one last opportunity to repent for what he is doing?

The word Rabbi means teacher. And for three years, Judas had followed Jesus, and sat under His teaching.

He had even performed signs and wonders in Jesus' Name.

But he never believed; he never was saved.

More importantly Judas never recognized Jesus as Lord.

So far, Judas' plan has gone forth without a hitch. Jesus is in custody. Well, all of that is about to change.

[Mar 14:47 NKJV] 47 And one of those who stood by drew his sword and struck the servant of the high priest, and cut off his ear.

In John gospel, he actually identifies who this individual is as Peter.

Peter, the one who earlier had professed that he was the exception among the disciples and he was never going to stumble before Jesus, takes out his sword and strikes those that arrested Jesus right? He takes on the Roman soldiers right? Of course not.

There were 600 Roman soldiers there armed with swords and countless other Temple guards and Peter strikes the lowly servant of the high priest - probably the smallest dude that was there at the scene.

It has been said that Peter was either the most skillful swordsmen among his peers as he was able to cut off the ear of the servant or he was the most inept swordsmen as he missed the head he was aiming for.

The gospel of John identifies the servant as Malchus – while Luke tells us in his gospel that Jesus heals Malchus' ear – probably in an effort to prevent Peter from being arrested.

I found it interesting that the word that the Greek word that is used here for small sword is the same word that we find referring to the word of God in the Book of Hebrews.

[Heb 4:12 NKJV] 12 For the word of God [is] living and powerful, and sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing even to the division of soul and spirit, and of joints and marrow, and is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart.

The question that we as believers need to ask ourselves, is how do we use our swords when we attempt to witness to a nonbeliever.

Do we simply cut people down – like Peter

Some people like to use the Scriptures to pound people over the head.

When you're done talking with them, you will know exactly why you are a bad person, why you are wrong, why you are stupid, with twenty-five different bible verse references.

Don't misunderstand me. God's Word will certainly show us the sin in our lives. But it will also bring the healing we need.

Some people will use God's word like a surgeon slicing a person open and declaring, "There's the cancer!" and then walk out of the room.

However church, God's desire is not just to expose the cancer, but to remove it and suture up the wound.

And that is done by sharing the grace and truth of Jesus Christ.

The problem with simply cutting people down is that eventually they no longer have ears to hear what the Spirit is saying because we have cut them off.

[Mar 14:48-49 NKJV] 48 Then Jesus answered and said to them, "Have you come out, as against a robber, with swords and clubs to take Me? 49 "I was daily with you in the temple teaching, and you did not seize Me. But the Scriptures must be fulfilled."

Jesus is offering no resistance to their attempts in arresting Him.

In fact, in Matthews account – after Jesus rebukes Peter for cutting Malchus' ear off, Jesus makes the following statement,

[Mat 26:53 NKJV] 53 "Or do you think that I cannot now pray to My Father, and He will provide Me with more than twelve legions of angels?"

A legion is a military term that would represent 6000. You might remember the demon possessed individual who identified himself as Legion because he had 6000 demons residing within him.

So, Jesus is saying that if He wants to, He would have 72,000 angels at His disposal to go against the multitude that came to arrest Him in the Garden of Gethsemane.

And to give you an idea of the power that Jesus had at His disposal, in the book of Isaiah 37:36 – write it down, one angel obliterated 185,000 Assyrians in one night.

And here Jesus had at His disposal 72,000.

Jesus didn't need Peter and his small sword to do the fighting – He was willfully being obedient to the will of God, that the scriptures might be fulfilled.

Jesus fulfilled at least 108 prophecies.

And we see one of those fulfilled in the very next verse.

[Mar 14:50 NKJV] 50 Then they all forsook Him and fled.

Just a few hours earlier, Jesus had explained to the eleven disciples that they were all going to stumble – fulfilling Zech 13:7, Seeing Jesus willfully giving Himself up without a fight shocked the disciples.

The Messiah that they envisioned themselves ruling with is now a prisoner and this leads each one of them to abandon Him.

[Mar 14:51-52 NKJV] 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, 52 and he left the linen cloth and fled from them naked.

Church history along with many theologians believe that this young man mentioned here in verse 51 and 52 is no other than Mark.

And there are many reasons for this.

This event is only recorded in the gospel of Mark.

The age points to the young man being Mark.

Many people believe that the upper room where Jesus and His disciples partook of the Passover was actually the house that belonged to mother of Mark – who was a follower of Jesus.

The belief is that Judas returns with the multitude to the Upper room to arrest Jesus and Mark hastily runs out to the Garden of Gethsemane to warn Jesus and His disciples.

Could it have been Mark? Of course –

Is it worth arguing over? No.

However, I did find an interesting tidbit for you guys.

And I want to end our study with it.

Turn to chapter 16 – I had never caught this until yesterday.

[Mar 16:1-8 NKJV] 1 Now when the Sabbath was past, Mary Magdalene, Mary [the mother] of James, and Salome bought

spices, that they might come and anoint Him. 2 Very early in the morning, on the first [day] of the week, they came to the tomb when the sun had risen. 3 And they said among themselves, "Who will roll away the stone from the door of the tomb for us?" 4 But when they looked up, they saw that the stone had been rolled away--for it was very large. 5 And entering the tomb, they saw a **young man clothed in a long white robe** sitting on the right side; and they were alarmed. 6 But he said to them, "Do not be alarmed. You seek Jesus of Nazareth, who was crucified. He is risen! He is not here. See the place where they laid Him. 7 "But go, tell His disciples--and Peter--that He is going before you into Galilee; there you will see Him, as He said to you." 8 So they went out quickly and fled from the tomb, for they trembled and were amazed. And they said nothing to anyone, for they were afraid.

The Greek word to describe the young man that ran away naked in the Garden of Gethsemane is the same word that is for the young man mentioned here in Chapter 16.

Now, the other gospels tell us that it was an angel in the tomb – however, I believe that Mark was pointing to himself by stating that before the death of Jesus Christ upon the cross, he was naked. However, after Jesus' death and resurrection, the same young man is no longer naked but clothed in righteousness by the work of Jesus upon the cross.

Church,

He was supposed to die. He had to die. He died for us. He died for our sins. He paid for our sins. He paid a debt He didn't owe because we owed a debt we couldn't pay.

That is the love of God.

Amen.

Let's pray...

To Receive Christ do the following:

Admit, "I am a sinner."

Confess and be willing to turn from your sin.

Believe, by faith that Jesus Christ died for you on the cross.

Receive, through prayer, Jesus Christ into your heart and receive eternal life.

Dear Lord Jesus,

I know that I am a sinner and need Your forgiveness. I believe that You died on the cross for my sins. Please forgive me for my sins and cleanse me by Your blood. I accept You by faith as my

personal Lord and Savior. Give me a thirst for Your Word and Help me to follow You all of my days. In Jesus' name I pray, Amen.

