

THE GOSPEL OF

JOHN

God in
Chains

INTRODUCTION

John 18:1-14

“Injustice is an inevitable fact of life in a fallen world. Sooner or later everyone will be misunderstood, misquoted, falsely accused, slandered, gossiped about, or openly maligned. Although we all share the experience, that doesn’t make it any easier to endure. We bear the image of God, who loves justice as much as He loves mercy, and that aspect of our nature longs for right to prevail over wrong, especially when our own well-being is at stake.

Jesus was the only person to live His entire life without failing morally, yet He was arrested, tried, convicted, and condemned to suffer a criminal punishment. His arrest was a betrayal, His trials a farce, His convictions illegal, and His punishment a travesty of justice. Yet throughout the ordeal, He remained calm, He answered sincere questions honestly, He spoke the truth with dignity, and He calmly resolved to allow the Father to vindicate Him at the proper time.”¹

OPEN IT

1. What’s one story that you’ve ever seen in the news where a person has been falsely accused?

¹ Charles R. Swindoll, *Insights on John*, Swindoll’s New Testament Insights (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 2010), 304.

READ IT

John 18:1-14

EXPLORE IT

2. Who and what did Judas bring with him to arrest Jesus?
3. What did Jesus say to the men when they told him they were looking for “Jesus of Nazareth?”
4. What was the reaction of the men when Jesus told them who He was?
5. What was Simon Peter’s reaction to the men arresting Jesus?
6. What did Caiaphas tell the Jews about arresting Jesus?

APPLY IT

“The Kidron had special historical significance, for King David crossed the Kidron when he was rejected by his nation and betrayed by his own son, Absalom (2 Samuel 15). Jesus had been rejected by His people and at that very moment was being betrayed by one of His own disciples!”²

7. King David was Israel’s most revered King. But he was a deeply flawed murderer and adulterer. How is Jesus superior to all human kings?

8. Judas spent three years with Jesus. He shared meals with him, listened to His teaching, and saw His miracles. And, yet, Judas betrayed Jesus. Describe the feeling of having someone close to you betray you.

² Warren W. Wiersbe, *The Bible Exposition Commentary*, vol. 1 (Wheaton, IL: Victor Books, 1996), 372–373.

Judas knew this place well (John 18:2), and so Jesus' choice of this location for his time with his disciples was surely deliberate. He went where he knew that Judas could find him. Jesus did not run from being betrayed; for our sakes he embraced it, waited for it, and pursued it. He was betrayed so that you might be eternally [accepted by God]. If you have been betrayed by people, remember that he was betrayed for you that you might be accepted by him.³

9. Describe ways this passage shows Jesus is not a victim nor a martyr.

10. Describe how it feels to know that Jesus did not run from being betrayed, but embraced it so you could be saved.

11. How does the fact that Jesus allowed Judas to betray Him help you respond with forgiveness when you've been betrayed?

³ Moody, Josh. John 13-21 For You: Revealing the Way of True Glory (God's Word For You) (p. 82). The Good Book Company. Kindle Edition.

Read John 18:6 again. When Jesus says “I AM,” He is making a claim to be God. It would be seen as blasphemous to Jews. But Roman soldiers might not understand the significance of the claim. However, John tells us these soldiers “drew back and fell to the ground.” Why? The soldiers would have been trained to avoid dropping to the ground because if you fall in battle you lose the war. The power of Jesus’ message was so strong it knocked the soldiers over! “As they picked themselves off the ground, they undoubtedly asked something like, “Was that an earthquake? What could have knocked us off our feet?” We the reader know exactly what happened. They were suddenly in the presence of deity.”⁴

12. What are some ways that people who don’t follow God should be able to clearly see Him at work around them?

In John 18:9, Jesus repeats something He originally said in John 6:35-40. No one who the Father gives Him will be lost. This means everyone who comes to Jesus in faith is His forever.

13. Describe some times when you doubt that you really belong to Jesus forever.

⁴ Grant R. Osborne, *John: Verse by Verse*, ed. Jeffrey Reimer et al., Osborne New Testament Commentaries (Bellingham, WA: Lexham Press, 2018), 412.

“Peter doesn’t understand that Jesus has been headed to this event from the first moment. The cup is the cup prepared for him by the Father. The ‘cup’ is full of divine judgment, and Jesus takes it to his lips and drains every last drop on the cross. To Peter the evening’s events are spiraling out of control. He thinks Jesus needs protection. He thinks someone needs to stop this arrest from taking place. He thinks someone needs to take charge. Little does he realize Jesus has choreographed every action, and nothing is out of step with his will. Peter’s actions to protect Jesus, though understandable, were useless. Indeed, they were a denial of why Jesus came. Jesus was born to die. He was not surprised by the turn of events; he was sovereign over them.”⁵

14. Peter faced long odds as he was likely standing before hundreds of Roman soldiers, but he fought anyway. What does this say about how Christians should stand firm for the Lord in spite of the odds?

15. Describe a time when you, like Peter, thought you were doing the right thing but were actually fighting against God’s plans?

⁵ Matt Carter, *Christ-Centered Exposition: Exalting Jesus in John* (Nashville, TN: B&H Publishing Group, 2017), 354.