

“The Arrest of Jesus”  
Mark 14:41-52  
(Preached at Trinity, April 29, 2015)

I'm supplying these notes for the benefit of busy pastors who may be engaged in bi-vocational work, feeling the pressure of preparing to preach twice on the Lord's Day while trying to balance full-time secular work as well as caring for their families. While the notes of another man are no substitute for personal study, I pray that these may aid in the process of preparing to preach.

**Disclaimer:** These are the actual notes I bring with me to the pulpit, which I follow loosely. They are not designed for publication. While I try to make every effort to give proper credit to my sources from the pulpit, adequate citations will sometimes be absent from my notes. If anyone feels their intellectual material has been used without adequate citation, please contact me and I'll make immediate correction giving credit.

1. Last time we witnessed our Lord in the Garden of Gethsemane as He prayed in anguish before the Father. With Him were Peter, James, and John. The rest of the disciples remained at the entrance to the garden.  
We saw in this solemn moment the reality of our Lord's agony as He prayed.  
We saw His loneliness as His disciples slept.  
We saw His obedient trust as He prayed in **Verse 36** - "Abba! Father! All things are possible for You; remove this cup from Me; yet not what I will, but what You will."  
We saw His courage as He boldly prepared to meet His enemies.
2. In our passage tonight we witness the arrest of Jesus. It is a sobering sight as we begin to see the hatred of humanity towards the Lamb of God.  
As we read this text we need to remember that everything that was happening was according to God's ordained plan. At no time is Jesus to be seen as a victim.  
**Matthew 26:53-54 NAU** - "Or do you think that I cannot appeal to My Father, and He will at once put at My disposal more than twelve legions of angels? <sup>54</sup> "How then will the Scriptures be fulfilled, *which* say that it must happen this way?"  
**Mark 14:49-50 NAU** - "Every day I was with you in the temple teaching, and you did not seize Me; but *this has taken place* to fulfill the Scriptures." <sup>50</sup> And they all left Him and fled."  
**Acts 2:23 NAU** - "this *Man*, delivered over by the predetermined plan and foreknowledge of God, you nailed to a cross by the hands of godless men and put *Him* to death."  
**Acts 4:27-28 NAU** - "For truly in this city there were gathered together against Your holy servant Jesus, whom You anointed, both Herod and Pontius Pilate, along with the Gentiles and the peoples of Israel, <sup>28</sup> to do whatever Your hand and Your purpose predestined to occur."
3. My main focus in this sermon tonight is upon the various characters present at the arrest of our Lord. God uses individuals uniquely as He accomplishes His purposes. Often we can learn much about human nature, about ourselves, and about our God from observing those mentioned in the Bible.
4. Of course, the chief figure in this drama is Jesus Christ Himself.

I. First of all, we see Judas the betrayer

**Mark 14:44-45** - "Now he who was betraying Him had given them a signal, saying, "Whomever I kiss, He is the one; seize Him and lead Him away under guard." <sup>45</sup> After coming, Judas immediately went to Him, saying, "Rabbi!" and kissed Him."

A. Judas demonstrates the corruption of the human heart

1. Judas had accepted 30 pieces of silver – a small amount no more than \$20
2. He betrays Christ by kissing Him on the cheek pretending to be a loyal disciple

**Psalm 41:9 KJV** – "Yea, mine own familiar friend, in whom I trusted, which did eat of my bread, hath lifted up *his* heel against me."

**John 13:18 NAS** - "I do not speak of all of you. I know the ones I have chosen; but *it is* that the Scripture may be fulfilled, 'He who eats My bread has lifted up his heel against Me.'"

B. What caused Judas to do this dastardly deed? We have to presume that for most of the three years of Jesus' ministry Judas considered himself one of the twelve. What changed?

Was it overpowering greed? It's hard to imagine doing this for \$20

Was it prideful self-will seeking to drive Jesus to rise up as the Messiah?

Was it prideful desire for recognition and praise from the leaders of Israel?

1. Judas did not know the power of his own corrupt heart
2. Like Peter, he did not know the power of the adversary  
**John 13:27 NAU** - "After the morsel, Satan then entered into him. Therefore Jesus said to him, "What you do, do quickly."  
Satan would do whatever necessary to destroy Christ.
3. Jesus says, **Mark 14:21** - "For the Son of Man *is to go* just as it is written of Him; but woe to that man by whom the Son of Man is betrayed! *It would have been good for that man if he had not been born.*"  
Such is the case of all lost people. Those who love their life will wish that it had never begun  
**Mark 8:35 NAU** - "For whoever wishes to save his life will lose it, but whoever loses his life for My sake and the gospel's will save it."

II. Malchus

**Mark 14:47 NAU** – "And one of them that stood by drew a sword, and smote a servant of the high priest, and cut off his ear."

A. John identifies his name as Malchus

**John 18:10 NAU** - " Simon Peter then, having a sword, drew it and struck the high priest's slave, and cut off his right ear; and the slave's name was Malchus."

1. This man was probably an unwilling party to this night's events
2. He too was there according to the Divine direction of God

B. He experienced the healing touch of Jesus

**Luke 22:51 NAU** - " But Jesus answered and said, "Stop! No more of this." And He touched his ear and healed him."

1. Did this change him? Did he see Jesus as the Son of God?  
We'll never know for sure in this life
2. The truth is multitudes receive of God's mercy and goodness and go away unchanged.

### III. Peter

- A. Peter began with the same confidence he spoke earlier  
**Mark 14:29 NAU** - "But Peter said to Him, "*Even* though all may fall away, yet I will not."  
**Matthew 26:35 NAU** - "Peter said to Him, "Even if I have to die with You, I will not deny You. . ."
1. With great zeal and courage he pulls his sword to fight  
**Mark 14:47 NAU** - "But one of those who stood by drew his sword, and struck the slave of the high priest and cut off his ear."  
 John tells us it was Peter  
**John 18:10 NAU** - "Simon Peter then, having a sword, drew it and struck the high priest's slave, and cut off his right ear; and the slave's name was Malchus."
  2. It was in his own strength he acted. He did not wait for the Master's command
    - a. He once again was interfering with the Master's work. He too believed Jesus would rise up and seize power.
    - b. According to John, Peter struck at this servant after the Roman soldiers fell to the ground. Surely it was time!!  
**John 18:4-10 NAU** - "So Jesus, knowing all the things that were coming upon Him, went forth and said to them, "Whom do you seek?" <sup>5</sup> They answered Him, "Jesus the Nazarene." He said to them, "I am *He*." And Judas also, who was betraying Him, was standing with them. <sup>6</sup> So when He said to them, "I am *He*," they drew back and fell to the ground. <sup>7</sup> Therefore He again asked them, "Whom do you seek?" And they said, "Jesus the Nazarene." <sup>8</sup> Jesus answered, "I told you that I am *He*; so if you seek Me, let these go their way," <sup>9</sup> to fulfill the word which He spoke, "Of those whom You have given Me I lost not one." <sup>10</sup> Simon Peter then, having a sword, drew it and struck the high priest's slave, and cut off his right ear; and the slave's name was Malchus."
- B. Ultimately, we know the sad end
1. Again, however, we need to note that Peter followed Jesus to the courtyard while the rest except John fled
  2. He demonstrated His love for Christ even in his weakness. And in the end he was preserved unto salvation. God shows pity upon the weakness of His people.

### IV. The Soldiers

- Mark 14:43 NAU** - " Immediately while He was still speaking, Judas, one of the twelve, came up accompanied by a crowd with swords and clubs, *who were* from the chief priests and the scribes and the elders."  
**John 18:3 NAU** - " Judas then, having received the Roman cohort and officers from the chief priests and the Pharisees, came there with lanterns and torches and weapons."  
 σπεῖρα – the tenth part of legion or about 600 men.

- A. Although we are not sure of the meaning meant here it was a large number. Mark uses the word ὄχλος referring to a great multitude or crowd.
1. If not so tragic it might have been comical – so many people for one unarmed man
  2. The ridiculous scene was not lost to Jesus  
**Mark 14:48 NAU** - "Have you come out with swords and clubs to arrest Me, as *you would* against a robber?"
- B. These soldiers witnessed the mighty power of Jesus  
**John 18:6 NAU** - "So when He said to them, "I am *He*," they drew back and fell to the ground." - Ἐγώ εἰμι
1. Recognizing His mighty power they bound Him  
**John 18:12 NAU** - "So the *Roman* cohort and the commander and the officers of the Jews, arrested Jesus and bound Him"
  2. This mighty band of Roman soldiers were reduced to weaklings at the mere voice of Christ
  3. The sad thing is that they too were unchanged by what they witnessed
- V. The Disciples
- A. Not much is told of them except **Verse 50**  
"And they all left Him and fled."
- B. All of them had boasted with Peter of their courage  
**Mark 14:31 NAU** - "But *Peter* kept saying insistently, "*Even* if I have to die with You, I will not deny You!" And they all were saying the same thing also."
1. They all fell into the same trap as Peter
  2. This should serve as a grave warning to us  
**Matthew Henry** – “even good men know not what they will do, till they are tried.”
- VI. John Mark  
**Mark 14:50-52 NAU** - "And they all left Him and fled. <sup>51</sup> A young man was following Him, wearing *nothing but* a linen sheet over *his* naked *body*; and they seized him. <sup>52</sup> But he pulled free of the linen sheet and escaped naked."
- A. Much is conjecture here.
1. This is only found in Mark which leads many to believe Mark is writing about himself.
  2. The linen cloak would have been a sign of wealth – Mark was from such a family.
  3. It could be that Jesus held the Last Supper in the home of Mary, the mother of Mark. We know she had such a room.  
**Acts 12:12 NAU** - "And when he realized *this*, he went to the house of Mary, the mother of John who was also called Mark, where many were gathered together and were praying."
  4. It could be Mark was asleep and was awakened when the disciples left the upper room and headed to the garden
  5. It is also very possible that Judas and his band went to the house first searching for Jesus

6. He might have grabbed a light garment and left to follow them and watch from a distance or he might have ran forth to warn Jesus
- B. It appears that when all of Jesus disciples fled, Mark stayed. It wasn't until they tried to seize him that he fled.
- C. If all of this is true it speaks highly of his character and confidence
  1. He left Paul and Barnabus causing Paul to reject him  
**Acts 15:37-39 NAU** - "Barnabas wanted to take John, called Mark, along with them also. <sup>38</sup> But Paul kept insisting that they should not take him along who had deserted them in Pamphylia and had not gone with them to the work. <sup>39</sup> And there occurred such a sharp disagreement that they separated from one another, and Barnabas took Mark with him and sailed away to Cyprus."
  2. Later Paul recognized his true character. He proved himself a valued disciple  
**2 Timothy 4:11 NAU** - "Only Luke is with me. Pick up Mark and bring him with you, for he is useful to me for service."

## VI. Jesus

- A. His unshakable composure over against the fear of his disciples  
**Mark 14:48-49 NAU** - "Have you come out with swords and clubs to arrest Me, as *you would* against a robber? <sup>49</sup> "Every day I was with you in the temple teaching, and you did not seize Me; but *this has taken place* to fulfill the Scriptures."  
**Luke 22:48 NAU** - "But Jesus said to him, "Judas, are you betraying the Son of Man with a kiss?"
- B. His affirmation of His deity - ἐγώ εἰμι  
**John 18:4-5 NAU** - "So Jesus, knowing all the things that were coming upon Him, went forth and said to them, "Whom do you seek?" <sup>5</sup> They answered Him, "Jesus the Nazarene." He said to them, "I am He."
- C. His majestic authority as His captors fall to the ground  
**John 18:6 NAU** – "So when He said to them, "I am *He*," they drew back and fell to the ground."  
  1. Jesus could have killed them where they stood
  2. He gave them the opportunity to repent, yet they did not
- D. His ongoing compassion, even in the face of great personal danger  
**Luke 22:50-51 NAU** - "And one of them struck the slave of the high priest and cut off his right ear. <sup>51</sup> But Jesus answered and said, "Stop! No more of this." And He touched his ear and healed him."
- E. His unfailing provision for His disciples  
**John 18:8 NAU** - "Jesus answered, "I told you that I am *He*; so if you seek Me, let these go their way,"  
  1. Their faith was weak, yet He did not cast them away  
**Matthew 12:20 NAS** - "A battered reed He will not break off, And a smoldering wick He will not put out, Until He leads justice to victory."

2. None of the elect shall ever be lost  
**John 17:12 NAU** - "While I was with them, I was keeping them in Your name which You have given Me; and I guarded them and not one of them perished but the son of perdition, so that the Scripture would be fulfilled."
3. He still had work for them to do, and for us.

Conclusion:

1. There were many on the stage of this greatest drama. God uses all things in the grand tapestry of His Divine providence.  
God used each of these in the Garden as He was unfolding His eternal purpose of redemption for His elect people.
2. But Jesus took center stage. He was the focus. It was time for Him to accomplish His purpose as our Redeemer. He was on His way to the cross. Oh, that we might look to Him. Oh, that we might faithfully follow Him!
3. Most on this monumental evening failed to hail Him as Lord. And the same is true today. Have we?