

## John 18:1 – 11

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~ The Upper Room Discourse began in chapter thirteen of the Gospel of John and ran through the end of our last report. It concluded with that mind-numbing prayer Jesus prayed to the Father. Honestly, we might have been better people if we had not been eavesdropping back there; but we did - and now it is too late. Jesus wasn't praying to us, but it was recorded so that the sincere, honest, genuine, loving and thoughtful Christian COULD know what Jesus prays for when He prays to the Father for us today. That is the longest prayer found in the entire Bible, by the way - and it can be read in less than three minutes by the average reading person. We are going to conclude all commentary today on that prayer by quoting the very true statement from Augustine, "... it's the easiest prayer in the Word of God in regard to words; but most profound in regard to ideas."

We are now going to examine – very, very carefully – the final few hours of the Lord Jesus Christ here on earth. We will see Him arrested in this chapter and taken before Annas and Caiaphas. This presentation by John differs from the synoptic Gospels because those Gospels focused on the humanity of Jesus and His human nature; and they all place an emphasis on the sufferings and death of the Savior. As we have said, this Gospel account places the emphasis on the deity of our Savior, and Jesus is presented as the God-Man. The emphasis we will place on Jesus for the remainder of this book is upon His glory. Here, we will see the glory of the Lord Jesus Christ in His arrest, trial, death, burial, resurrection and His ascension back to Heaven and to the right hand of God the Father. The strongest emphasis is upon His return to the Father, which is simply remarkable. Jesus has said again and again that He was going back to the Father; and that theme will carry us right out of this Gospel of John. This was mentioned in four out of the five preceding chapters. That's all certainly in accord with His glory....

*1 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.*

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~ “....these words....” in verse one refer to the Upper Room Discourse. The majesty and meekness of Jesus will be revealed completely now. We can reasonably conclude that Jesus and the disciples spent, likely, all of their nights under the open sky. He was born in a stable. He said the foxes have holes and the birds have nests, but He had nowhere to lay His head. He is not going to be arrested in a fine home or hotel room; no, they find Him outside in a garden. Well, we are going to see some other troubling and alarming things as we move through here.

Jesus left Jerusalem and went out to this place because He was accustomed to the Garden of Gethsemane. I am sure they spent a whole lot of time there. Luke told us that Jesus taught in the temple during the daytime, but at night He went out to the Mount of Olives. We do not have any recorded account of Jesus spending a night inside the city limits of the walled Jerusalem proper. We saw Jesus in Bethany with His friends in the last few weeks. Even on this last night when they had the upper room where they could have easily stayed all night – they didn’t. I never really understood why they didn’t just remain there; but they didn’t. They went over the brook to this place we all know as the Garden of Gethsemane.

Strangely omitted from this account is the agony other Gospel writers noted about Jesus at this time; and John does not tell us about Jesus falling down on His face, either. The reason for those omissions is because we are speaking of the glory of the Lord now. Again, I want to over-emphasize how John places the emphasis on the DEITY of Christ. Luke said He went out as was His custom, and the disciples followed Him to the Mount of Olives; and we know this garden was at the foot of the mountain. I find it extremely interesting that crossing the brook of Kidron – or Cedron – is accounted for so systematically. If you will review the fifteenth chapter of second Samuel, you will see David being betrayed by his own son Absalom who was leading a rebellion. Ahithophel, David’s closely trusted so-called friend, helped out in the betrayal – and guess which brook they went across?

Christians do things just like this today - and it’s awful; unfortunately, it happens all the time. Well, Jesus is giving His enemies the opportunity to

take Him. Remember, the religious rulers wanted to grab Jesus a long time ago, but they were afraid of the people; so, they wouldn't take Him in the temple or right off the streets of Jerusalem. No, it is only in the dead of night they come out there with a select few to arrest Him. Jesus is now the Lamb of God that offers no resistance whatsoever. As the sheep before the shearers is just plain dumb; Jesus will open not His mouth but, rather, yields Himself completely.

Remember, we have already seen the Lord Jesus escape the religious rulers twice – once in chapter eight and again in chapter twelve – and those were miraculous escapes. We were told that they once took up stones to stone Him, but Jesus hid Himself, and went out of the temple and departed from them. I'm sure the crowd would have permitted a public stoning. Well, it would have been impossible for the religious rulers to locate Jesus up until this time. This is where Jesus lays Himself wide open to be taken, and I think these sequences of events are critical to understand. The dignity we see in Christ is absolutely overwhelming to me – I hope it is to you, too. Of course, this also gives Judas the opportunity to locate Him....

*2 And Judas also, which betrayed him, knew the place: for Jesus oftentimes resorted thither with his disciples.*

*3 Judas then, having received a band of men and officers from the chief priests and Pharisees, cometh thither with lanterns and torches and weapons.*

~ We learned in Luke this was, actually, a detachment of Roman soldiers that Pilate had granted Caiaphas the high priest for this occasion. The word "band" means the tenth part of a legion; that makes this five hundred men. Matthew said it was a great multitude. Here, we learn the officers and chief priests were in that group, too. Remember, Jesus asked in the other Gospel, "be ye come out as against a thief?" Well, one thing this crowd had observed firsthand was the miracles of Jesus. I don't know why they didn't realize that if Jesus had not wanted to be taken, those weapons would have been absolutely useless....

*4 Jesus therefore, knowing all things that should come upon him, went forth, and said unto them, Whom seek ye?*

*5 They answered him, Jesus of Nazareth. Jesus saith unto them, I am he. And Judas also, which betrayed him, stood with them.*

~ It's easy to miss the subtleties in verse five as they say they are seeking Jesus of Nazareth. That's the designation for the man they were after; they aren't acknowledging He is the Christ as Simon Peter did. Well, that name, Jesus of Nazareth, will be above every name someday and, at that time, even the occupants of hell will bow to His Name, Jesus of Nazareth. At this time, however, they aren't about to believe in Jesus as their Savior or the Son of the True and Living God. Interestingly, they don't seem to know Who they are looking for. Even Judas didn't know Him for a moment. Of course, Judas had been with all of them for three years, and Paul tells us the reason Judas did not know Him:

*2 Corinthians 4:3 But if our gospel be hid, it is hid to them that are lost: 4 In whom the god of this world hath blinded the minds of them which believe not, lest the light of the glorious gospel of Christ, who is the image of God, should shine unto them ~*

My friends, the natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God; neither can he know them, for they are foolishness unto him. The things of Christ are only known when they are spiritually discerned. The Lord of Glory is standing right in front of this crowd, and they do not even recognize Him. The unsaved man today doesn't know God; I don't care if they have read the Bible from cover to cover a thousand times. It doesn't even matter how religious you are today – if you are not a born-again believer, you are never going to know or even recognize God.

There was an interview on television several decades ago with prominent church leaders from various liberal denominations and organizations. They were talking about the moral condition of that day. Well, they focused on a man who had been converted out of Judaism and had become a Christian. The attempt to explain this would have been laughable if it hadn't been so

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tragic. They spoke of moral values, and of background, and everything under the sun that was humanistic. The entire approach was as patently philosophical as it could possibly be; and the reason was because it never occurred to them that this converted man had seen Jesus of Nazareth – the Christ, the Lord Jesus – the Son of the Living God. None of those other men saw Christ. I doubt they ever did. All of them are dead today, I'm sure. Judas went along in the night in which we are studying to point Jesus out; and he could not. Until Jesus revealed Himself, they weren't arresting anyone, because they were in complete and total confusion....

*6 As soon then as he had said unto them, I am he, they went backward, and fell to the ground.*

~ This is a marvelous section of Scripture that reveals, for a few brief moments, His glory and majesty altogether. John said, "... the Word was made flesh" – Jesus pitched His tent amongst the nation Israel. Even in this dark and desperate hour, the Lord Jesus reveals His deity again and they fell backward. You need to note the direction this crowd went. They didn't fall forward to worship – they fell backward onto the ground in fear, dismay and confusion. This was a moment of pure pandemonium, and He is a whole lot more than Jesus of Nazareth now. What they cannot see is the Lord of Glory – God revealed in the human flesh. Friends, it is CRITICAL to know Who He is in this world today. This is all in fulfillment of prophecy, also.

*Psalm 27: 2 When the wicked, even mine enemies and my foes, came upon me to eat up my flesh, they stumbled and fell ~*

That is a remarkable prophecy, and it reveals the God-ward side of the Person we are examining, the Lord Jesus Christ; that Psalm is Theocentric. Well, let's also take into consideration Psalm thirty-five and forty, which are anthropocentric, meaning, man-centered - and looking towards the man-ward side of Jesus.

*Psalm 35:4 Let them be confounded and put to shame that seek after my soul: let them be turned back and brought to confusion that devise my hurt  
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*Psalm 40:14 Let them be ashamed and confounded together that seek after my soul to destroy it; let them be driven backward and put to shame that wish me evil. 15 Let them be desolate for a reward of their shame that say unto me, Aha, aha ~*

What a picture we have developing before us. We have prophecy revealed when the Lord Jesus reveals His glory to them. I absolutely cannot stress enough how important this is to understand. They went looking for Jesus of Nazareth, and they found the Lord of Glory. Well, Jesus is still in complete control of this situation and, again, I would have you notice the dignity and poise of the Lord at this time as He gives the command to let His disciples go and the prayer He has just prayed becomes fulfilled. Jesus just told the Father in the last chapter that not one had been lost except the son of perdition – and all in fulfillment of prophecy. Jesus commands that they be let go and let go they most certainly were....

*7 Then asked he them again, Whom seek ye? And they said, Jesus of Nazareth.*

*8 Jesus answered, I have told you that I am he: if therefore ye seek me, let these go their way:*

*9 That the saying might be fulfilled, which he spake, Of them which thou gavest me have I lost none.*

*10 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.*

~ Even after this incident they didn't arrest Simon Peter. Luke told us the Lord Jesus put the ear back on, but that's not why they let Peter go. They let Peter go because that is what Jesus has just prayed about and commanded them to do. The Lord Jesus Christ is in charge of everything

and everyone that happens to be a part of this universe. If there are life forms in outer space that we do not know about – guess what? – THEY are ALSO in subjection to Him. Jesus retains control – even in these hours of darkness as He yields Himself to death for YOU and me – and He has the same control and dignity right now, friends....

*11 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?*

~ There are several viewpoints of that cup – His death – and we will consider them carefully on safari in our next report. As we continue to study the Bible together I am finding out how little I actually know about the Word of God. I am now seeing that the more you know about the Bible, the LESS you really know about the Bible. That paradoxical statement happens to be true. I have now decided, and I have come to terms with the fact that I just do not know the Word of God at all. What troubles me is that some people seem to think they know everything there is to know. They talk a good talk, and it seems like they know everything; but, friends, they have a lot to learn – as does anyone who believes they have a grip on understanding the Word of God. I would say to you: don't be discouraged if you have made that realization, too, although it is discouraging. There's another paradoxical statement but, friends, I am simply trying to teach the entire Bible ~

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