

Christ's Glory in the Garden

By David Harrell

Bible Text: John 18:1-11
Preached on: Sunday, July 12, 2015

Once again, we have a wonderful privilege, a magnificent opportunity to come together in freedom and open up the word of the living God and I would encourage you to join me by turning to John's Gospel, chapter 18, from which we have just read a few minutes ago and we will be looking closely at the first 11 verses where we see a magnificent display of the glory of Christ in the garden. As we come once again to do this, may I remind you that this is indeed an opportunity to worship the Lord and to experience the goodness of his grace as we come away from this world that is so wicked, so distressing. You know, as we experience the culture and the government now demanding that we jettison our beliefs, jettison what God has said and embrace the beliefs that they have, we find ourselves struggling at times but may I remind you that these things are going to happen. It's not going to get better, it's going to get worse. That's what sin always does. Man never drifts toward holiness, he always drifts in the opposite direction and as the world is being prepared for the antichrist, we look all the more for the return of the true and the living Christ and so that is our desire, once again, to come before the inspired word of God and see him clearly and exalt him from the depths of our heart.

What we have before us is an inspired firsthand account of Jesus' betrayal and arrest in the garden. This is a text that is filled with irony. It is filled with many wonderful insights that we need to apply to our lives but some of these truths will escape the casual reader and therefore we must look closely at them to be able to glean everything that the Spirit of God would have for us. As we prepare our minds, may I remind you the unique emphasis of John's Gospel is different than the other Gospels. The emphasis in Matthew's Gospel with respect to Jesus is that he is depicted as the sovereign King. Mark depicts him as the suffering servant. Luke portrays him as the Son of Man but John portrays him as the Son of God. Remember, he has said, "These things have been written to you that you might believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God and believing that you might have life in his name." So as we approach this passage, bear that in mind, that this is his unique emphasis but might I also remind you that throughout Scripture, the Son of God, the Messiah, is depicted as a Mediator. A Mediator between God and man. The Lord Jesus is therefore God's chosen representative who not only speaks and acts for God and obviously he is God, but he also represents the people before God.

Now, as we look at Scripture, we see the idea of mediation between God and man permeating the entirety of God's revelation to us in his word and throughout Scripture, the divine Mediator can be seen in one of 3 very unique functions: that of prophet, priest and ruler. Occasionally 2 of these functions will be seen in one person, for example, Melchizedek was both a priest and a ruler while Moses was a prophet and ruler. And in a very limited way, we see Samuel acting in all 3 ways but ultimately it's only God's own Messiah, the Lord Jesus Christ, where we see all 3 functions of prophet, priest and king

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being manifested. And we know that when he returns as King of kings and Lord of lords, he will establish his mediatorial kingdom, his messianic kingdom, here upon the earth where he will exhibit the fullness of these perfections in all 3 roles.

Now, it's interesting as we come to John's Gospel, we see that the apostle has been careful to note these 3 roles. For example, even in his Upper Room Discourse that began basically in chapter 13, we see him first as a prophet. He is the Word Incarnate. He speaks the words of his Father. There, fulfilling that role as a prophet, he instructs and encourages his despairing disciples. Then in chapter 17, he is depicted as priest. Like the high priest of the Old Testament, he bears the needs and the burdens of all whom the Father has given him. They are engrafted, if you will, upon his heart and he takes us all behind the veil into the presence of a holy God where he intercedes on our behalf.

Now, in chapter 18, we see him in all of these roles but especially in the role of King, the King of glory, that is now coming to redeem his people, deliver them from the kingdom of darkness. To rescue us from the tyranny of Satan and the bondage of sin. The sting of death. In fact, as we read earlier in verse 37 of chapter 18, "Pilate said to Him, 'So You are a king?' Jesus answered, 'You say correctly that I am a king. For this I have been born, and for this I have come into the world, to bear witness to the truth.'" Now today we know the Lord Jesus has asked us to pray, "Thy kingdom come, thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven," and this we do pray. We are longing for our King to return and the final word of the Lord Jesus himself uttered from his present throne of grace in heaven is the promise, "Surely I come quickly," to which John responds in the book of Revelation with the last prayer recorded in Scripture, "Even so, come Lord Jesus." But as we see in the historical narratives in the Gospel records, we can realize very quickly that a cross must precede the crown. As our great high priest, he must first make atonement for our sins before we can reign with him and here in John 18, we see our Savior and our King preparing for the final indignities of his betrayal, of his trial and his crucifixion.

Now, as we look at these 11 verses this morning, I would like to do so under 2 very simple categories. First, we will see John depict him as the Son of God and what I would like to focus on is, 1. The majesty of the Son of God. Then secondly, we will focus on the mercy of the Lamb of God. Now, you will recall that Jesus has just finished his high priestly prayer where he has interceded on our behalf, however, here we see him continuing in his high priestly role in chapter 18 and the chapters to follow. You will recall that the Old Testament high priest not only interceded for the burdens and the needs of the people but he also brought a sacrifice into the Holy of Holies to make atonement for their sins and this is precisely what Jesus is preparing to do only he, himself, will be the willing, ultimate and final sacrifice who will lay himself upon the altar to satisfy the just wrath of a holy God for all whom the Father had given to him.

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So let's look closely at what the Spirit of God tells us through his inspired apostle. Beginning in verse 1, "When Jesus had spoken these words," that is, all that had been recorded in chapters 13-17 up to this point, "He went forth with His disciples over the ravine of the Kidron." It's interesting, Kidron means "black waters" and perhaps there is some symbolism here; the black waters that Jesus was about to navigate as he made his way towards the cross. And the ravine Kidron is actually a very steep hill that descends about 200 feet from the outer base of the court, the outer court of the temple. Perhaps you've been there. I have. You walk down and at the bottom there is a dry stream except during the rainy season; a wadi they would call it and that water actually flows south and southeast all the way to the Dead Sea. And John tells us they went to "a garden, in which He entered with His disciples."

Now, the path that he chose has great historical significance. You may recall in 2 Samuel 15, King David traversed that same path when his son, Absalom, sought to overthrow him in his rebellion. And you may also recall that David was betrayed by his close advisor and friend, Ahithophel. And now a thousand years later we see the greater son of David, the Lord Jesus Christ, being betrayed and traversing this same great ravine, going up to the Mount of Olives and notice their destination is a garden. This would be the garden of Gethsemane on the western slope of the Mount of Olives, a beautiful place even to this day. In fact, some of the olive trees in the grove there are said to have their roots going all the way back, their seedling roots all the way back to the time of Jesus. It's an amazing thing.

Now, this implies the fact that he enters with his disciples, it implies that this was a privately owned garden, a gated garden, probably a garden that belonged to a wealthy donor, somebody that supported Jesus. And we know that this was a familiar retreat for Jesus and his disciples. This was a place of beauty; a place of peace; a sanctuary of intimate fellowship and sweet communion; a refuge of prayer and rest. But we all know that there is no safe place on this fallen planet, right? No place is safe. Even the most sacred sanctuary can be defiled. In fact, I believe this is one of Satan's preferred strategies to somehow defile that which is sacred; to poison that which is pure; to destroy that which is beautiful and blessed. It may be a marriage. It may be a family. It certainly can be a church and that's what we see happening here as the enemy of our souls and they enemy of Jesus prepares to do all that he can to thwart the purposes of God.

Verse 2, "Now Judas also, who was betraying Him, knew the place, for Jesus had often met there with His disciples." I find it interesting, it seems to be the habit of betrayers and slanderers to know the habits and special joys of those they wish to destroy. However, Jesus deliberately chose this place. He knew that Judas would be well acquainted with it.

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Moreover, Jesus knew that this would be a place where he could be captured quite easily. There would be no mob, no crowd that might come to his aid so it would make for an easy arrest and it also might be a safe place for the disciples to escape. But will you recall as we think through Scripture, in the past the Lord Jesus would hide himself from his enemies because the appointed hour of his atoning work had not yet come. For example, in John 8:59, we read the Jews "took up stones to cast at Him, but Jesus hid Himself and went out the temple." And just a few days before this scene in the garden, after his triumphal entry when they wanted to crown him as King, he says to them in chapter 12, verse 36, "While you have the Light, believe in the Light, so that you may become sons of Light." Then John says, "These things Jesus spoke, and He departed and hid Himself from them." How different the scene we have before us. Jesus is not hiding himself, he is actually going out and identifying himself. I find it fascinating because of the guilt and shame of his sin, the first Adam, hid himself in the garden but here the sinless second Adam steps forward to bear in his own body that guilt and shame for all sinners.

So, first, what I would like to focus on is John presenting to us the majesty of the Son of God. Will you notice that the Lord Jesus is in total control. His utter sovereignty and supremacy over the staggering indignities he was about to endure is undeniable. Folks, this is not Plan B, this is Plan A. Verse 3, "Judas then, having received the Roman cohort," well, this is interesting. A cohort was 1,000 men. They were broken down: 760 foot soldiers and 240 cavalry. They were led by a chiliarch which in verse 12 is translated "commander." But often in practice it would be merely 600 men. So what am I saying? That there was a bunch of soldiers. We don't know exactly how many but a lot of soldiers along with John says, "officers from the chief priests and the Pharisees." Now, this would have been the temple police who would be the primary arresting officers. And notice they "came with their lanterns and torches and weapons." Now, why would they do this? Did they perceive Jesus to be a threat? Well, perhaps. He was a miracle worker and I'm sure they weren't too certain whether or not there would be a crowd along with him standing in the shadows that they might have to somehow subdue. And they probably brought lanterns and torches in order to capture Jesus and the disciples thinking that they would try to disappear into the night. By the way, it's obvious from the Gospel accounts that they fully intended to arrest the disciples as well.

So here we have Judas, that traitor who pretended to be a follower of Jesus, but like so many people today, he only followed Jesus in hopes that he would fulfill his own selfish purposes like so many phony Christians today. And I want you to notice some of the irony here and John's Gospel is full of irony. Here we have a perfect illustration of the blind leading the blind. And here we have men carrying lanterns and torches in the darkness so that they can extinguish the light of the world. Here we see the spiritually dead coming to kill the only one in whom there is life. Here we witness powerless men

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bearing weapons to somehow overpower an omnipotent God. Here we have murderous men bearing swords to arrest God who is about to voluntarily give his life so that they can have eternal life. Violent men coming to subdue the Prince of Peace. It's insane, isn't it? And isn't that what sin does, creates insanity in the heart? But in this final act in the drama of God's redeeming purposes in Jesus, his beloved Son is unmoved. Do you see that? He is unmoved. He is unafraid. Moreover, he is about to unleash just a miniscule portion of his glory to validate yet again that he is who he claimed to be, the Son of God, the Messiah.

Verse 4, "So Jesus, knowing all the things that were coming upon Him," in other words, all the things that God had decreed in eternity past and agreed upon by the Son regarding the eternal covenant of his grace; all that had been predicted and pictured in the Old Testament pursuant to his redemptive purposes in his death, his burial, his resurrection, his ascension into glory, all of these things and yet the text says, "He went forth." He does not shrink back. He is committed to doing his Father's will to give his life to redeem all whom the Father had given him.

So he willingly now and he joyfully moves forward, ready to give his life for his sheep and he said to them, "'Whom do you seek?' They answered Him, 'Jesus the Nazarene.'" Now, you must understand that to be from Nazareth was not a good thing. This was basically a very derisive way of speaking about Jesus. The only way I can put it maybe in our vernacular is to put it this way, "We are looking for Jesus, the white trash redneck. This Jesus, the Nazarene. That's what we are looking for." He said to them, "I am He." You notice that the "He" is in italics. It's because it's not in the original language. It's put there so that we can better understand it. He basically said, "Ego eimi, I am. And Judas also, who was betraying Him, was standing with them." You see, Jesus uses the covenant name of God, the great I Am to identify himself and yet there we have Judas who had seen all of these things and like so many today who once professed to stand with Jesus but he was really just standing for himself, standing with anybody else in the world that would somehow help him accomplish his agenda.

"Whom do you seek? Jesus the Nazarene." And he said to them, "I am. So when He said to them, 'I am He,' they drew back and fell to the ground." Beloved, don't miss this supernatural scenario, what's happening here. Here Jesus reveals to his enemies and to the world that he is who he claims to be. And here he uses the covenant name of God, the title he used to describe himself, you will recall in John 8, he told the unbelieving Jews, "Before Abraham was born, I am," ego eimi. In other words, he referred to himself in the present continuous tense which sounds complicated and it seems odd but what he's saying is, "I am the one who has always and will always exist." This is a title indicating self-existence. There has never been a time he did not exist. You remember in Exodus 3,

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Moses asked God, "What shall I tell the people when they ask what is your name? And God said to Moses, 'I AM who I AM.'" There you have it again. And he said, "Thus you shall say to the sons of Israel, I AM has sent me to you." I am the preexistence, self-existent, eternal God. The uncreated Creator who is and will always be. This is the title that he used to respond to his enemies as they come to arrest him. It seems absurd, doesn't it?

"So when He said to them, 'I am He,' they drew back and fell to the ground." I find it interesting John is reflecting some 50 years past, obviously he was there, what that must have been like. Can you imagine just the sound of all of those people falling back, falling to the ground? What a demonstration of power. The Lord Jesus merely mentions his name and hostile men are rendered powerless. They are thrown on their backs to the ground. I remember as a young man, when I wrestled, that was the position you never wanted to get into because you were helpless. You have to somehow roll over so that you can get up. And what a demonstration of mercy because the Lord Jesus could have thrown them into hell but being the merciful God that he is, he gives them another chance to repent and embrace him as Savior and Lord. I shudder to think how many people have in some way been rendered powerless by a holy God, who in some way have been thrown upon their backs, knowing full well that he is up to something and rather than rolling over and then falling on their face in worship, they do what these men do: they get up and continue onward in their hatred and rejection of the Lord Jesus Christ.

My friend, if this is you, know this: the Spirit will not always strive with you. If you continue to ignore his merciful overtures, there will come a time when you will hear nothing but silence. You will feel nothing but apathy, perhaps even disdain. Those promptings will cease forever and you will die in your sins. In light of this, it dawns on me that the church, in fact, where we are at right now, is the most dangerous place on the planet because it is here where you hear the Gospel, it is here where Christ is exalted, it is here where sinners are called to repentance and if you come to this place and hear these truths and in many ways are thrown on your back in helplessness and you still do not cry out for his mercy, there remains nothing more for you than eternal guilt and condemnation. What a horrible thought. The more a man willfully rejects Christ, the more his heart will be hardened by the deceitfulness of sin. Folks, if this is you, if this is any of you, I plead with you to repent. Humble yourself before the Lord Jesus Christ while you have a chance.

These men drew back and fell to the ground. What a picture of man's utter helplessness in the presence of a holy God and how vividly this foreshadows that day when those who reject Christ will come before him as Judge rather than Savior. Augustine said it so well, "What shall they do when he comes to judge who did this when about to be judged? What

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shall be his might when he comes to reign who had this might when he was at the point to die?" Indeed, dear friends, such irresistible power that went forth from our Lord in his humiliation and mercy should cause us to ask the question, "What kind of power will go forth from the Lord Jesus when he speaks his name in the day of exaltation and wrath when he pronounces judgment upon the wicked?"

Well, as if to give them another chance, he says in verse 7 that, "He again asked them, 'Whom do you seek?' And they said, 'Jesus the Nazarene.'" Notice they did not at this point as they came to their senses, as they no doubt stood back to their feet after having been knocked backwards, they did not say, "We seek the great I AM. We seek the uncreated Creator of the universe who is and who always will be. We seek God manifest in human flesh. We seek you, Lord Jesus." They did not say that. No, we see Jesus the Nazarene expressing their disdain for Jesus and their sense of superiority over him.

Now, the text does not say but perhaps some of these men in this arresting detachment just stood up with the rest of them in obedience to their chiliarch and yet in their heart they believed in Jesus. We don't know. You know, I would imagine some of them did. Someday we may meet them in glory. Won't that be great to be able to talk with them about that? Man, I'd love to hear that first-hand account. But, my friends, if they did not, then their guilt and condemnation will be all the more just. To experience the majesty and the power of the Son of God and then to experience his undeserved mercy to allow you another chance to repent and to believe and then to reject him, only the most hardened, vile sinner would do such a thing. What will they be able to say in the day of judgment?

But I believe there is another reason why Jesus asked them again, "Whom do you seek?" It's because he wanted them to verbalize a second time that they were under orders to arrest him and him alone and not the disciples because he knew they intended to do that. Notice verse 8, "Jesus answered, 'I told you that I am He; so if you seek Me, let these go their way,' to fulfill the word which He spoke, 'Of those whom You have given Me I lost not one.'" Beloved, we have seen the majesty of the Son of God, now let's look at the mercy of the Lamb of God because here Jesus demonstrates his great love for his own. He has promised to love them to the uttermost. Here we have a picture of the Good Shepherd protecting his sheep unlike the hireling who would run at the first sight of a wolf. But also we have a marvelous picture of a substitute, of one who steps forward to take the place of sinners. You will recall how this was pictured back in Genesis 22 when Abraham was about to sacrifice his beloved son and he told Abraham that, "God will provide for himself the lamb." And as he prepared to strike his son, you will recall the angel of the Lord called to him from heaven and said, "Do not stretch out your hand against the lad, and do nothing to him; for now I know that you fear God, since you have not withheld your son, your only son, from Me. Then Abraham raised his eyes and

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looked, and behold, behind him a ram caught in the thicket by his horns; Abraham called the name of that place The LORD Will Provide." My friends, this is what we have pictured here in the garden. We see Jesus preparing to offer himself as a substitute for sinners. We witness a foretaste of his saving work where God delivers sinners from their sin and the kingdom of darkness by providing his Son, the spotless Lamb of God, as their substitute.

So he says, "If you see Me, let these go their way." Then John says, "to fulfill the word which He spoke, 'Of those whom You have given Me I lost not one.'" This is an interesting statement because here we see by implication that their faith would have been so weak that it would not have been able to endure an arrest and all of the disappointment, all of the confusion. Imagine, having all of your hopes built up and you are certain that this is the Messiah, the Son of God. He's about to establish his kingdom and now he is arrested; we are arrested; we are all killed. It would be more than they could bear. Jesus knew this and so Jesus is doing what only he can do. Beloved, don't let this escape you: not only does our Savior save sinners, he secures them forever, thus fulfilling, John says, "the word which He spoke, 'Of those whom You have given Me I lost not one.'"

You know, we sing about this often. You remember the great hymn, "A Mighty Fortress is our God," Martin Luther. One of the verses goes like this,

"Did we in our own strength confide,
Our striving would be losing,
Were not the right man on our side,
The man of God's own choosing.
Dost ask who that may be?
Christ Jesus, it is he;
Lord Sabaoth, his name, (Sabaoth is Hebrew for "Lord of Hosts)
The Lord of Hosts, is his name,
From age to age the same,
And he must win the battle."

Now, I find it interesting that it is at this point in the history of what happened in the garden that Luke tells us that Judas comes over to the Lord and gives him a kiss. Luke 22:47, Judas "approached Jesus to kiss Him. But Jesus said to him, 'Judas, are you betraying the Son of Man with a kiss?'" What a picture of the kind of phony self-serving love of those who claim to love Christ but, in fact, they really love themselves and they only love him for what they are going to try to manipulate him to do for them. Then they

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think that somehow their phony affection would be able to assuage his wrath and somehow silence their conscience.

Well, all of this was more than Peter could bear and if anyone is going to do something stupid, it's going to be Peter. He was one of those, as I say: ready, fire, aim kind of guys. I've been there many times myself and, by the way, isn't it great to see what the Spirit of God did with Peter? Doesn't that give you hope? It gives me hope. Well, "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." By the way, Luke tells us in his Gospel that Jesus then reached down and he healed that ear, another display of his supernatural power. I mean, after falling back and then to see Jesus do this, you know, you can only say the only reason a person would not believe is because somehow they are spiritually dead and that's exactly the answer.

Now, at first glance, one might look at what Peter did and say, "My, what a noble act of love and bravery," but in fact, dear friends, this was an act of unmitigated selfishness and pride. Notice Jesus says to Peter, "Put the sword into the sheath; the cup which the Father has given Me, shall I not drink it?" You see, Peter was so self-deceived, his theology was so errant, he was so spiritually arrogant and overconfident that he was convinced that he was fighting for the Lord when in fact he was fighting against him. You see, Jesus didn't need Peter to protect him, he needed Peter to trust him and obey him. But here's what was going on in Peter: he simply could not come to grips with a dying Messiah. He refused to humble himself to Jesus' plan of redemption. Peter had his own agenda, "Establish the kingdom for my good and my glory which I rightly deserve." That's what's going on in his heart. "I'll have no more of this talk of leaving without me, of a dying Messiah. That's just not part of my theology." You will recall in Matthew 16, Jesus began to show his disciples that he was going to go to Jerusalem and suffer many things from the elders and chief priests and scribes and be killed and be raised up the third day and what was Peter's response? One of humble submission? "Lord, I don't understand this but I'm going to trust you. This is your plan." No, Peter took him aside, Matthew tells us, and began to rebuke him saying, "God forbid it, Lord, this shall never happen to you." And what was Jesus' response? "Thanks, Peter, you know, I just appreciate so much your love, your concern for me." No, he turned to Peter and he said, "Get behind Me, Satan." It doesn't get any stronger than that. "You are a stumbling block to Me for you are not setting your mind on God's interest but man's." Beloved, this is a problem for all of us. How many times do we think we know better than God? And in how many ways in our lives do we just kind of automatically assume that he needs to submit his will to ours? Then as a result we feed our pride with self-serving spiritual delusions that nourish an inflated sense of overconfidence.

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Well, this was the Frankenstein Peter was creating in his own heart. Beloved, what a dangerous thing it is to be at cross purposes with a holy God. You will recall in John 13, Jesus washed the feet of the disciples. He was trying to teach them the need of ongoing spiritual cleansing and the process of sanctification and humility because he knew they were bickering with one another over who was going to be first in the kingdom and what's Peter's knee-jerk response? One of humble submission and teachability? No, he says, "Never shall you wash my feet." In other words, "I know what's best. This isn't part of my agenda. I'm not going to submit to your plan. I'm looking for a Messiah who is...what is this foot washing stuff? You're not going to wash my feet." Later in John 13, Peter being concerned about Jesus' talk of leaving them says, "Lord, where are you going?" Jesus said, "Where I go you cannot follow me now but you shall follow later." "Wrong answer. No, no, no, this isn't what I want to hear. This doesn't fit my agenda. This is not part of my theology." Peter said to him, "Lord, why can I not follow you right now?" Said differently, "You owe me an explanation. Let's debate this a little bit. Obviously you've got something wrong here. I need to help straighten you out." He goes on to say, "After all, I lay down my life for you. Can't you see how good I am? How deserving I am that you submit your will to mine?"

Well, there is the self-serving spiritual delusion that nourished his inflated sense of overconfidence. Of course, Jesus saw right through that. You will recall back in John 13:38, Jesus said, "Will you lay down your life for Me? Really? Truly, truly, I say to you, a cock shall not crow until you deny Me 3 times." Folks, this is what's going on in his heart and we have all got to guard our hearts against this. We are all so susceptible to this type of thing. Again, how often do we think we know better than God? And what a dramatic object lesson of our proclivity to be controlled by our flesh and to assume that we are being religious in doing so and that God is impressed. And how easy it is for us to put on a show of great religious fervor when, in fact, all we're doing is promoting ourselves or promoting some personal preference that we have elevated to the status of divine fiat or some pet doctrine that we want to pound on other people as if we are doing God some wonderful thing when, in fact, we are just quoting him to promote ourselves. Folks, when this gains momentum in your life, it will define your character and it will quench the Spirit and God will chasten you because he loves you.

Again, notice the irony, a man who is about to deny Christ will not deny himself. Convinced he loves the Lord so much, he will give his life for him. He unwittingly seeks to prevent the Lord from loving him so much to give his life for him. He simply cannot come to grips with Jesus as the Lamb of God and in his perceived religious zeal, he was actually at cross purposes with God's plan of redemption. John Calvin said it so well, quote, "It was exceedingly thoughtless in Peter to attempt to prove his faith by his sword while he could not do so by his tongue. When he is called to make confession, he denies

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his Master and now without his Master's authority, he raises a tumult." Calvin went on to say, "Warned by so striking an example, let us learn to keep our zeal within proper bounds and as the wantonness of our flesh is always eager to attempt more than God commands, let us learn that our zeal will succeed ill whenever we venture to undertake anything contrary to the word of God."

So Jesus said to Peter, "Put the sword into the sheath; the cup which the Father has given Me, shall I not drink it?" And of course, the cup of which Jesus speaks to Peter is that cup of divine wrath. We see it in the Old Testament. That cup is always associated with suffering and the bearing of God's wrath. This will be the cup that the Lamb of God will drink to the very dregs. This is the cup of which he had just said a few minutes earlier in the garden as he sweat great drops of blood in the anguish of his soul, "My Father, if it is possible, let this cup pass from Me. Yet not as I will but as Thou wilt." My friends, this was the cup that would in just a few hours cause him to say, "My God, My God, why hast Thou forsaken Me?" Peter, don't try to stop this in your own self-serving pride. In your own ignorance.

Well, with this, Jesus surrenders himself to the arrest. They lead him away like a lamb to the slaughter as Isaiah says, "Like a sheep that is silent before his shearers, so He did not open His mouth." Beloved, as we close this morning, may I challenge you with just a couple of thoughts. First of all, I hope you will see that there is nothing more important in all of the universe than doing the will of the Father. I pray that this is the attitude of your heart and I would challenge you to examine your heart. Having seen Christ's glory in the garden and having seen God's perfect plan unfold, examine your heart and ask yourself this question, "Lord, where am I at cross purposes with you? Where am I seeking my own agenda trying to promote myself?" And ask the Holy Spirit to help you see this and he will do so. He will do so and know this, that your sin will manifest itself most clearly in the context of other relationships: first of all, your relationship with God and then your relationship with those who you know best and those around you. Know that pride comes before a fall and Peter fell hard, didn't he? Boy, he fell hard. "Let him who thinks he stands take heed lest he fall." So let's examine our hearts to these ends that God may have the glory in our lives and that Christ might have the preeminence in all things.

Christ's Glory in the Garden

By David Harrell

Bible Text: John 18:1-11

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Let's pray together.

Father, again we rejoice in these eternal truths. They speak to us so powerfully, so practically. But Spirit of God, apart from your sanctifying work, there is nothing more than words so I pray that by your power you will help us to be doers and not mere hearers. And Lord, for anyone that might be within the sound of my voice that knows nothing of saving grace, that knows nothing of the miracle of the new birth, that knows nothing of what it means to have sins forgiven and be declared righteous, O God, by your grace will you cause them to see the truth of their sin and the Savior and embrace him in repentant faith? I ask all of these things in the precious name of the one who gave himself for us. Amen.

We pray you have been edified by this presentation. You have been listening to Pastor, Bible Teacher and Author, Dr. David Harrell. For more information or for other messages from Dr. Harrell, please visit the Olive Tree Christian Resources website at otcr.org.

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