



The Dynamic Gospel Study Guide – Book of John

Chapter 18

1 The sharing and encouragement completed, it was time to face the music. Jesus left together with His students to the other bank of the seasonal creek known as Kedron where there was a peaceful garden. They rested for a while there, waiting.

2 Jesus chose the spot precisely because it was well-known to Judas, the one who at that very moment was setting in motion the Great Betrayal. It was a private spot for the students to gather but easy to find.

3 Judas, now backed by a gang of Temple thugs along with religious riffraff appeared brandishing torches and weapons.

4 Jesus rose to meet them before anyone else. He said, “Who do you want?”

5 They answered, “Jesus from Nazareth.” “Jesus, eh? Well, here I am.” Judas was right in the middle of the belligerent crowd.

6 Something about His words stunned them so much they fell backward to the ground.

7 Jesus stated again “Who do you want?” “Jesus, of Nazareth” they replied, much less convincingly.

8 “I told you – **I AM**. If that is whom you want to arrest, get on with it. These men have nothing to do with your job. Let them go.”

9 So, Jesus words were fulfilled as spoken to His Father when He said, “not one have I lost of those who remain.”

10 Simon Peter was armed as well as any of the mob and he wasn't about to stand around doing nothing. He drew his sword and swung wildly. One of the Chief Priest's slaves named Malchus caught the blow on the side of his head. The stroke tore off the man's ear.

11 Jesus dressed down Peter on the spot. “Put that away – **NOW!** My Father has mapped all this out. It's hard enough as it is. Am I supposed to set aside this bitter cup because of **you?**”

12 The captain of the guard gave the signal. The crowd slammed Jesus to the ground and bound Him hand and foot.

13 Emboldened, the mob dragged Jesus triumphantly back into town straight to the house of Annas, the senior priest and father-in-law of Caiaphas, Chief Priest of the Temple that year.

14 It was the decision of Caiaphas to finally seize Jesus, fulfilling his own words that it's expedient for one man to die for the entire people.

15 In the crush of the masses it was difficult to follow, but Peter and another disciple kept close and followed Jesus right to the house of Annas. The second disciple personally knew a number of the house staff and convinced them to let him in.

16 Peter waited outside the courtyard door while the other negotiated. Finally, both were let in.

17 While the other disciple went about gathering information, Peter waited with the house staff in the courtyard. "So, what's your connection to this mess? Are you one of this crazy preacher's students?" asked the young woman who attended the door. "Who, me?" Peter replied. "No, I have nothing to do with Him," he lied.

18 There they all stood, servants, soldiers and nervous visitor, crowding around a charcoal fire trying to keep warm.

19 All the while, phase one of the trial was underway, with Caiaphas interrogating Jesus about His followers and teachings.

20 When finally allowed to speak Jesus replied, "What's there to figure out? I've been speaking plainly since I stepped onto the main stage. I've taught in meeting houses all over. I've preached right here in the Temple in front of all your sharpest minds. You've all heard every word. There are no secrets here.

21 "So why bother with all the pretense? If your ears are that dull ask any of the thousands who listened more carefully than you! They won't have any difficulty explaining the simple Truth they've heard."

22 Egos bruised, the Chief Priest's personal guard gave Jesus something to think about, slapping Him hard. "Is that the way to address the High Priest of God Himself?"

23 Jesus straightened and faced down the guard. "If I have slandered the man, prove it. If you can't, why resort to violence? You're just lashing out foolishly."

24 There Jesus stood, still hogtied like an escaped prisoner or rebellious slave. Annas has sent Him to Caiaphas that way to make a point.

25 All the while, impatient Peter was stuck in the courtyard, wedged between servant girls and the lowest ranking guards trying to shake off the chill. The regulars were growing suspicious of Peter and began to press him. "Are you sure you're not one of those Galilean wackos? You sure look like one." "Absolutely not!" Peter shouted.

26 One of the slaves related to Malchus - the very person Peter had attacked earlier - pressed him again. "I'm sure I saw you there in the garden with Jesus right at the center of the whole scuffle."

27 "I was NOT! I don't know the man!" shouted Peter, loud enough to wake the livestock. He staggered back a step and the rooster crowed that very moment.

28 Everything was in a tizzy. The crowd marched out of the house of Caiaphas dragging Jesus along. They threw Jesus into the Roman courthouse, not daring to cross the threshold themselves. There was ceremonial cleanliness to keep up and the Passover Feast continued later that day.

29 Out stepped Pilate the Roman governor, wondering what all the ruckus was. "This had better be good," he answered the crowd gathered outside the door. "What crime has this man committed, that you would dump Him in my living room at this hour?"

30 "If His hands were clean, we wouldn't turn Him over to you. He's one of ours, after all."

31 "If He's one of yours then deal with Him yourselves, for crying out loud! Your laws, your people." The religious leaders answered "That's the hitch, oh great governor. Your own law prevents us from executing this man."

32 And so it all happened just the way that Jesus said it would, right down to the type of execution He would suffer. The Romans executed their unwilling subjects in one way, and one way only.

33 Stuck with an unenviable conundrum, Pilate had Jesus brought into the courtroom. It was a political trial and Pilate questioned Jesus about His politics. “So, are You the king of this dignified nation?”

34 Jesus replied, “Did you come up with that yourself or are others whispering in your ear?”

35 “Am I a Jew hanging around with Temple priests?” Pilate answered. “Your own country is throwing You on the altar and I'm the fire. So, what have You done?”

36 Jesus answered, “My kingdom is not like yours, all caught up in earthly intrigue. If it was, I would have My followers working schemes to overthrow everyone in power. They wouldn't stand for this farce. I'd have a crown on My head already. But My kingdom doesn't work that way and never will.”

37 Pilate jumped on that. “So You are a king, after all! Now we can talk!” Jesus replied, “So you say. But I wasn't born to rule your kingdoms. I came into this world simply to tell the Truth and to gather all those who want to hear it. They hear My voice and know it's the Truth.”

38 Pilate was disappointed. The discussion was wandering off into philosophy. “What *is* truth?” he asked dismissively, marching off to confront the pesky religious leaders. He addressed the crowd still gathered and said “I can find no reason to condemn the man for anything.

39 “So you have a custom that the governor should release one prisoner at the Passover as a goodwill gesture. No better time than the present. Shall I release to you your king?”

40 The crowd went berserk, booing down Pilate. “Not Him,” they screamed. “Release Barabbas!” Barabbas was a notorious scoundrel and violent man.

Explain the Context:

From your reading provide a short answer to the following:

What is the theme of this chapter?	What is the BIG Idea?
What is something that surprised you?	What is this chapter <i>not</i> saying?

Take a moment to consider these questions:

- 1) Jesus could have gone anywhere to spend time in prayer. Why do you think He chose to go to this particular garden?
- 2) Why do you think such a large company of guards and police accompanied Judas to the garden?
- 3) Jesus makes another “I AM” statement in this passage. What is the effect of this statement?
- 4) Why do you think the soldiers took Jesus to Annas before taking Him to the High Priest?

- 5) How is Peter's denial of Jesus different from Judas' betrayal of Jesus? What does each of their responses lead them to?

- 6) What is the excuse the religious leaders give for bringing Jesus to Pilate?

- 7) Read verses 33-38a (the conversation between Pilate and Jesus). How might Pilate be trying to find a reason NOT to put Jesus to death?

- 8) What is the crowd's response to Pilate's suggestion that he release Jesus?

- 9) What does the crowd's response tell us about the hold the religious leaders had on the people?

Apply the Scripture

Write the verse that stood out to you while reading [in this translation or your favorite].

How does this verse challenge you? Does it reveal an attribute of God's character?

For further study:

- John 8:58
- Exodus 3:14
- John 17:12
- Isaiah 51:32
- Jeremiah 49:12
- Psalms 119:142