

The book of John can be divided into three parts: (1) chapters 1-12 recount Jesus' ministry, (2) chapters 13-17 His instruction to His disciples, and (3) chapters 18-21 His death and resurrection. One of the many unique things about John's gospel is that he devotes almost half of the book (chs.13-21) to the final week of our Savior's life.

Furthermore, he chooses to record specific things about this final week, so to underscore the glory of Christ, as God's unique Son. If you remember, each of the four gospel writers have a specific audience in mind—Mathew portrays Him as the Son of David—Mark portrays Him as the Servant of God—Luke portrays Him as the Son of Man, and John portrays Him as the Son of God.

It's likely early Friday morning—our Savior having instructed His disciples in the Upper Room, prayed His High Priestly Prayer (either in the upper room or else after leaving it), now leaves Jerusalem, crosses the Brook Kidron, and enters a garden. Here He will be arrested, tried, beaten, and crucified (through the remainder of Thursday and first part of Friday).

Thus, this morning we begin to consider the passion of our Savior. The word passion simply means to suffer, and so we begin to examine our Savior's suffering. As we shall see within chapters 18-19, this suffering is endured in five steps: (1) His arrest in the garden; (2) His trial before Caiaphas (and the Jews); (3) His trial before Pilate (and the Gentiles); (4) His suffering on the cross; (5) His suffering in the grave (as His burial is the last step in His humiliation).

Now, before I come to this passage, I want to say something, very briefly, about history and theology—what we largely find in the remaining chapters of John (18-21) is history. We find the historical acts and events that give significance to our theology. Perhaps one way of saying this would be—within the gospels we largely find the historical events that serve as the basis for our theology.

The NT epistles (letters) expand upon the history of the gospels. Thus, it's within passages like John 18-21, where we encounter the events that form the very substance of the Christian religion. We will see our Savior's arrest, trial, mistreatment, crucifixion, and resurrection, all historical facts that are recorded for all to read, and from which we derive all our theology.

This brings us this morning to our theme: The Arrest of Jesus

- I. Jesus and His Betrayer (vv1-3)
- II. Jesus and His Adversaries (vv4-9)
- III. Jesus and His Father's Cup (vv10-11)

I. Jesus and His Betrayer (vv1-3)

1. V1—"When Jesus had spoken these words, He went out with His disciples over the Brook Kidron, where there was a garden, which He and His disciples entered."
2. By "these words" is either meant, the teaching He gave in the upper room, or else, the prayer He just offered to His Father.
3. It very likely refers to both—that is, His teaching in chapters 14-16, and His prayer in chapter 17, but either way, John underscores the fact that His instruction has finished.
4. For the previous several chapters, John has recorded His instruction to the multitude, and His instruction to the disciples.
5. Now all instruction has ceased—He now leaves Jerusalem with His disciples, crosses the Brook and enters a garden.
6. MH—"The office of the priest was to teach and pray and offer sacrifice. Christ, after teaching and praying, applies Himself to make atonement. He had said all He had to say as a prophet."

7. Though John fails to mention, the garden referred to is the Garden of Gethsemane—the word Gethsemane literally means "an oil press."
8. It's suggested that this garden was called Gethsemane because of the olive groves and olive presses that filled the garden.
9. It's a fitting name, in that our Savior would here wrestle with His Father in prayer, and His sweat would be like drops of blood (Lk.22:44).
10. John intentionally omits this detail, as it doesn't aid his purpose of portraying Christ as the Royal, Son of God.
11. Thus, he simply says—"He went out with His disciples over the Brook Kidron, where there was a garden, which He and His disciples entered.
12. Now, several of the older commentators, see a connection between this garden and the garden of Eden (Gen.2:8).
13. As the Savior enters the garden to redeem His people from sin, we remember that it was in the garden of Eden that mankind fell into sin.
14. Perhaps I can put it this way—the Second Man entered a garden (Gethsemane), to regain what the first man lost in a garden (Eden).
15. But it isn't the garden I want you to notice, it's the person that meets Jesus in the garden, v2—"And Judas, who betrayed Him."
16. The last time we heard of Judas, was when our Savior identified him as the one who would betray him, and then he left the upper room.
17. Thus, it's been several hours since our Savior has seen Judas, and now he comes to do what our Savior foretold.
18. V3—"Then Judas, having received a detachment of troops, and officers from the chief priests and Pharisees, came there with lanterns, torches, and weapons."
19. In other words, Judas brought a mix mob with him, made of Roman soldiers, and leaders from the chief priest and Pharisees.
20. They came with lanterns and torches (that they might see), and weapons, in case they needed to take Christ by force.
21. Lesson 1—We learn how evil and hardhearted a professing Christian can become—here of course, I am thinking about Judas.
22. He sat under Jesus' ministry for three years—he heard him preach, pray, perform miracles, and live a holy life.
23. And yet for all that, he brought to Jesus his enemies, who came with weapons to arrest, beat, and finally crucify Him.
24. How many times had Judas sat with Jesus in this very garden, and heard Him open His heart to His Beloved Father.
25. How many times had Judas heard the sweet and loving instruction of Christ, who opened up the glories of the gospel.
26. How many times had Judas witnessed the tender way in which Christ, patiently endured with His wayward disciples.
27. Richard Phillips—"What a calloused heart Judas showed in betraying Jesus at a spot made precious by fellowship in prayer with Jesus Himself."
28. Lesson 2—We learn how united native man is in his hatred and opposition to Christ—the mob that met Christ was made of two groups or types of people.
29. The Jews, or the chief priests and Pharisees, and the Gentiles, or the Roman soldiers—these came as one mob.
30. Though they hated each other, they hated Christ more, and thus were willing to join forces together against Him.
31. At times you might hear people debate, who is guilty of arresting and killing Christ—the Jews or the Romans (here we find the answer—both).
32. Furthermore, for all of man's rage, what can he really do? They came with weapons to find against the GodMan.

33. Lesson 3—We learn how willingly our Savior gave Himself to be arrested and killed—a few hours before our Savior told Judas to go and do what he must, and now our Savior enters the very garden He knew Judas would come to.
34. Why did our Savior go to the very garden Judas would assume He was at? Because Christ was there waiting for them.
35. Thomas Goodwin—"Our Lord and Savior knew that he should be taken by Judas, and that this was the place appointed by His Father wherein He should be taken...He knew that Judas would be there that night, and, therefore, like a valiant champion, He comes into the field first, afore His enemy. He goes there to choose, and singles out this place on purpose."

II. Jesus and His Adversaries (vv4-9)

1. From verse 4 we learn that our Savior not only knew all things that would come upon Him, but He went out to meet them.
2. The point being, Christ not only knew what was coming, but was in every way ready to endure what was coming.
3. Now, I want to suggest two things about Jesus and His Adversaries—He reveals His true identity to them, and He protects His disciples from them.
4. (1) Christ reveals His true identity to His adversaries—Jesus asked them—"Whom are you seeking? They answered Him, Jesus of Nazareth."
5. To this Jesus responds—"I am He."—now, you must know that the "He" is added by our translators and isn't in the Greek text.
6. Literally our Savior says—"I AM"—*ego eimi*—I AM—now it's possible our Savior merely means, I am He (that is Jesus of Nazareth).
7. But this isn't likely in light of v6—"Now when He said to them, 'I AM,' they drew back and fell to the ground."
8. Now, it's true that the Roman soldiers wouldn't have understood this phrase, but for the Jews it was very significant.
9. If you remember, the Lord revealed Himself to Moses, at the burning bush in the OT, as—"I AM WHO I AM."
10. Ex.3:14—"Thus you shall say to the children of Israel, I AM has sent me to you"—this means, All that I am, I am in and of Myself.
11. This name underscores His self-existence, self-sufficiency, and unchangeableness—all that He is, He is of Himself, and can be nothing else.
12. And it's when He speaks this name, the entire mob, Jews and Gentiles—"drew back and fell to the ground" (v6).
13. They first drew back in fear and dread, and then were knocked to the ground, all by the POWER of this name.
14. Now, obviously, they didn't merely fall because they tripped over each other, as some of the liberal commentators suggest.
15. But they were thrown to the ground by the power of God—it was only a preview of what will happen in the Day of Judgment.
16. Our Savior wanted everyone to know, that if He wanted to, He could have destroyed this mob with only a word.
17. But, I think He also wanted His disciples to be encouraged, that He wasn't being taken by force or against His will.
18. (2) Christ protects His people from His adversaries, v8b—"Therefore, if you seek Me, let these go their way."
19. In other words—If it's Me you're after, then take Me and do with Me as you please, but leave My disciples alone.
20. As the Good Shepherd, our Savior protects His needy sheep from the wolf, by being taken in their stead or place.

21. John then offers an inspired commentary on His statement, v9—"that the saying might be fulfilled which He spoke, 'Of those whom You gave Me I have lost none.'"
22. Jn.17:12—"While I was with them in the world, I kept them in Your name. Those whom You gave Me I have kept, and none of them is lost except the son of perdition, that the Scripture might be fulfilled."
23. In other words, the fact that our Savior kept them from the mob, was an illustration of Him keeping them from all their enemies (Satan, sin, and this world).
24. Because, if you think about it brethren, later on the disciples would be arrested, beaten, and most of them, put to death.
25. But our Savior knew their present weakness, for it was only after the Spirit came did they have the boldness necessary to endure such treatment.
26. Thus, we learn several important truths about Christ in verses 4-9, and I want to selectively suggest only three.
27. Lesson 1—We learn about His power over His enemies—brethren, think how sovereign God is over His enemies.
28. Judas, the Romans, and the Jews, all are ultimately serving His purposes, Ps.76:10—"surely the wrath of man shall praise You)—that is, even the wicked actions of men, ultimately serve God's sovereign and all-wise purposes.
29. Lesson 2—We learn about His compassion for His weak people—He knew they wasn't strong enough to be arrested (and thus, He keeps them from it).
30. Brethren, we can't even imagine how often Christ keeps His beloved people from things they are not ready to endure.
31. Lesson 3—We learn about His willingness to give His life for the sheep—sheep that love to wonder from the fold.
32. We read in Mark 14:50—"Then they all forsook Him and fled"—that is, after Christ was arrested they all fled.
33. Why were they even able to flee, but because He was taken in their place—the Shepherd gave His for the sheep.
34. Remember brethren, our Savior's in a garden, and He is entrusted with a people, similar to Adam in the garden of Eden.
35. Adam was placed in the garden, and given the responsibility to protect his bride or people, and yet, tragically failed.
36. Christ was put in another garden and given a similar responsibility to protect His bride or people, and He did.
37. James Montgomery Boice—"Adam and Eve by their sin plunged the race into misery. They fell and carried their progeny over the cliff of sin into destruction. Christ, on the other hand, stood firm. He did not sin, nor did he shrink from his work. As a result, he saved all whom the Father had given him. In Adam all were lost. Christ could say, 'Those you have me I have kept. None of them is lost.'"

III. Jesus and His Father's Cup (vv10-11)

1. V10—"Then Simon Peter, having a sword, drew it and struck the high priest's servant, and cut off his right ear. The servant's name was Malchus."
2. Here we find Peter acting with a zeal without knowledge—Peter no doubt desired to protect Christ from the mob.
3. There is a sense in which I think many (most) of us can appreciate, in some sense or another, what Simon Peter did.
4. He simply wanted to keep the mob from arresting or harming his master—he did what he did out of love for Christ.
5. But here's the problem—unknowingly, Peter was actually working with Christ's enemies, in keeping Him from the cross.
6. On another occasion, after our Savior mentioned the suffering He must endure in Jerusalem, Peter said—"Far be it from You, Lord; this shall not happen to You" (Matt.16:22).

7. Matt.16:23—"But He turned and said to Peter, Get behind Me, Satan! You are an offense to Me, for you are not mindful of the things of God, but the things of men."
8. In other words, Peter was actually working in harmony to the desire of Satan, in keeping Christ from Jerusalem.
9. And this is exactly what's happening now in the garden—Peter is unknowingly, getting between Christ and His work.
10. V11—"So Jesus said to Peter, Put your sword into the sheath. Shall I not drink the cup which My Father has given Me."
11. In other words—put away your sword and stop hindering these events—these are all a part of My Father's cup.
12. Thus, at this point—I want to answer four questions, and then, in closing, suggest three personal exhortations.
13. (1) What did He drink? Our Savior merely speaks about a cup. A cup is intended to hold something you can drink.
14. Thus, the question—What was in the cup that our Savior drank—well, we know from the rest of Scripture that it contained the wrath of God.
15. Ps.11:6-7—"Upon the wicked He will rain coals; fire and brimstone and a burning wind shall be the portion of their cup."
16. Ps.75:7-8—"God is the Judge: He puts down one, and exalts another. For in the hand of the LORD there is a cup, and the wine is red; it is fully mixed, and He pours it out; surely its dregs shall all the wicked of the earth drain and drink down."
17. Rev.14:9-11—"If anyone worships the beast and his image, and receives his mark on his forehead or on his hand, he himself shall also drink of the wine of the wrath of God, which is poured out full strength into the cup of His indignation. He shall be tormented with fire and brimstone in the presence of the holy angels and in the presence of the Lamb."
18. Thus, we learn that it was the wrath of God in the cup, which is the expression of God's righteous anger for man's sin.
19. The Scripture teaches that God is righteously angry because of man's sin, and His wrath is that anger expressed.
20. (2) How did He drink it? Obviously, our Savior did not drink from a literal cup, but He did endure the wrath of God.
21. But the imagery of drinking is intentional—when we drink something, it gets down into our belly, our very being.
22. So too, when the wrath of God was poured out on Christ, it was like God's righteous anger filled His human soul and body.
23. Simply put, our Savior endured the righteous wrath of God because of man's sin, He endured the penalty for sin.
24. He was treated as if He were guilty of our sin—He was punished in our place—He satisfied God's wrath for us.
25. (3) When did He drink it? Or perhaps we can put the question like this—When did Christ endure the wrath of God?
26. Well, there is a sense in which our Savior began to drink this cup from the beginning of His incarnation as a poor baby.
27. Because there is a sense in which this cup can be described as His humiliation, His humiliation began at His incarnation.
28. He was poor, persecuted, and despised—and then later when He began His ministry, He was rejected and ridiculed.
29. And then He was betrayed, arrested, falsely tried, physically abused, and publically ashamed—this was all a part of the cup.
30. And yet, by cup ultimately speaking, our Savior refers to the cross, where He would drink the wrath of His Father.
31. Perhaps we can say—throughout His life, His rejection, arrest, trial, and physical abuse, our Savior began to drink this cup.

32. But, it would be upon the cross, when the Father's wrath was poured out upon Him, that He would fully drink it.
33. (4) Why did He drink it? V11—"Shall I not drink the cup which My Father has given Me?"—this is why He drank it—it was given to Him by the Father.
34. Thus, a related question would be—When did the Father give this cup to Christ—well, the answer is from eternity.
35. From eternity, the Father commissioned His Son, to come in time, born of a woman, to the debt our sins caused.
36. We've seen this throughout the book of John, where our Savior describes His mission as obedience to His Father.
37. Thus, in closing, I want to suggest three exhortations, derived from the fact that Christ drank the cup of His Father's wrath.
38. Exhortation 1—If Christ drank the wrath of God, then let every believer be comforted, for there is no wrath waiting for you.
39. Simply put brethren, the reason there isn't any wrath in the cup for us, is because Christ drank the entire cup dry.
40. Exhortation 2—If Christ drank the wrath of God, then let every believer be motivated to drink any cup for Christ.
41. Though the cup that Christ drank was filled with God's just wrath, and thus, no Christian will ever drink from this cup.
42. Yet, this does not mean that Christians will never have to drink from other cups filled with affliction and hardship.
43. The Scriptures actually speak of different cups—there is the cup of wrath, a cup of salvation, but also a cup of affliction.
44. For Christians, this cup of affliction is void of all judicial wrath and anger, it's affliction designed to help and not hurt.
45. (a) The cup of bereavement—every Christian will bury a loved one—it's a cup that we all will eventually drink.
46. (b) The cup of mistreatment—that is, mistreatment from the world, from your family, and even from professing Christians.
47. (c) The cup of sickness—this is a cup most Christians will drink, all manner of physical sicknesses and weakness.
48. (d) The cup of poverty—this too is a cup many Christians drink—not in this country—but in many other countries.
49. Dear brethren, these are bitter cups indeed, and what is the greatest motive for us to willingly drink them, but the fact that Christ willingly drank His cup for us.
50. Perhaps I can put it this way—Christians ought to be willing to drink any cup for Christ, in light of the fact that He drank the cup of His Father's wrath for us.
51. Exhortation 3—If Christ drank the wrath of God, then let every guilty sinner trust Him as their sin-bearer and wrath-appeaser.
52. I mentioned several cups of affliction that all Christians will drink, but there's actually only two cups that every person will drink from (the cup of salvation and the cup of damnation).
53. These are the two cups that every person will drink for all eternity—the cup of wrath or the cup of God's blessing.
54. How is it that people drink from the cup of salvation? They realize they deserve to drink from the cup of wrath and they look to Christ who drank it for them.
55. Ps.116:13—"I will take up the cup of salvation, and call upon the name of the LORD"—you call upon Him for salvation in Christ.
56. Dear young people, I want you to look upon the cross and behold your salvation—see Him there drinking your cup.
57. Hymn (175)—"In my place condemned He stood, sealed my pardon with His blood: Hallelujah! what a Savior!"