

# **To Seek and to Save the Lost**

## **Betrayal and Arrest of Jesus**

*Luke 22:47-53*

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# Betrayal and Arrest of Jesus

## Scripture

Jesus' last night on earth was spent eating a meal with his twelve apostles. He earnestly desired to eat this meal with them, because he knew that he was about to suffer and die the next day (Luke 22:15).

However, the Last Supper was very disappointing to Jesus. Instead of a significant time with his disciples, the evening quickly degenerated into Judas' deception, the disciples' dissension, Peter's denial, and the disciples' dullness about what was about to happen. Eventually, perhaps around midnight, Jesus and the eleven apostles went to the Mount of Olives where they planned to spend the night. When they arrived, Jesus went further and spent time in prayer before Judas came and betrayed him to the religious authorities.

Let's read about the betrayal and arrest of Jesus in Luke 22:47-53:

**<sup>47</sup> While he was still speaking, there came a crowd, and the man called Judas, one of the twelve, was leading them. He drew near to Jesus to kiss him, <sup>48</sup> but Jesus said to him, "Judas, would you betray the Son of Man with a kiss?" <sup>49</sup> And when those who were around him saw what would follow, they said, "Lord, shall we strike with the sword?" <sup>50</sup> And one of them struck the servant of the high priest and cut off his right ear. <sup>51</sup> But Jesus said, "No more of this!" And he touched his ear and healed him. <sup>52</sup> Then Jesus said to the chief priests and officers of the temple and elders, who had come out against him, "Have you come out as against a robber, with swords and clubs? <sup>53</sup> When I was with you day after day in the temple, you did not lay hands on me. But this is your hour, and the power of darkness." (Luke 22:47-53)**

## Introduction

All of us like a certain measure of control in our lives. We make

plans for the long-term, mid-term, and short-term. But sometimes even our best-laid plans go awry. An illness occurs, an accident happens, or even just the weather changes our plans. One of the things we learn in life is that we are not ultimately in control of our lives.

In our study of Jesus' life and ministry we have noticed that Jesus was always in control of every event in his life. Nothing happened that was beyond his control. And yet, all that seemed to change on the night of his betrayal and arrest in the Garden of Gethsemane.

H. G. Wells once said that the world is like a great stage production, directed and managed by God. As the curtain rises, the set is perfect, a treat to every eye. The characters are resplendent. Everything goes well until the leading man steps on the hem of the leading lady's gown, causing her to trip over a chair, which knocks over a lamp, which pushes a table into the wall, which in turn knocks over the scenery, which brings everything down on the heads of the actors. Meanwhile, behind the scenes God, the Producer, is running around, shouting orders, pulling strings, trying desperately to restore order from chaos. But, alas, he is unable to do so! Poor God! As Wells explains, he is a very little, limited God.<sup>1</sup>

God sent his Son, Jesus Christ, into the world to seek and to save the lost. His ministry got off to a great start. Throngs of crowds loved his preaching ministry. Thousands benefited from his miracles. People were so taken with Jesus that they wanted to crown him as their king. But Jesus refused to be sidetracked. Instead, he kept proclaiming the good news of the kingdom, calling people to repent of their sin and to believe that he was the only Savior of sinners.

But over time opposition arose against Jesus and his ministry. After Jesus entered Jerusalem on Palm Sunday the chief priests and the scribes and the principal men of the people were seeking to destroy him (Luke 19:47). By the time Jesus got to the Garden of Gethsemane on Thursday night he was in such agony that his sweat became like great drops of blood falling down to the ground (Luke

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<sup>1</sup> D. James Kennedy, *Truths That Transform* (Old Tappan, NJ: Fleming H. Revell, 1974), 16.

20:44). Things then seemed to get out of control, especially when Judas arrived with a crowd to betray Jesus and have him arrested.

Albert Schweitzer was a brilliant physician, gifted musician, and liberal theologian who lived just over a century ago. He believed that Jesus lost control at the end of his life, and that things did not turn out as Jesus had planned. Schweitzer wrote a book titled, *The Quest for the Historical Jesus*, in which he penned these famous words:

There is silence all around. The Baptist appears, and cries: "Repent, for the Kingdom of Heaven is at hand." Soon after that comes Jesus, and in the knowledge that He is the coming Son of Man He lays hold of the wheel of the world to set it moving on that last revolution which is to bring all ordinary history to a close. It refuses to turn, and He throws Himself upon it. Then it does turn; and crushes Him. . . . The wheel rolls onward, and the mangled body of the one immeasurably great Man, who was strong enough to think of Himself as the spiritual ruler of mankind and to bend history to His purpose, is hanging upon it still. That is His victory and his reign.<sup>2</sup>

Schweitzer admired Jesus. He thought he was an "immeasurably great Man." Nevertheless, he was "only a man whose mangled remains now flop like a rag doll on the wheel of the world."<sup>3</sup>

So, did the stage production get out of control? Did Jesus miscalculate? Did Jesus lose control at the end of his life?

## Lesson

The betrayal and arrest of Jesus in Luke 22:47-53 teaches us that Jesus was in control of God's plan of redemption.

Let's use the following outline:

1. Jesus Was in Control in the Betrayal of Judas (22:47-48)
2. Jesus Was in Control in the Reaction of the Disciples

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<sup>2</sup> R. Kent Hughes, *Luke: That You May Know the Truth*, Preaching the Word (Wheaton, IL: Crossway Books, 1998), 340.

<sup>3</sup> R. Kent Hughes, *Luke: That You May Know the Truth*, 340.

(22:49-51)

3. Jesus Was in Control in the Rebuke to the Crowd (22:52-53)

I. **Jesus Was in Control in the Betrayal of Judas (22:47-48)**

First, Jesus was in control in the betrayal of Judas.

Jesus had been praying in the Garden of Gethsemane. He was in such agony that his sweat became like great drops of blood falling down to the ground (Luke 20:44). Although he asked his heavenly Father if there were some other way to accomplish the salvation of sinners, he was resolute in his obedience, saying, “Nevertheless, not my will, but yours, be done” (20:42). Then he finished praying, and went back to the sleepy disciples. Though things were soon about to change, Jesus was still in control of all events.

Jesus said to his disciples, “Why are you sleeping? Rise and pray that you may not enter into temptation” (Luke 22:46). **While he was still speaking, there came a crowd, and the man called Judas, one of the twelve, was leading them. He drew near to Jesus to kiss him, but Jesus said to him, “Judas, would you betray the Son of Man with a kiss?”** (22:47-48).

We can understand what a massive betrayal this was when we remember what Jesus had done for Judas.

First, Judas was **one of the twelve**, that is, Judas was chosen by Jesus to be one of his twelve apostles. He had been specially chosen and called by Jesus himself to be with him for three years.

Second, Judas heard Jesus’ teaching for three years. What would any one of us give to hear Jesus in person for three minutes, let alone for three years! He had a front row seat to all of Jesus’ preaching. He heard Jesus proclaim the good news about the kingdom of God, and how one is able to enter the kingdom of God by faith and repentance.

Third, Judas saw Jesus’ miracles for three years. He saw thousands of people healed. He saw people have demons cast out of them. He saw Jesus raising dead people back to life again. Judas personally

benefited from Jesus' miracles when he ate the bread and fish that Jesus created when he fed the five thousand. And he also had his own fears relieved when Jesus calmed the storm on the Sea of Galilee.

And fourth, Judas was given opportunities to serve in ministry. He served as the treasurer for the apostles. And he also went out with the other apostles through the villages, preaching the gospel and healing everywhere (Luke 9:6).

Jesus was showing Judas again and again that he was the Christ, the One sent by God to seek and to save the lost. But apparently, Judas misunderstood Jesus' mission because he thought that Jesus was going to establish a political or military kingdom. So, Satan incited Judas to betray Jesus to the religious authorities.

But even though Judas betrayed Jesus in the Garden of Gethsemane, Jesus still reached out to Judas. In the very act of betrayal, **Jesus said to him, "Judas, would you betray the Son of Man with a kiss?"** (22:48). Jesus loves lost sinners, and even in the moment of his betrayal Jesus was appealing to Judas to recognize what he was doing so that he could repent. Alexander Maclaren put it this way, "Thus to the end Christ seeks to keep him from ruin, and with meek patience resents not indignity, but with majestic calmness sets before the miserable man the hideousness of his act."<sup>4</sup>

Have you ever been betrayed? Have you ever had a close friend turn against you? Jesus knows your pain and suffering. No-one ever experienced a greater betrayal than Jesus, and so he understands how you feel. Part of Jesus' suffering was that of betrayal. So Jesus is able to sympathize with you in your suffering because he personally experienced the betrayal of Judas. When you feel betrayed, or when you are betrayed, tell Jesus about it. He understands exactly what pain you are suffering because he himself was betrayed by Judas.

Judas betrayed Jesus with a kiss. But even with that kiss, Jesus was still in control in the betrayal of Judas.

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<sup>4</sup> Alexander Maclaren, *Expositions of Holy Scriptures* (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker, 1971), 252.

## II. Jesus Was in Control in the Reaction of the Disciples (22:49-51)

Second, Jesus was in control in the reaction of the disciples.

You may remember that earlier in the furnished Upper Room the disciples assured Jesus that they had two swords (Luke 22:38). Peter even went so far as to say that he was ready to go with Jesus both to prison and to death (Luke 22:33).

So, as the crowd closed in on Jesus to arrest him, **and when the disciples who were around him saw what would follow, they said, “Lord, shall we strike with the sword?”** (22:49). A common response to betrayal is to strike back. When we feel betrayed, we immediately start thinking of how we can get back at our betrayer. We want to get some sort of revenge against the person who betrayed us.

Philip Ryken notes that “some of the great stories in world literature are based on the motif of betrayal and revenge. Consider *The Count of Monte Cristo*, the famous novel by Alexander Dumas in which the young Edmond Dantes is betrayed by three jealous friends and sent to prison. After making his escape and finding his fortune, Dantes systematically takes revenge on each of his hated enemies, driving them into financial ruin, public disgrace, suicide, and insanity. There is something juicy about a story like that, something that appeals to our fallen nature: it satisfies our craving for revenge.”<sup>5</sup>

The disciples of Jesus reacted immediately when they saw that he was betrayed. **And one of them**, whom we know was Peter (John 18:10), **struck the servant of the high priest and cut off his right ear** (Luke 22:50).

Peter’s use of the sword showed, as David Gooding said, “poor aim but stout intention.”<sup>6</sup> There is a time and a place for the proper use of the sword. The government has the right to use the sword. Also,

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<sup>5</sup> Philip Graham Ryken, *Luke*, ed. Richard D. Phillips, Philip Graham Ryken, and Daniel M. Doriani, vol. 2, Reformed Expository Commentary (Phillipsburg, NJ: P&R Publishing, 2009), 514.

<sup>6</sup> David Gooding, *According to Luke: A New Exposition of the Third Gospel* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1987), 336.

an individual has the right to use the sword to protect himself from an unprovoked attack.

However, Peter's use of the sword was improper. For one thing, no matter how wrong they were, the religious authorities had the legal authority to arrest Jesus. Furthermore, Jesus did not need protection. Jesus had more than twelve legion of angels that could protect him (Matthew 26:53). But the main reason that Peter's use of the sword was improper is because Jesus' arrest was part of God's plan of redemption. It was God's will for Jesus to be betrayed, arrested, tried, convicted, and crucified. Although Jesus was the sinless Son of God, who was completely innocent, he nevertheless had to go through all of that in order to purchase salvation for the elect.

Peter's use of the sword demonstrated zeal, but it was short-lived. His courage soon faded. Even as Jesus was arrested and taken away, he withdrew into the background. A short while later he denied knowing Jesus not once, not twice, but three times! The disciple who went so far as to say that he was ready to go with Jesus both to prison and to death had actually forsaken Jesus and fled.

Bishop J. C. Ryle makes the following application:

The lesson before us is deeply instructive. To suffer patiently for Christ is far more difficult than to work actively. To sit still and endure calmly, is far more hard than to stir about and take part in the battle. Crusaders will always be found more numerous than Martyrs. The passive graces of religion are far more rare and precious than the active graces. *Work* for Christ may be done from many spurious motives, from excitement, from emulation, from party-spirit, or from love of praise. *Suffering* for Christ will seldom be endured from any but one motive. That motive is the grace of God.<sup>7</sup>

There are times you may feel that you or someone you care about has been wronged. Be very careful about your reaction.

Jesus immediately repaired the damage done by Peter. He **said**,

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<sup>7</sup> J. C. Ryle, *Expository Thoughts on Luke*, vol. 2 (New York: Robert Carter & Brothers, 1879), 430–431.



**“No more of this!” And he touched** the servant of the high priest’s **ear and healed him** (Luke 22:51). This was Jesus’ last miracle, and it was very important. It protected him from any accusation that he was trying to set up a military kingdom. It also showed that Jesus was completely opposed to unwarranted violence. But most importantly, as Philip Ryken said, “It also ended any attempt to hinder his progress towards the cross where he died for our sins. When Jesus performed this miracle, he was showing his purpose to bring salvation and his willingness to suffer injustice for the glory of God.”<sup>8</sup>

So, Jesus was in control, even in the reaction of the disciples.

### III. **Jesus Was in Control in the Rebuke to the Crowd (22:52-53)**

And third, Jesus was in control in the rebuke to the crowd.

**Then Jesus said to the chief priests and officers of the temple and elders, who had come out against him, “Have you come out as against a robber, with swords and clubs? When I was with you day after day in the temple, you did not lay hands on me”** (22:52-53a). Earlier, Luke had said that Jesus “was teaching daily in the temple. The chief priests and the scribes and the principal men of the people were seeking to destroy him, but they did not find anything they could do, for all the people were hanging on his words” (Luke 19:47-48). By coming at night, the religious authorities showed that they were doing something that was outside the bounds of the law. And so Jesus concluded his rebuke to the crowd by saying, **“But this is your hour, and the power of darkness”** (22:53).

Earlier in the evening, when Jesus was in the Upper Room with his disciples eating the final Passover meal and instituting the first Lord’s Supper, he gave his Upper Room discourse and then prayed. He began his great high priestly prayer with these words, “Father, the hour has come” (John 17:1). That “hour” did not refer to sixty minutes, for much later that evening when Jesus was arrested he said

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<sup>8</sup> Philip Graham Ryken, *Luke*, 516.

again to the crowd, **“But this is your hour”** (22:53). Philip Ryken explains the expression as follows:

When Jesus said “this is your hour,” he was not referring to sixty minutes on the clock, but to the short, definite period of time when evil men would have their way. This was the hour when Judas would give his treacherous kiss and the leaders of Israel would make their unlawful arrest. This was the hour when angry men would call for blood and cruel soldiers would carry out their terrible torture. This was the hour when the Son of Man would suffer unto death. In other words, this was the hour when Satan would triumph.<sup>9</sup>

Ryken continues his explanation:

At this point it would be encouraging to say that at least Satan’s triumph lasted only an hour, whereas the victory of God’s Son will last for all eternity. This is true, of course. When Jesus said “this is your hour,” he was placing a time limit on the power of darkness. Although Satan seemed to triumph in Gethsemane, at Calvary, and in the dark days when Jesus was buried in the grave, his victory turned to defeat on Easter Sunday. On the third day Jesus rose from the dead, breaking the power of darkness and bringing the light of salvation to everyone who believes in him. The power of darkness had its time, but now that the resurrection power of God has come in Christ, we do not live in Satan’s dark hour.<sup>10</sup>

We should be encouraged because even when Satan seems to have the victory, God has purposed Satan’s actions to fulfill his own divine purposes. Satan is but an instrument in God’s great plan for the redemption of the world. As Kent Hughes said, “Satan was the unwitting stage manager for God, and every fall and humiliation he choreographed for Christ was actually a step toward our salvation.”<sup>11</sup>

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<sup>9</sup> Philip Graham Ryken, *Luke*, 519.

<sup>10</sup> Philip Graham Ryken, *Luke*, 520.

<sup>11</sup> R. Kent Hughes, *Luke: That You May Know the Truth*, 344.

## Conclusion

Therefore, having analyzed the betrayal and arrest of Jesus in Luke 22:47-53, we should believe that since we have a Savior who was able to triumph in his darkest hour, he will surely deliver us in our darkest hour.

In spite of what some may think, Jesus never lost control at the end of his life. Jesus was in control even during his betrayal and arrest. God was working all things for his glory and our good.

And he still does so today. We need to believe that God is at work even in our darkest hour.

William Tyndale is famous for his translation of the Bible. His burning passion was to translate the Hebrew and Greek Scriptures into English. However, his work of translation was considered a crime, and he was forced to flee England and go into hiding in Europe.

Many people know that Tyndale was eventually burned at the stake. But what is less known is that his capture came as result of a betrayal by a friend. Tyndale befriended Henry Phillips. He shared meals with him, trusted him, and even confided in him. One day Phillips led Tyndale down a narrow passage and straight into the arms of his enemies. Like Judas, Phillips was paid handsomely for his treachery, and like Judas, he used a prearranged signal to betray Tyndale.

How did Tyndale respond? Did he thirst for revenge, or did he experience the presence of Christ in his own dark trial?

When William Tyndale went through his darkest hour, suffering a betrayal that led to his death, he experienced the peace and the comfort of Christ. As a result of his patient suffering and faithful witness, we are told, the jail keeper and his daughter came to faith in Christ, along with other members of their household.<sup>12</sup>

We have a Savior who was able to triumph in his darkest hour. Let us believe that he will deliver us in our darkest hour. Let us ask him to supply grace to help us in our time of need. Amen.

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<sup>12</sup> The full story of Tyndale's arrest is told by David Daniell in *William Tyndale: A Biography* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1994), 361–373.



# Mission Statement

The Mission Statement of the Tampa Bay Presbyterian Church is:

*To bring people to Jesus Christ  
and membership in his church family,  
develop them to Christlike maturity,  
equip them for their ministry in the church  
and life mission in the world,  
in order to magnify God's name.*

## Sermons by Rev. Freddy Fritz

This sermon, and other sermons, by the Rev. Freddy Fritz can be found at:

1. [www.tampabaypresbyterian.org/sermons](http://www.tampabaypresbyterian.org/sermons)
2. [www.sermoncentral.com/contributors/freddy-fritz-sermons-11181.asp](http://www.sermoncentral.com/contributors/freddy-fritz-sermons-11181.asp)
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**PRAYER:**

Our Father, Jesus was betrayed by one of his close friends. It is difficult to imagine someone who was so close to Jesus could betray him for thirty pieces of silver. But Judas did. But even in that betrayal Jesus reached out to Judas so that he would see his heinous action and repent. But he never did.

The disciples' reaction to the betrayal and arrest of Jesus showed how easy it is for us to want to get revenge when wronged.

And Jesus rebuked the crowd for their under-cover-of darkness arrest of him.

And yet, in all of this, we learn that Jesus was in control of all that was going on. He was not just a man who was to become like a rag doll on the wheel of the world. No. Jesus was carrying out your plan of redemption for sinners. And how thankful we are that he was obedient, even to the very end.

O God, please help us to believe that we have a Savior who was able to triumph in his darkest hour. Enable us to believe that he will deliver us in our darkest hour. Will you supply us with grace to help us in our time of need.

And for this I pray in Jesus' name.

**BENEDICTION:**

May the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God, and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit be with you all, now and always. Amen.

**CHARGE:**

Now, brothers and sisters, go and serve God wholeheartedly!