

The Man Who Is God

“The Sovereign Lord, The Depravity of Man”

VPB 03/11/12

Mt. 26:46-56 & John 18:1-11
(Also Luke and Mark’s accounts)

***Sermon Point:** To understand that although Jesus was about to suffer the brutality of man against Him that He was the one in control of the events of that night and not His captors. That God’s plan of salvation was being fulfilled in the events. And although every person here was responsible for their actions because they wanted to be doing what they were doing, God’s eternal plan was taking place.*

Now they had their chance to finally get their hands on Him and rid themselves of Him for good.

We pick up this week where we left off last time with Judas having betrayed Jesus with the very public indignity of the kisses and a loud salutation of “Hail Rabbi”. Guaranteeing that all present heard his address and the focus of attention rested upon him as he, I believe, was still in the process of gaining standing with the Jewish leaders and the Roman officials who were present.

This is all to set the scene as the Savior reacts to the words and actions of Judas as He sees the very large group of people following him and knows precisely why they are there and what their ultimate purpose is.

John 18: 4 “So Jesus, knowing all the things that were coming upon Him.”

Knowing = oy-ki’-os: To recognize, understand, realize, to be conscious of. All basically synonymous terms of know, to know, or knowing.

This word knowing is a term used to describe one’s household or family of blood relatives. IOW it’s a very clear and precise understanding and knowledge. Similar to what one would have of their family that they lived and grew up with.

So Jesus was not being caught off guard or being surprised. He knew exactly what was transpiring and what the ultimate outcome would be from the events of this night.

We are not endeavoring to give any more attention to the betrayer but looking at the reaction of the Savior to him.

Notice the Saviors reaction to Judas when he kissed Him.

Matt. 26:50 “Friend, do what you have come for.”

Luke 22:48 “Judas, are you betraying the Son of Man with a kiss?”

Do you notice anything about those statements?

There is no sign of desperation in the Saviors voice at all! He is perfectly calm and shows no signs of distress or exasperation whatsoever. No anger, frustration, or hopelessness at all.

Here He is facing one of His own who is a traitor and who has just identified Him to those who were going to ultimately kill Him and before that publically humiliate Him and put Him to great suffering and He is calm.

Compare this to what He just experienced in the garden as He looked into the hot anger of God's wrath against sin.

As He was on His face in the dirt sweeting blood and in great anguish of soul. That caused Him to tremble and become so distressed that an angel from heaven was sent to help Him.

Quiet a comparison is it not? The anger and hatred of men is nothing in comparison to God's anger against sin. And Jesus knew that very well.

It brings to memory His words in Luke 12:4-5

"I say to you, My friends, do not be afraid of those who kill the body and after that have no more that they can do."But I will warn you whom to fear, fear the One who, after He has killed, has authority to cast into hell; yes, I tell you, fear Him!

So Jesus confronts His betrayer and then turns to address those who came out with "lanterns, torches, and weapons" to arrest Him.

Notice Judas' position at this time.

John 18:5: "And Judas also, who was betraying Him, was standing with them."

IOW he had blended in with the crowd. A moment before he was out front and leading them but now, mostly after seeing the reaction to him from Jesus, he fades back into the crowd in an effort to escape so to speak.

Not so our Lord. He has advanced from the garden and confronts the crowd. Having almost ignored Judas and the betrayal.

Notice something about our Lord here. He did not try to avoid the crowd, He was not found hiding in the shadows or behind the disciples, He was not disguised to avoid being identified, He was not found in confusion or great fear, He did not put up any resistance or fight, and we will see that it was He who identified Himself to the crowd instead of Judas.

Also one other thing, He was not captured but rather He gave Himself over to the crowd.

So with infinite calmness, majesty, and great glory our Lord takes His position of leadership, His position as the Good Shepherd (He lives His words – this crowd was out for blood), His position as Lord, as he steps out in front of His disciples (as a hen gathers her brood) and asked the question to the crowd.

“Whom do you seek?”

And with those four words the passion of our Lord Jesus Christ begins. From this point on He will say very little until after His glorious resurrection (and then not to un-believers), but what He is about to say to this crowd defines Him as the eternal God Who has His existence in eternity and Who is the Creator and Sustainer of all that is.

Further evidence of this is in His statement to Peter in Mt. 26:53.

“Do you not think that I cannot appeal to My Father, and He will at once put at My disposal more than twelve legions of angels?” (Over 80K)

But He did not do that. Rather He submitted to His Father’s Will and committed Himself into the hands of His captors. (You know sometime humans think that they have control of God).

Now there are two subjects that I want to try and address today. Things that were on display on this night that Jesus was arrested.

First: That there is clear evidence of the depravity of the human heart was on display. And that apart from grace human beings, even with clear evidence before them, cannot and will not see and understand spiritual matters.

Second: That there is clear and unmistakable proof that our Lord Himself was in total control of the events that took place on this night.

THE DEPRAVITY OF THE HUMAN HEART AND THE SOVEREIGN LORD:

From the very beginning of our Lord’s life men had been trying to destroy Him.

Mt. 2:13 Now when they had gone (the Wise Men), behold, an angel of the Lord appeared to Joseph in a dream and said, "Get up! Take the Child and His mother and flee to Egypt, and remain there until I tell you; for Herod is going to search for the Child to destroy Him."

Men have always had the desire in their hearts to destroy God. And if they couldn’t destroy Him then they just refused to admit that He even exists.

The problem with being able to kill God is that no one has ever been able to get their hands on Him.

However now with the incarnation of Christ the opportunity presents itself to them and the possibility now exists that God could finally be dealt with by men.

Many times during His ministry men tried to kill Him.

Luke 4:28-30

28 And all the people in the synagogue were filled with rage as they heard these things. **29** and they got up and drove Him out of the city, and led Him to the brow of the hill on which their city had been built, in order to throw Him down the cliff. **30** But passing through their midst, He went His way.

Mt. 12:14 But the Pharisees went out and conspired against Him, as to how they might destroy Him.

Mark 11:18 (After He ran off the sellers in the temple)

The chief priests and the scribes heard this, and began seeking how to destroy Him; for they were afraid of Him, for the whole crowd was astonished at His teaching.

Afraid (fob-eh'-o) = to scare away or to be startled. **Root** = To be struck with fear and dread.

Luke 19:47 (Same setting as Mk. 11:18)

And He was teaching daily in the temple; but the chief priests and the scribes and the leading men among the people were trying to destroy Him.

Destroy = To kill someone and completely rid yourself of them.

They wanted Him out of their sight, mind, and thinking.

Isn't that typical of the human heart? They want God completely out of their minds so there is not conviction of sin.

One may say "well if a person is not saved they have no conviction of sin".

That wouldn't be so. Remember Judas last week? He said "I have sinned". And the scriptures say that he had regret for what he had done. I said last week that he was sorry for betraying Christ and sorrow is a synonym of regret. But it doesn't mean that it's a sorrow to repentance.

Judas wanted God out of his thinking so badly that he went out and hanged himself.

King Agrippa in Acts 26:28 said to Paul; "You almost persuade me to become a Christian."

But how did King Agrippa deal with Paul and the Gospel? He sent him away and got it out of his mind.

So the Jewish leaders had been trying for three years to kill Jesus and now they had their chance. To them they had Him cornered with no place to hide. Now they could finally rid themselves of Him and be done with Him.

On this night they were in charge and He could not escape, or so they thought.

Now three things take place to prove that not to be the case at all. Three things that should have gotten the attention of the people confronting Jesus but they paid no attention to them.

Thus proving beyond a doubt that the hearts of men are blind and deprived apart from the Grace of God.

First:

Jesus statement of who He is.

John 18:4-5 - **4** So Jesus, knowing all the things that were coming upon Him, went forth and said to them, "Whom do you seek ?" **5** They answered Him, "Jesus the Nazarene." He said to them, "I am He." And Judas also, who was betraying Him, was standing with them.

Now the Jewish leaders who were supposed to be the knowledgeable ones should have picked up on what Jesus said when He said, "I Am He".

*Note: The personal pronoun "He" has been added to smooth the translation in English. What Jesus actually said was "I Am".

I Am = i-mee' – To exist, to happen, and to be.

This is the same thing that Moses heard on the mountain when he asked God what His name was. God's answer to Moses was, "I Am Who I Am".

IOW-The One Who exists or the One Who Is. It's the only term that man has come up with to describe God. And the Jewish leaders present on this night should have known that.

But this is not the first time they had heard Jesus say this.

John 8:58 "Jesus said to them, "Truly, truly, I say to you, before Abraham was born, I am."

So they had clear evidence here from the Savior's own mouth as to who He is and they completely ignored His words.

There is an importance in listening and paying attention to detail. However this was a simple statement by the Savior and the "experts" should have understood it.

Secondly:

They should have picked up on the results of the statement that Jesus had just made.

John 18:6 So when He said to them, "I am He," they drew back and fell to the ground.

By the power of the words of the Savior the entire crowd, Judas included, were knocked flat on their backs before Him. Can you imagine the noise this event must have produced?

600 to 800 Roman soldiers with armor, swords, and shields. Plus all the other people and onlooker who had assembled with them? Plus all the screaming from those who were burned by falling torches. But even with this they got up and proceeded to arrest the Blessed Lord Jesus. There is a great deal to be learned about the power of the spoken Words of God.

Do you remember the incident with the Centurion in Mt. 8:8? "But the centurion said," Lord, I am not worthy for You to come under my roof, but just say the word, and my servant will be healed."

Or the raising of Lazarus in John 11:43? "When He had said these things, He cried out with a loud voice, "Lazarus, come forth."

Or the storm in Mark 4:39? "And He got up and rebuked the wind and said to the sea, "Hush, be still." And the wind died down and it became perfectly calm."

There is a lot in the Words of God that we should listen to. If we listen properly then we'll learn and more importantly the Gospel is presented through the words of men. "How shall they hear without a preacher?"

But on this night these people were presented with the Words of Jesus and their power but they refused to heed them because after being shown great evidence of Who He is they proceeded with their plan.

****Note:** It's evident here that Our Lord is making it clear to these people and to us that He is the one in charge of these events and not the men who are present. But that the power to do these things has been given them at this time.

Luke 22:53 – "But this hour and the power of darkness are yours"

Darkness = (skot'os) of ignorance respecting divine things and human duties, and the accompanying ungodliness and immorality, together with their consequent misery in hell. Of persons in whom darkness becomes visible and holds a sway.

What a terrible thing to have such a black darkness attributed to one's care!

Men should pay attention to what God says! It is important for one to pay attention to the evidence before them about the Lord Jesus Christ.

Third:

The third evidence on this night showing the depravity of the hearts of men is when Peter cut off the ear of the servant Malchus.

Luke 22:49-51 **49** When those who were around Him saw what was going to happen, they said, "Lord, shall we strike with the sword?" **50** And one of them struck the slave of the high priest and cut off his

right ear. 51 But Jesus answered and said, "Stop! No more of this." And He touched his ear and healed him.

Now John tells us that it was Peter who cut off the man's ear. Luke is the only one of the Gospel writers who tells that Jesus healed the man's ear.

Now this event took place after all the people had been knocked down on their backs by the words of Jesus.

Now picture this event and imagine the scream that would have come from this man having his ear cut off with a sword. One can only picture that this would be another very loud as well as bloody event.

Again catching the attention of all those around and putting the focus of them on the Lord Jesus.

So our Lord rebuked Peter and then did a very miraculous thing. He picked up the man's ear and reattached it as if it had never been cut off.

Demonstrating again within a few moments Who He is with unquestionable evidence and it made no difference to those around Him.

When He healed the man's hand on the Sabbath they wanted to kill Him.

When He raised Lazarus from the dead they plotted to destroy Him.

When He preached the truth to them in John chapter 6 they walked away from Him.

When He told them plainly who He was in John chapter 8 they tried to stone Him.

It became so bad that John chapter 11 (v.54) tells us that He wouldn't even walk publicly among them because they wanted to kill Him.

And now, on this dark night, three evidences of who He is and His sovereign authority and they are blind to it and the hatred in their hearts drive them in anger to destroy them.

Are we not seeing evidence of:

Romans 1:20 For since the creation of the world His invisible attributes, His eternal power and divine nature, have been clearly seen, being understood through what has been made, so that they are without excuse.

Acts 28:25-26 **25** And when they did not agree with one another, they began leaving after Paul had spoken one parting word, "The Holy Spirit rightly spoke through Isaiah the prophet to your fathers, **26** saying, 'GO TO THIS PEOPLE AND SAY, "YOU WILL KEEP ON HEARING, BUT WILL NOT UNDERSTAND; AND YOU WILL KEEP ON SEEING, BUT WILL NOT PERCEIVE.

They had every opportunity to walk away and to reconsider their actions and they would not. They wanted to destroy Him too much.

And He submitted Himself to them.

John 18:12 So the Roman cohort and the commander and the officers of the Jews, arrested Jesus and bound Him.

Quiet a crowd. All people in authority. And most of them should have known better.

But they heard His words and saw the evidence of His authority and ignored it because of their own selfish, sinful, hate filled hearts.

How about you? Have you seen the evidence about Him an ignored it?

May God bless His word.

Amen

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