

Jesus Is Arrested

SESSION IN A SENTENCE: In Gethsemane, Jesus affirmed His Father’s plan for Him to submit to death as the Messiah who would provide salvation.

BACKGROUND PASSAGE: Mark 14:27–15:5

Deep below the surface of the earth, around one hundred miles down in the upper part of the earth’s mantle, extreme pressure and high temperatures forge common carbon atoms together into crystals, which we call diamonds. Once a diamond is formed, it then must take a violent journey of riding waves of volcanic rock erupting toward the surface of the earth, where it can be mined for commercial use.¹



What was a pressure-intense situation you have faced, and what was the result of it in your life?

Group Time

Point 1: Jesus affirms the will of the Father (Mark 14:32-36).

³² Then they came to a place named Gethsemane, and he told his disciples, “Sit here while I pray.” ³³ He took Peter, James, and John with him, and he began to be deeply distressed and troubled. ³⁴ He said to them, “I am deeply grieved to the point of death. Remain here and stay awake.” ³⁵ He went a little farther, fell to the ground, and prayed that if it were possible, the hour might pass from him. ³⁶ And he said, “‘Abba’, Father! All things are possible for you. Take this cup away from me. Nevertheless, not what I will, but what you will.”

Throughout the Gospels, we read of Jesus’ many great works and miracles. He healed the crowds, raised the dead, fed thousands, preached with authority, and confronted the religious elites. He also showed abundant compassion and even wept for those who would reject Him. But here in the garden of Gethsemane, we observe a sharp transition in His disposition as He prays ahead of His crucifixion, and we get a glimpse of what it will mean for Him to suffer.

What was the cause of Jesus’ distress? Jesus was facing more than just physical suffering and death on the cross. He would also drink a “cup” that He did not want to drink. This cup, different from the cup in the Lord’s Supper, was a metaphor for the wrath of God against all that is unholy and unrighteous—against all sin. Though He asked for the cup to pass from Him, no alternative existed, so Jesus, the God-man, submitted to His Father’s will and resolved to obey His Father and secure the salvation of sinners like you and me.

God Is Unchanging: God’s being and _____, along with the ethical commitments He has given, cannot change. God’s unchanging nature is good news for Christians, for it guarantees that God does not change His _____ or go back on His _____.



What are some reasons to be grateful that God is unchanging?

Point 2: Jesus affirms the plan foretold in Scripture (Mark 14:43-49).

⁴³ While he was still speaking, Judas, one of the Twelve, suddenly arrived. With him was a mob, with swords and clubs, from the chief priests, the scribes, and the elders.

⁴⁴ His betrayer had given them a signal. “The one I kiss,” he said, “he’s the one; arrest him and take him away under guard.” ⁴⁵ So when he came, immediately he went up to Jesus and said, “Rabbi!” and kissed him. ⁴⁶ They took hold of him and arrested him. ⁴⁷ One of those who stood by drew his sword, struck the high priest’s servant, and cut off his ear.

⁴⁸ Jesus said to them, “Have you come out with swords and clubs, as if I were a criminal, to capture me? ⁴⁹ Every day I was among you, teaching in the temple, and you didn’t arrest me. But the Scriptures must be fulfilled.”

Mark was careful to mention that Judas, Jesus’ betrayer, was one of the twelve disciples. This magnifies the horror of his offense—one of Jesus’ handpicked followers chose to sell Him out to the religious leaders. Judas knew exactly where Jesus would be because Jesus had retreated to this garden often (Luke 22:39). Furthermore, the kiss Judas gave Jesus, a sign of deep friendship and devotion, was a deep betrayal, like stabbing Jesus in the back.

Voices from the Church

“Dante found Brutus, Cassius, and Judas in the deepest pit of hell. Those who are traitors, who win the trust of their friends and then betray from the inside, are the most wicked of all. Indwelling sin is our Judas.”²

—Kris Lundgaard



What are some ways people respond to betrayal?

Jesus prayed fervently for the cup to pass, but notice how Jesus surrendered to the Father’s will. Even when sinners “took hold of him,” He remained calm. Why? Because He knew His Father’s sovereign purposes were being accomplished. This betrayal, arrest, and everything that followed were a fulfillment of the prophetic Scriptures. This was all part of the Father’s good plan (Acts 2:23; 4:27-28).

Christ as Sacrifice: There are several _____, symbols, and _____ in the Old Testament that foreshadowed Christ as being the sacrificial Lamb of God who would take away the _____ of the world permanently, “once and for all.”

Point 3: Jesus affirms His identity as Messiah (Mark 14:53,60-64).

⁵³ They led Jesus away to the high priest, and all the chief priests, the elders, and the scribes assembled.

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⁶⁰ Then the high priest stood up before them all and questioned Jesus, “Don’t you have an answer to what these men are testifying against you?” ⁶¹ But he kept silent and did not answer. Again the high priest questioned him, “Are you the Messiah, the Son of the Blessed One?” ⁶² “I am,” said Jesus, “and you will see the Son of Man seated at the right hand of Power and coming with the clouds of heaven.”

⁶³ Then the high priest tore his robes and said, “Why do we still need witnesses? ⁶⁴ You have heard the blasphemy. What is your decision?” They all condemned him as deserving death.

What followed Jesus’ unjust arrest was a travesty of a trial, including false accusations and false testimony (Mark 14:55-59). This was not a court looking for the truth but a charade searching for a means to justify their intention to murder Jesus. Yet Jesus remained silent; He refused to dignify the lies leveled against Him. The Messiah is a great example of what it looks like to suffer while resting peacefully in the sovereign grace of God over and above despair (1 Pet. 2:21-25).



What can believers communicate through their silence in the face of false accusations?

False accusations could not get a response out of Jesus, but a straightforward question about His identity did. If Jesus falsely denied He were the Messiah and Son of God or chose to remain silent once more, then He might have been allowed to go free. But Jesus answered affirmatively and clearly, effectively sealing His fate of crucifixion. Though He is the rightful Ruler and Judge over all the earth, Jesus allowed Himself to be tried and judged by sinful, deceitful human beings because His time to die had come.



How has faith in Jesus changed your identity?

Daily Study

Day 1: Read Mark 14:27-31

The disciples were so certain that they would never fall away and would always have Jesus' back. Peter dug his heels in the most, but Jesus doubled down with specifics regarding Peter's fall: Peter would deny he even knew Jesus three times!

Before we are tempted to look shamefully upon Peter and the other disciples for their inevitable cowardice, we should consider how often we are tempted to abandon our allegiance to Jesus and compromise on biblical convictions while under pressure:

- When your coworker is bad-mouthing Christians and you avoid the conversation because you don't want to be labeled as a Bible-thumping wingnut
- When you know you shouldn't laugh at a joke but you're afraid others will see you as an uptight prude if you don't
- When you caved to the cultural pressure to abandon the good truths that are taught in the Scripture because the culture considers it outdated dogma

The good news is that although we fail Jesus all the time, He never fails us. Even when the pressure is on, He never abandons the will of the Father, which includes His love for us.

 In what areas of life will you be a witness to the gospel rather than abandoning your allegiance to Jesus?



Voices from Church History

“How now shall we live? By embracing God's truth, understanding the physical and moral order he has created, lovingly contending for that truth with our neighbors, then having the courage to live it out in every walk of life. Boldly and, yes, joyously.”⁴

—Charles Colson (1931-2012)

Day 2: Read Mark 14:32-42

The contrast of Jesus' disposition in this passage and Book of Mark thus far is jarring. Up to this point, Jesus has shown a remarkable sense of controlled confidence. In fact, His calm dignity stirred up awe and amazement among those He encountered. Even when predicting His own death, there wasn't the slightest hint of dread or trepidation.

In the garden of Gethsemane, however, we get another perspective. The mighty Messiah now pleaded with the Father to be spared, if possible, from the cup of His wrath. Jesus was so gripped by the horror of this looming suffering that its weight dropped Him to His knees.

In His humanity, Jesus needed to express His heart to the Father, He needed to make His request known to God. This remarkable display of humility from Jesus, God's Son, reveals the great suffering the Messiah went through to save sinners like you and me.

 What does the weight of Jesus' agony say about the weight of God's wrath against our sin?

Day 3: Read Mark 14:43-52

The gravity of Judas's betrayal cannot be missed. He was one of the Twelve, a chosen disciple of Jesus. Imagine how the other disciples must have felt when one of their own, a teammate and fellow soldier in the trenches of ministry, did the unthinkable and betrayed Jesus for a lump of extra cash.

Imagine a pastor of your church going into a room for his regularly scheduled time of prayer, and one of his staff members decides to betray him. Knowing exactly where the pastor would be and when, the staff member leads a mob there to interrupt the pastor's prayer time in order to betray him and have him removed from the church property.

Jesus was in the garden of Gethsemane, a quiet place of prayer, and Judas chose this spot to interrupt and betray Jesus for the reward of a few pieces of silver and the pseudo-respect of the hypocrites in power. But the weight of his betrayal came back on his own head (Matt. 27:1-5).

 In what ways are you tempted by earthly delights to the detriment of your faith commitment to Christ?

Day 4: Read Mark 14:53-65

The main charge for prosecuting Jesus was that He threatened to destroy the temple, which would be an act of vandalism and blasphemy. Jesus predicted the temple would be destroyed at some later date (Mark 13:1-2), but He never called for it to be destroyed. And He did say the temple could be destroyed and He would rebuild it in three days, but He was speaking about the temple of His body experiencing crucifixion and resurrection (John 2:18-22).

The irony is thick as the Sanhedrin continues to judge the One who is the righteous Judge of all humanity. Although He is the very embodiment of truth, they seek to condemn Him on false charges. Although He is the One who gives men hands to serve and once healed a blind man with His saliva, these enemies blindfold Him before taking turns spitting on Him and beating Him with their fists.

Why would Jesus submit Himself to such shameful indignity at the hands of His sinful creatures? Because He was motivated by His love for the Father and for sinners like you and me.



How will you honor Jesus as Savior and Lord today because He endured so much shame and suffering for you?

Day 5: Read Mark 14:66-15:5

Peter walked with Jesus for three years. He spent almost every waking hour with Jesus from the moment he was called to follow Him. He learned the Scriptures by sitting at Jesus' feet. He witnessed the kingdom of God by standing next to Jesus as He performed miracle after miracle. He was invited into the inner circle of Jesus; in fact, he was one of only three men invited by Jesus to pray with Him in Gethsemane. Despite his vow to the contrary, this same Peter denied Jesus three times.

In the "courtroom," Jesus bravely and courageously declared His identity. In the courtyard, Peter cowardly and shamefully denied his as Jesus' disciple and friend.

The good news for Peter, and for us, is there is grace for sinners in Jesus Christ, even for betrayers who repent.



What betrayals and sins do you need to repent of, trusting in the grace of Jesus for forgiveness and restoration?

UNIT 25

SESSION 1

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2. Lesslie Newbigin, *The Gospel in a Pluralist Society* (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 1989) [eBook].

SESSION 2

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2. D. L. Moody, “The Prodigal,” in *The D. L. Moody Collection*, ed. and comp. James S. Bell Jr. (Chicago, IL: Moody, 1997), 346–47.
3. David Wenham, *The Parables of Jesus* (Downers Grove, IL: IVP, 1989), 101.

SESSION 3

1. Amanda Bible Williams, in *She Reads Truth*, by Raechel Myers and Amanda Bible Williams (Nashville, TN: B&H, 2016), 6–7.
2. G. R. Beasley-Murray, *Gospel of Life: Theology in the Fourth Gospel* (Peabody, MA: Hendrickson, 1991), 107.
3. Quoted in “Only one life, ‘twil soon be past...” by Thomas and Elizabeth West, *The West London Life*, December 31, 2018, www.thewestlondonlife.com/single-post/2018/12/31/Only-one-life-twil-soon-be-past.
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2. Athanasius, “Homily on the Resurrection of Lazarus,” quoted in *John 11–21*, ed. Joel C. Elowsky, vol. IVb in *Ancient Christian Commentary on Scripture: New Testament* (Downers Grove, IL: IVP, 2007), 13.
3. Warren W. Wiersbe, *The Bible Exposition Commentary: New Testament*, vol. 1 (Colorado Springs, CO: Victor, 2001), 334.

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2. Sinclair B. Ferguson, *A Heart for God* (Colorado Springs, CO: NavPress, 1985), 155.
3. Louie Giglio, *The Air I Breathe* (Colorado Springs, CO: Multnomah, 2003), 22.

SESSION 2

1. Andrew Wilson, *Unbreakable: What the Son of God Said About the Word of God* (IOPublishing, 2014) [eBook].
2. Kim Huat Tan, *Mark*, in *New Covenant Commentary* (Eugene, OR: Cascade Books, 2015) [Wordsearch].
3. Augustine, *Tractate on John* 40.9.13, quoted in *Mark*, eds. Thomas C. Oden and Christopher A. Hall, vol. II in *Ancient Christian Commentary on Scripture: New Testament* (Downers Grove, IL: IVP, 2001) [Wordsearch].

SESSION 3

1. John Stott, quoted in “Between Two Worlds: An Interview with John R. W. Stott,” by R. Albert Mohler Jr., August 8, 2011, albertmohler.com/2011/08/08/between-two-worlds-an-interview-with-john-r-w-stott.
2. Derek Kidner, *Genesis: An Introduction and Commentary* (Downers Grove, IL: IVP, 1967, reprint 2008), 73.
3. Anne Askew, *The Latter Examination of Anne Askew (1547)*, ed. John Bale; quoted in *Luke*, ed. Beth Kreitzer, vol. 3 in *Reformation Commentary on Scripture: New Testament* (Downers Grove, IL: IVP, 2015) [Wordsearch].
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5. C. S. Lewis, *Mere Christianity* (New York: Touchstone, 1980), 181.

SESSION 4

1. See “Diamonds Unearthed,” by Cate Lineberry, *Smithsonian Magazine* (December 2006), www.smithsonianmag.com/science-nature/diamonds-uneearthed-141629226.
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3. Dexter Maben, “Mark,” in *South Asia Bible Commentary*, gen. ed. Brian Wintle (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 2015), 1322.
4. Charles Colson and Nancy Pearcey, *How Now Shall We Live?* (Wheaton, IL: Tyndale, 1999), 487.

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1. Cyril of Jerusalem, *Sermon on the Paralytic* 12, quoted in *Mark*, eds. Thomas C. Oden and Christopher A. Hall, vol. II in *Ancient Christian Commentary on Scripture: New Testament* (Downers Grove, IL: IVP, 2001) [Wordsearch].
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3. N. T. Wright, *Surprised by Hope* (New York: HarperOne, 2008), 252–53.

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SESSION 3

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