

## 24 Hours - Arrest of Jesus

*24 Hours*

By Dr. Jeff Meyers

**Bible Text:** John 18:1-11

**Preached on:** Sunday, January 29, 2012

Today we continue in a sermon series, a walk through the four gospels—Matthew, Mark, Luke and John—a very small time period as far as chronology is concerned, but an unbelievably impactful period of time, 24 hours that changed the world.

We begin with what we know as the Passover meal or the Last Supper where Jesus knelt down with a basin of water and a towel and He washed the feet of the apostles. Today we come to the third and final week in the Garden of Gethsemane. We have had Jesus with the famous prayer life where three times He falls upon His face and says, “Father, not my will, but yours be done.” Last week we dealt in particular with the person of Judas, the individual who would personally betray the Lord. And today we are going to exit the Garden of Gethsemane. Today the actual arrest of Jesus is going to take place. And it is one of those passages of Scripture that regardless of our familiarity with Scripture, we somewhat kind of know. We know there was a bunch of people there who disagreed with Jesus and they brought all kinds of weapons and it was in the middle of the night and basically chaos ensued.

And that is kind of the thing I want you to understand before we read John chapter 18. This was a life of total chaos for a very brief period of time. For you have soldiers running all around, all kinds of weapons and torches and lanterns. You have the apostles that were there. Obviously Judas is there on the wrong side, but the other 11. They began to flee in all directions. There is shouting, yelling, hollering, screaming, all kinds of craziness except in one very particular area, the person of Jesus. The calm in the midst of the storm that is around Him.

Let me ask you a personal question. Do you feel like your life is a storm? Do you feel that all around you is just utter chaos and utter dysfunction or whatever word that you want to put. What we are going to discover today is that there are three things that Jesus showed us that He is in our life and can be in our life; and I want to address these subject matters before we get to chapter 18 of the book of John. Jesus is and can be our Deliverer, our Healer and our Savior.

Now let me explore those terms and make them very pragmatic for today. When I say that he is our Deliverer, you know, that word deliverance is something that most old fashioned Baptists get kind of scared of. They say, “What does that actually mean?”

Let me give you a definition of deliver, to take from one place to another. This week Amazon.com delivered a book from a warehouse somewhere else to my house. To deliver means to take from one place to another.

Let me ask you a question. How many would say: I need some deliverance in life? I need out of this situation. I need out of this circumstance. I need this to change from A to B.

We are going to find out in a moment Jesus can be our Deliverer. But he can also be our Healer. Now when we talk about healing so many times I think we pigeon hole that word into just physical circumstances, the medical field, for lack of better terms. But if we define healing, really in a biblical sense, it means to solve.

Now you can solve a medical issue with physical healing, we see in the life and the ministry of Jesus He healed people's physical bodies. He also healed their relationships. He healed their past. He healed their future. So when we talk about that Jesus is a healer, it is beyond just what we know as a hospital and a medical condition. And ultimately He is our Savior. To be saved is to be taken out of something.

Let me ask you a question. How many of us who recognize that Jesus is our Savior, recognize that we are sinners in need of salvation and forgiveness, have still tripped upon this thing called life? Let me ask you. "How many of you need forgiveness in an area of life, need forgiveness for a fault, need forgiveness in an area or need the ability to forgive those who have faulted you?"

You see, we are going to see in a moment in the midst of the Garden of Gethsemane is that everybody who needed deliverance, everybody who needed healing, everybody who needed salvation is running around chaotically. And the only person who can provide it is the one who peacefully stands in the midst.

In John chapter 18 beginning in verse one... the first verse is actually taking them from the last supper to the garden. It says:

When Jesus had spoken these words, he went forth with his disciples over the brook Cedron, where was a garden, into the which he entered, and his disciples. And Judas also, which betrayed him, knew the place: for Jesus oftentimes resorted thither with his disciples. Judas then, having received a band of men and officers from the chief priests and Pharisees, cometh thither with lanterns and torches and weapons. Jesus therefore, knowing all things that should come upon him, went forth, and said unto them, Whom seek ye? They answered him, Jesus of Nazareth. Jesus saith unto them, I am he. And Judas also, which betrayed him, stood with them. As soon then as he had said unto them, I am he, they went backward, and fell to the ground. Then asked he them again, Whom seek ye? And they said, Jesus of Nazareth. Jesus answered, I have told you that I am he: if therefore ye seek me, let these go their way: That the saying might be fulfilled, which he spake, Of them which thou gavest me have I lost none. Then Simon Peter having a sword drew it, and smote the high priest's servant, and cut off his right ear. The servant's name was Malchus. Then

said Jesus unto Peter, Put up thy sword into the sheath: the cup which my Father hath given me, shall I not drink it?<sup>1</sup>

The chronology of the passage of Scripture that I just read with you is roughly 10 to 15 minutes of, at most, utter, sheer chaos. And in the midst Jesus demonstrates that He is a deliverer, He is a healer and He is a Savior.

So just breaking those down very simply today, let's begin with the first, that Jesus is a deliverer. And, as I told you a moment ago, delivery is to take from one place to another.

Now to deliver something you have to have the power or the ability to do so. To say you can and do not deliver is a false promise. Yet Jesus displays here is that He has the power to deliver. And for you to understand this, I want you to look at verse three, Judas having a band of men with him.

You say, "Well, what is a band of men? How many people did that actually encompass?" We discover there are two different groups of people in the Garden of Gethsemane that evening. There are a group of Roman soldiers and there is a group of higher level Jewish officials for lack of better terms. It says he specifically came with a band. Let me break that down for you numerically.

In the book of Acts 10:1 one there is a man by the name of Cornelius. It says that he is a God-fearing man, one who even gave his alms to God. Literally, his financial resources. He is praying one day that the Lord will send him the truth of the gospel and then Peter has this famous vision. Remember his vision on the top of the house, three times that the sheet is lowered down and the Lord says, "Don't call unclean what I have called clean. Go to that Gentile. Go to that Italian man and speak the truth to him."

You say, "Well, what does that have to do with this?" Well, in verse one of chapter 10 of the book of Acts it says: "There was a certain man in Caesarea called Cornelius, a centurion of the band called the Italian band."<sup>2</sup>

A band, according to first century Italian military strategy, had centurions in it and was made up about 80 men under each centurion. If you had six centurions you would have had about 480 men. Traditionally speaking, that is the number of people that would have been there in the Garden of Gethsemane, 500 soldiers, just of the Roman descent, 500 men with lanterns and torches and swords.

You say, "Well, a band is only about 480, because they contain six centurions of 80 each. That is 480. How do you get 500?"

Notice it says that he also had the chief priests and the Pharisees. So give or take, 500 people coming to arrest Jesus Christ.

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<sup>1</sup> John 18:1-11.

<sup>2</sup> Acts 10:1.

Oh, that is just barely the tip of the iceberg of understanding the power, because then we have got to go into verse six. Actually verse five and six. It says:

They answered him, Jesus of Nazareth. Jesus saith unto them, I am he.  
And Judas also, which betrayed him, stood with them. As soon then as he had said unto them, I am he, they went backward, and fell to the ground.<sup>3</sup>

Let me give you the picture here. They said, “We are looking for Jesus of Nazareth.”

He said, “I am.” And 500 of them, less than the number that are in this room, but a significant number of people, literally fell backwards. The amazing thing to me is they got up and went after him again.

Now that is a sermon for a different day. We are not even going to address the evident stupidity of humanity. Okay? But we are grasping the power that he displayed.

Now I want you to notice in this power He said, (look at your Bibles), “I am *He*.”

Those of you, as myself, have a King James Bible in your hand you will notice that the word “he” is in italics. That means it is not a part of the original, so to speak. In other words, when they translated from Greek into English it just said, “I am.” Can you think of another very famous biblical statement that encompasses that?

In the book of Exodus chapter three Moses has been running from his past. He needed a little deliverance from that murder, didn't he? He needed a little healing in his life. He needed some salvation in his life for 40 years. He is wandering the desert working for his father-in-law. He is out on the backside of nowhere when all of a sudden he sees a bush that is on fire, but it is not being consumed. He addresses the bush and it speaks to him and he finds out it is the Lord talking. The Lord says, “Take off your shoes. You are on Holy ground.”

And He begins to share with Moses that even though you have got a messed up, jacked up past, you are going to go back and deliver, ha, ha, deliver and heal my people from Pharaoh and the Egyptians.

He argues with the Lord, as we all would have, too. And in the process of doing that he ends up with this great excuse: Okay, God, if I am going to do this, who do I say sent me? And the famous statement is, “I am that I am not that I was, not I will be, but I am.”

Do you realize that the power to deliver this situation here did not come with swords, did not come with numbers? Literally the name of the Lord thrusts them back.

That is why in the book of Jude verse nine we have the story of the archangel Michael

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<sup>3</sup> John 18:5-6.

who is arguing and fighting with Satan. And literally the person, the entity of Satan when Michael comes against him (he) steps back and says, "The Lord rebuke you."

By the way, if you read Deuteronomy chapter 34 Michael got what he was after.

The power that is possessed here in this scenario is simply just in saying, "I am."

But here is the fascinating thing to me. And for those of you who have Matthew chapter 26 open, turn back over there to Matthew 26 verse 53. We are going to get a little bit out of chronological order here. In a moment we are going to deal with this servant whose ear is taken off. His name is Malchus. But after Peter does that, Jesus makes a statement to him that I think we need to understand in light of deliverance. Notice what he says in verse 53 of Matthew chapter 26. "Am I not able to call 12 legions of angels?"

I know some of you have heard songs and choral pieces that are based on this famous verse. A legion in Roman army or military terms once again is anywhere from two to six thousand. Now that definitely would out number the soldiers, but it is even greater. Jesus just said, "I am," and they fell back. What if when we talk about deliverance, what if Jesus had unloaded all the firepower of just Matthew 26:53? Notice he limits it.

By the way, the book of Hebrews says that the angels are innumerable, meaning we couldn't count them if we wanted to. He says, "How about just 12 legions of them?"

Let's take the smaller of the number, 2000. That would be 24,000 angelic beings. It would outnumber them literally 48 to one. However, in the book of Isaiah 37:36 it says an angel of the Lord descends on the Assyrians at night and kills 185,000 men in one night. You will not find a statue of that in Hallmark. I promise you. That being said, a legion is 2000, 24,000 angelic beings multiplied times 185,000 men in one night, roughly speaking, give or take 10,000 or so, the Lord was saying in the snap of a finger I can annihilate 4.4 billion people. The population of the world wasn't even at a billion at that point.

What if you took the high number? What if it was 6000 in a legion, 72,000 angelic beings? Then the number is roughly 13.3 billion, almost twice the number of people on this planet. Do you realize that when it comes to deliverance, when it comes to the attacks of this world, Jesus is saying, with the snap of my finger and the sound of my name I can eliminate this world two times over. Folks, that is power.

But then we get to verse eight of John 18 when he says, again, "Whom do you seek?" They say, "Jesus of Nazareth." He said, "I am."

So why did they not fall back again? Why did this not become like some great video game where they come forward, he knocks them down, come forward, knock them down, just kind of recurring in manner.

And I think the thing we need to address when it comes to deliverance is not just the fact that He has the power to deliver, but the possibility of deliverance. Why is this that sometimes we are not taken out of a circumstance? Why is it sometimes we are not completely delivered? What if Jesus had called on those legion of angels? We would be in a mess.

See, often times what we want in life is we want what is called helicopter faith. Helicopter faith is whenever there is a problem in life, we want the Lord to come pull us out of it, have no smell of smoke whatsoever, and we are just, “delivered.”

The glory of God comes not from being taken out of, but going through the situation. Had the Lord knocked them back down again, then would the trial with Caiaphas have taken place? Would the cross have taken place? We can speculate and postulate all day long, but the truth of the matter is the possibility thereof. And I want to remind you of two weeks ago when the first week in the Garden of Gethsemane, Matthew chapter 26, when Jesus goes and falls on his face away from Peter, James and John, he prayed very uniquely. He said, “Father, not my will, but yours. If it be possible, take this cup from me.”

Now He understood what was about to take place. But have you ever thought about those words, “If it be possible?” Let me change how you pray. If it be possible, take me out of this circumstance. If it be possible, remove this problem from my life. If it be possible...

Now we are going to explore that in a moment when we talk about Jesus as a healer. Listen, Jesus has the power to deliver you from anything. The question is—and this is the focus of the next point here—is who ultimately gets the credit and the glory?

Folks, because often times we begin to straighten up our coat and go, “Well, didn’t I do a good job there?”

Which brings us to number two. Jesus as healer. Verse 10 of this passage of Scripture. It says:

“Then Simon Peter having a sword drew it, and smote the high priest’s servant, and cut off his right ear. The servant’s name was Malchus.”<sup>4</sup>

Now when we deal with Jesus as a healer, I mentioned to you earlier, we typically focus on the medical aspects and we have a medical condition here: the ability for Jesus to heal.

Now I want to explore this whole ear being cut off situation and I know I probably could go way too long talking about this, but as the dad of three little boys, this fascinates me. I have never once taken a fencing course. I have never owned a “sword” in my life. I never served a day, though I incredibly respect the military, I have never served in the military, yet my boys from the time they got out of diapers you put a stick in their hand it is a

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<sup>4</sup> John 18:10.

sword. And they are cutting.... they don't even have to have anything in front of them. They will just fight the air. Okay?

Let me tell you something I have noticed about little boys with sticks, slash, swords in their hands. Is they don't go and cut to use a time clock analogy, they don't cut from 12 to six. They never go anything and forget the motion. They don't just slash down. Do you know instinctly my little boys know that you take a sword and you either cut of the head or you go for the heart. I did not teach them that. And they learned it before they went to public school. It is somewhere bred within our sinful nature, ok?

You say, "Well, how did he cut his ear off then?"

Because Peter obviously would have known what he was doing. I realize he was a fisherman by trade, but he was rough. Now we could fight, argue, scream and yell and do all the little incidentals there about, well, if he went straight across then it would have hit his ear. Then it would have hit, you know, the mail or the, you know, the armor that he would have had on.

Let me give you an idea what I think was happening. Peter was ticked. Peter was upset. Peter had a temper. Last time I checked people with tempers go for the jugular, right? I don't think he was going for the ear. I think he was going for the neck. That being said, if he had come with a three to nine o'clock swipe, Malchus, based on his right ear cut off in my opinion went... and ducked.

Now we get to the ability here. What did he do? It said he cut off his right ear. I cannot imagine. There are very few things in life that I can imagine would have been more gruesome and more painful than that. The sharp edge of a sword literally taking from the bottom of the jaw and all the way to the top is, well, just taking it off.

Let me share with you just the medical scenario here. If you have ever received any kind of wound, "above the shoulders," it is profuse bleeding. They are in the middle of the night. They did not have medical clinics in Jerusalem that stayed open 24 hours. Not only do we have profuse bleeding, but even if they had gotten it to stop, even if they had addressed it medically, the opportunity for infection and gangrene and other things is so profuse. And yet even though it is not particular in the gospel of John, in the other three it says that Jesus reached down and healed him.

Now I want to be real honest with you. I don't know exactly what happened in the Garden of Gethsemane. We are not given the particulars. But the Bible does not say that Jesus picked up the ear and slapped it back on. It says He touched him and healed him. Now could he have picked up the ear? Sure, he could have. Or he could have just touched him and a new one... I don't know how exactly it happened, but we know that it did.

Let me tell you something. If Jesus could put an ear back on, then he can clean up.

He can solve cancer. He can put limbs back in order. Listen. There is nothing he cannot do. I think that is why we have the miracles we have, arms that are halved being made whole.

Do you know there are three men who were blind in the gospel that Jesus healed, but he healed them all three in different ways. One of them he just spoke and it happened. One of them he spit and one of them he got mud. The point was he had the ability to do so, which leads to a very important question for your life and mine. Why does there sometimes seem to be the absence of healing? Have you ever wondered that? Why does person A see deliverance and healing and person B doesn't? Why Malchus? Why not somebody else?

And I think that is why the name Malchus is given to us. Any time the Bible gives us a proper name, it is almost as if all alarms are on... pay attention to this. Notice who Malchus was. The high priest's servant. He was not a part of the Roman army. He was not a part of the band that was related to Rome. Where does Jesus go... And, by the way, we are going to talk about this next week when Peter denies him three times before the cock crowing three times, where does he go? To the high priest's house.

Let me ask you an honest question. If you were Caiaphas and it was your life and you got woken up in the middle of the night by someone who had been taken in captivity like this and your right hand man, a guy whom the Bible names, has suffered an almost terminal, if not possibly terminal, situation, where would your focus be?

Malchus. Oh, I am sure Jesus would have been arrested. I am sure. But do you understand what Jesus did by healing Malchus: not only did He demonstrate He had the ability to do so, but He demonstrated something that we have got to grasp, that in this evening in the Garden of Gethsemane, nobody was going to get the attention but Him. Nobody was going to receive honor but Him. Nobody was going to get glory but Him, which leads to a very important thing.

So why do we not always experience healing? Number one, we are in fallen, sinful bodies and the Bible says we are going to die. The Lord does heal, but we will all die. Malchus died one day, guys. It happens.

You know, sometimes, let me take the glass half empty and then the glass half full. The glass half empty sometimes the Lord doesn't heal us because we won't give Him glory for it.

You know, the Lord... and this is an old Texas phrase. Do you know He rides second saddle to nobody? And if we have Him in the second saddle, do not expect Him to display His abilities for us.

You say, "Well, what about those who have faith? What about those just like this last week who called upon the, "elders" of the church and said, "There is someone in our



family who is not doing well. Will you gather around? Will you pray for them like James chapter five does?”

And, by the way, some of you have fallen for the lie that you are not well because you don't have enough faith. That is a crock of bad theology, because according to James chapter five it is the people praying for the person whose faith is on display, whoever is wearing the very bad suit throwing people out of wheelchairs on stage, it is his faith at stake, not yours. It says in James chapter five those who pray, their faith will heal that person. You say, “But we gathered them.”

Why not? Let me ask you a question. What would have been different if all of the focus would have been on Malchus that night? The focus wasn't on Malchus. The focus was on Jesus. And I just believe—and you may disagree with me, but I just believe that sometimes we are not healed. Sometimes our arteries are not cleaned out. Sometimes the cancer does not go into remission. Sometimes whatever we are dealing with is not healed because by our (listen to me) by our staying faithful to the Lord in the midst of the adversity, he receives more glory than if we had been miraculously healed.

See, we need to understand it is not about His ability to do it. He can, folks. It is about the honor and the glory and the recognition that He will receive.

I know time is short, but that is why I have a friend of mine who was on a trip some years ago just doing what normal people do on vacation suffered a virus that settled in his back and to this day he is wheelchair bound. Was he in defiance to the Lord? Was he in rebellion to God? No. Did he call the elders together to pray that he would be healed? Absolutely yes. Twenty plus years later he is still in that wheelchair.

You say, “Why and how?” I am going to tell you why, because every person who walks into his accounting firm and begins to feel sorry for him, he says, “Don't you feel sorry for me. Look to Jesus.” He said, “I have had more opportunities to share Jesus in the wheelchair than I ever did with two feet on the ground.”

Sometimes what we like to see and is happening as far as healing is concerned isn't because we are bad, isn't because we are sinful and the Lord doesn't care, it is because the Lord is going to receive honor and glory in a means that we never thought possible. He was deliverer. He was healer in this incident. But most importantly he is and was Savior.

Now I want you to notice verse 11. “Then said Jesus unto Peter, Put up thy sword.”<sup>5</sup>

Have you ever imagined how Jesus said that, by the way? I mean, this is the same Peter who he said at one point, “You are slow of faith, brother.” This is the same Peter that one day—and I am going to paraphrase this. He said, “You don't have a clue what you are doing.” He just put up the sword. And then the other gospels record that he knelt down and healed Malchus' ear. He says,

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<sup>5</sup> John 18:11.

“Put up thy sword into the sheath: the cup which my Father hath given me, shall I not drink it?”<sup>6</sup>

Have you ever thought about the magnitude of salvation? I mean the breadth and the width my Father gave it.

In other words, the religious leaders weren't looking for salvation. The Romans weren't looking for salvation. Not even the apostles were looking for salvation. He said, “This problem of sin in our lives is of such a great magnitude the Father in heaven said we have to address this.” That is the magnitude of our need for salvation.

And I was sharing with some people just a few moments ago. I think one of the biggest problems that I am seeing at the beginning of this year is this. As situations get a little bit better, as scenarios take up a little bit in our lives, we begin to get this false thinking that somehow we can solve life's issues.

You see, one of the great things about bad things in our life is we realize we are completely dependent upon God. And He says, “The magnitude of salvation...”

My Father has given this.

Do you realize that no matter how good, how smart, how wonderful, how wealthy you are, the Father in heaven looking down sees you as one who needs salvation, one who needs forgiveness, one who needs to have all the wrongs made right. That is the magnitude of sin. You will never be good enough and you have never been so bad you can't be saved. That is the magnitude.

Jesus said, “I could deliver myself. I could heal any and all, but I have to go to the cross. If I don't go to the cross then this magnificent problem known as sin, this huge problem will pervade.”

Which brings us to the means. “Shall I not drink it?”<sup>7</sup>

I am going to take you back a couple of years in time, the book of Matthew chapter 16. Jesus was in Caesarea Philippi where the Jordan River technically begins. It was a place where all the religions of the world would gather together. It was a place where the pagans would literally sacrifice babies to their gods. It was a place where philosophers would gather around and postulate the great deep thinkings of life.

Jesus gathered the twelve apostles together. He said, “Who do you say that I am?”

They said, “Well, some say you are John the Baptist. Some say you are Jeremiah. Some say you are one of the prophets.” He says, “Who do you say that I am?”

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<sup>6</sup> Ibid.

<sup>7</sup> Ibid.

And this Simon Peter, the same guy who takes the sword out of his sheath and he cuts Malchus' ear off says, "You are the Christ, the Son of the living God."

What he was saying is, "I am a sinful human being and you can save me. I am messed up and you can forgive me. My eternity is in your hands, Jesus."

He says, "Simon Peter, flesh and blood has not conferred this upon you, but my Father which is in heaven. Upon this, this statement, I will build my church."

He goes on and on and on. And then Jesus begins to tell them that He is going to go to the cross and be crucified for the sins of humanity. And what does Simon Peter do? He opens his big mouth again and says, "Not on my watch. They are not going to do that to you." What does the Lord say to him? "Get behind me Satan."

Now, folks, that is a pretty strong comment, right there. He didn't say, "Peter, you just don't get it." He didn't say, "Peter, could you have a seat right here? We need to have a talk. We need to discuss this." He said, "No, no."

Because even though Peter wanted the product, he didn't want the means. Salvation does not come from, "getting better." Salvation does not come by getting an education. Salvation does not come by, "cleaning up our act." Salvation can only come through a cross. It can only come from a sinless Savior sacrificing himself for sinful humanity. This very last statement in verse 11 of John 18: "Shall I not drink it?"<sup>8</sup>

It is almost as if he is telling Peter, "Two years ago I told you this was going to happen. I have been telling you regularly. You go and cut off a guy's ear. I heal it. Peter, I am going to the cross."

And yet it would be earlier in the gospel of John, chapter 10, where Jesus made this stark statement, nobody is able to take His life lest He give it.

The final statement on the cross Jesus would say, "Father into your hands I commend my spirit."

The means of salvation, the means of healing, the means of deliverance, can only come through a cross. Any other means is just another mechanism that humanity has come up with to make us feel better about ourselves.

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<sup>8</sup> John 18:11.