

Part 80: Trust and Betrayal

Paul Cheng | Luke 22:39-53

February 4, 2024

This year, on June 6th, will be the 80th anniversary of D-Day. I had the privilege of going on a leadership trip to Normandy during my time in Army ROTC, and it was an experience I will never forget. If you're not familiar with D-Day, at this point in the war, Germany was taking some losses, but they were not giving up much ground. They had essentially taken over the continent of Europe, but Hitler's forces were now spread pretty thin because he was not only fighting the Allied forces on the Western front, but he also awakened the Soviet Union in the East.

But Hitler still had the upper hand in Europe. The Allied Forces could not get a footing in Europe due to Hitler's fortified defenses on the coastlines of Europe. And so, it was decided, that on D-Day, on H-Hour, the Allied forces would invade Europe in hopes of taking back the continent of Europe.

When I visited Normandy, I couldn't get over standing on the beaches, and looking at the sheer boldness it took to even consider invading this section of France. You stand on the beaches of Omaha and see 50ft cliffs in front of you. When they hit the beach, they immediately stood in front of the Germans.

What were you doing when you were 17 or 18? I want you to imagine being fresh out of high school and looking at evil in the eye like that. I want you to imagine the fear that might've paralyzed them. But there are some of you in this room that don't have to imagine this, because you've lived through war.

We have historically called this generation the 'greatest generation,' because of what they did during WWII. These men laid down their lives not only for their country and the free world, but more importantly, for the brothers next to them. As my wife and I were reminiscing over this, we couldn't help fighting back tears thinking about their sacrifice. Yet how much more do we stand in awe of the one who faced sin and death, and said, "Not my will, but yours be done."

Jesus, the perfectly obedient and spotless lamb, willingly laid down his life for us, stared down evil, and said to each and every one of us, I'm doing this for you. This certainly seems like a Savior worth worshiping. My hope this morning is that you leave here more in love with Jesus, because of his perfect obedience to the Father, and his willingness to take on all our sins.

This will be our main point this morning. **We can trust the Father because Jesus trusted him for everything.** Luke is going to show us this in two ways. First, we will see that Jesus did this by **submitting to the Father**, and then we will see that Jesus did this by **resting in the Father**.

Our first point this morning is going to have 2 subpoints. The first subpoint is **prayer and spiritual warfare**. We're going to begin this morning by doing a bit of Bible study. I'm going to read **verses 39-46** again for us and I want you to listen for repeated phrases and themes.

I think the most obvious repeated phrase in this section is "Pray that you may not enter into temptation." Luke uses it twice; once in verse 39 and then again in verse 46. So, you'll notice that these two lines act as a bracket for the rest of the section.

Luke is purposeful in using this tool. He's not only highlighting what's between this verse sandwich, but he's also giving us an insight of how we should read this section about Jesus in the Garden of Gethsemane. Luke writes in verse 39 that Jesus and the disciples went up to the Mount of Olives, to *the place* (which Luke is assuming we know that this was the Garden), as was Jesus' custom. Therefore, this trip up to the Garden to pray was a regular thing for Jesus. This was not a novel or new thing. Yet when they arrived at the Garden, Jesus exhorts the disciples with him to pray to not enter into temptation. There was something different about tonight. Mark records that Jesus specifically asks them to not sleep, but to pray.

If the theme of temptation is ringing some bells for you about the last time temptation was made a big deal, you're probably thinking about Satan tempting Jesus in the wilderness, and if you want to go back even further, then you'll find yourself in the garden in Genesis 3. This isn't a mistake, and I'll talk more about this in a little bit. However here in the garden of Gethsemane, even though Jesus would come under deep opposition, Jesus seems to be more concerned with the disciples and their obedience.

Look again at the text, Jesus doesn't tell them to pray for him and the opposition he's about to encounter. Instead, he tells them to pray that **THEY** would not enter into temptation. So, by bracketing this section with praying to not enter into temptation, Luke is showing us that the veil of spiritual warfare is being lifted, and that Satan, the lion, is prowling around, looking for someone to devour.

Jesus had been warning his disciples several times that his hour had come. Just last week, we saw Jesus telling his disciples that he "will be numbered with the transgressors." The hour of testing had come, and instead of being ready for it, the disciples slept.

We live in a very unique time in history. We live in a period of time that loves to fantasize about magical and fantastical worlds like Harry Potter or the Star Wars universe. We fill up movie theaters to go watch a story that transports us away from the world we live in, because it's boring and dull. Yet, this scene from Luke shows us that we are being lulled to sleep by the enemy. We are being put under a spell that says this spiritual world is fun to think about, but isn't actually real.

Yet Luke and Jesus are screaming to wake up! Wake up from your slumber and from thinking that this physical world is all that there is. Jesus is saying pray! Get on your knees and pray that you would not enter into temptation. Pray because the Enemy is real, and he is trying to sift you

like wheat. There is a spiritual war going on, and you are woefully inadequate to fight against these spiritual forces. You need God's help.

So, as we move through the rest of this passage this morning, keep this at the forefront of your mind. We are not just stepping into a garden; we are stepping onto a battleground between Jesus and the forces of darkness, and this battleground cannot be won through human effort. It can only be done through the one who has triumphed over evil, which leads us to our second subpoint: Jesus' **prayers of submission and anguish**. Let's read **verses 41-46 together**.

I think a good first question someone could ask after reading this text would be: what is this cup that Jesus is asking God to remove from him? This is a fair question because as we have worked through Luke for the past several years, we have seen Jesus take on everything. He has taken on the crowds, the sickness, the death, and the religious elite. But here, we have Jesus asking God to remove something from him.

The Bible uses the cup in a couple different ways. It could be symbolizing blessing, salvation, destruction, or in this particular case, it's referring to God's wrath. **Psalm 75:8** says this: "For in the hand of the LORD there is a cup with foaming wine, well mixed, and he pours out from it, and all the wicked of the earth shall drain it down to the dregs."

You can see from this Psalm that the cup is from the hand of the Lord himself, and it's being poured out to all the wicked of the earth, and all will not only drink it, but drain it down to the dregs. Notice that the Psalmist doesn't say that some will drink of it. It says ALL the wicked of the earth shall drink it. Just like when God judged the earth with the flood, all of mankind was brought under judgment. Therefore, this cup, this cup of wrath is for every single one of us in this room, myself included. No one is exempt from it.

So, then the second good question to ask from this text is: 'why is Jesus asking for the cup to be removed from him?' This question literally came up while discussing the sermon about the Lord's Supper. If you remember, Tyler talked about Jesus desirously desiring to eat this meal with them. In other words, he was doubly desiring to die for the sins of the world.

So how do we get from Jesus desirously desiring to die for the sins of the world to asking the Father to remove the cup of wrath from him?

As we've been working through the gospel of Luke for the past two and a half years, we have seen a Jesus that was in perfect relationship with God the Father and God the Holy Spirit. Though it was at a distance because of the incarnation, he was still in relationship with them.

But here, we finally see that his mission to seek and save the lost was going to be through him drinking the cup of wrath meant for you and for me, and by drinking this cup of wrath, Jesus would take on all the sins of the world. This was Jesus fulfilling what John the Baptist yells when he sees him at the Jordan River, when he says, "Behold, the Lamb of God, who takes away the sin of the world!"

And in the moment that Jesus takes on our sins, past, present, and future, Jesus would cease to be in relationship with his Father and the Spirit. He had never not been in relationship with them. Jesus, the Son of God, did not become the son of God on Christmas. Jesus, the eternal Son of God, has always been in relationship with his Father with no beginning and no end. I want you to stop and think about that for a moment.

Jesus, the Son of God, came to the final intersection on his journey to the cross, and at the end of this road, he would no longer have the relationship that he always had. But make no mistake, Jesus was not caught off guard by this moment.

For this moment had been foreknown since before the creation of the world, and had been foretold and promised since **Genesis 3:15**. Look with me at this verse real quick.

From the third chapter of the Bible we see the promise that there would be war between the offspring of the serpent and offspring of the woman. God promises there would be one who would come that would bruise the head of the serpent, but also take note that God says it would only come through the serpent bruising his heel.

Therefore, Jesus had to be bitten by the serpent. He had to be bruised for us, and how does he do this? He must drink the cup of wrath meant for us and bear in his body, our penalty for sinning against the God of the universe. And in doing so, by taking on all of our sins, Jesus would experience the chasm that we have always known, but one that he had never experienced.

This is what led Paul to say in **Galatians 3:13**, ¹³ Christ redeemed us from the curse of the law by becoming a curse for us—for it is written, “Cursed is everyone who is hanged on a tree.”

Jesus wasn’t changing his mind and saying that he no longer was desirously desiring to be poured out. I need you to hear this clearly this morning. Jesus was not desiring to change his mind. Jesus was anticipating the separation from Trinity. He was anticipating the moment he cries out, “My God, my God, why have you forsaken me?”

Jesus not only had to die, yes, the crucifixion was horrible. But what is more horrifying is that the one whom John says “all things were created through,” (Jn.1:3) became accursed for us. “For our sake he made him to be sin who knew no sin, so that in him we might become the righteousness of God.” (2Cor5:21) What amazing love this is!

This is why the gospel is good news! The only one who could redeem us and save us, the only one who could bridge the chasm between us and God, is the one who became the chasm for us. This moment, of what would appear as weakness or fear, is actually the moment we see the heart of our Savior the clearest. We see what it cost HIM to save us. We no longer needed animals and birds to be a placeholder for our sin. We didn’t need another man to disobey and ultimately disappoint us. We needed the God-Man to obey perfectly for us, and to die in our place.

We see this perfect obedience in Jesus' immediate words after he asks the Father to remove the cup from him. He says "nevertheless, not my will, but yours, be done." (42) Here we see Jesus' perfect obedience and submission to his Father. We will see the answer to Jesus' prayer in the following weeks, as Jesus is put on trial, beaten, and hung on a cross.

But before we see the answer to Jesus' prayer, we see something else embedded in Jesus' prayer for the cup to be removed from him. For it's in this petition by Jesus that we see Jesus' absolute trust in the Father. Jesus trusted his Father enough to ask for another way, and trusted that if there was, that the Father would graciously provide it. But Jesus also makes it clear that if there wasn't another way, then he would provide himself, in submission and in joy.

You see, the last time there was a man in a garden with a tree of temptation and a decision to obey or disobey, was all the way at the beginning of the Bible in Genesis 3. The garden of Eden was filled with everything they could ever want to eat. But Adam was given the command to not eat of the tree of good and evil, and instead of believing and trusting God, Adam chose to become like God himself and ate. When faced with decision to obey God and take him at his word, Adam chose disobedience and death, for momentary satisfaction.

Yet here in this text, we have a new garden and a new tree and a new man. In the old garden, there were trees of every kind. In this garden, however, there was just one tree, the cross. In the old garden, Adam had Eve to counsel with. In this garden, Jesus was alone because his disciples fell asleep. In the old garden, Adam was told to not eat of the one tree. In this garden, God the Father wanted Jesus to eat the fruit of only one tree.

But instead of not trusting his Father, and not doing his will, we see with high-definition clarity what perfect obedience looks like, and this is what gives us hope. We have hope because the trajectory of the first Adam was sin and death. The trajectory of all those who put their faith and trust in Jesus, the new Adam, is life and life eternal

The curse is broken. We are no longer slaves to sin because Jesus obeyed perfectly for us. But why is this important? Why is this applicable to my life now?

But, first, I want to say something to the kids in the room this morning.

So, kids, I want you to hear this. This cup that Jesus is asking to be removed from him was meant for all of us, your mommy, your daddy, your brother and your sister. No one escapes this, not even you. No amount of good things that you do for your friends or your family, no amount of obedience to your parents will save you.

This sounds really scary, and I'm not going to lie to you, it is. It's literally the scariest thing in the world. But I want to make sure you hear this clearly: God is just and holy. And because he's holy, he hates sin. He hates sin more than anything in this world, and because we've sinned, we can no longer be with God.

That is why we have to drink this cup of wrath, but that is also why Jesus had to come, and guess what kids? He has come. If you hear nothing else this morning, I want you to hear this. Jesus. Has. Come. And he has drank the cup for you and for me. So put your trust in him. All of it.

But now to answer the question about why this is so important. The key is to look at the cup that Jesus was about to drink. Jesus perfectly obeying and submitting to the Father, is good news. The greatest news in history, the reason we all sit here, Sunday after Sunday; the news that endures Christians to be persecuted and martyred for their faith is this: those that have put their trust in Jesus, will never have to drink from the cup that Jesus asks to be removed from him.

The anguish that Jesus would suffer on our behalf, passes from us. We now get to drink the cup of Jesus' blood that cleanses us from all unrighteousness. The cup of wrath, is no longer ours. Jesus' prayer for the cup to be removed from him, becomes true for us. Though the Father chose to not remove it from Jesus, Jesus willingly drank it, so that it would be removed from us.

We will never have to experience what Jesus experienced. If you have placed your faith in Jesus, you will NEVER have to experience what Jesus experienced. You will NEVER have to cry the words, "My God, my God, why have you forsaken me."

This is why we sing. This is why we worship Jesus. This is why we preach Jesus and him crucified. This is why he is mighty to be praised and worthy of all honor and glory. This is why he is worthy to open the scroll. This is why all authority on heaven and on earth has been given to him.

May you worship this Jesus. May you worship the Lamb who takes away the sin of the world!

In these couple of verses, we see a great contrast between Jesus and the disciples. As I mentioned earlier, Jesus was trying to tell the disciples that the time had come, that the hour of darkness was here. He did this by calling them to pray to not enter into temptation. He was calling them to fight, not with weapons and arms, but with prayer, and not with their strength, but strength from their Father.

But what did they end up doing? Look at **verse 45** again. It says that Jesus found them "sleeping for sorrow." It's clear, from that single word, 'sorrow,' that the disciples were starting to finally come around to the idea that Jesus, their friend and their messiah was going to die. But as I said earlier, it's also clear that they did not know that the hour of testing had come.

All that they had experienced that week: the triumphal entry, the clearing of the temple, the heated debates with the religious officials, Jesus' prophesying about the destruction of Jerusalem, and finally the Lord's Supper. It all hit them at once. There was not going to be a big Taylor Swift Eras

tour for the disciples and their messiah. The once hoped for victory, looked like it was heading for a tragic ending.

Despite all of this, Jesus calls them to obedience, even when their feelings and emotions tell them to curl up in a ball and cry.

Have you ever found yourself so distraught, so unable to process something, that you find yourself just trying to numb your feelings and emotions with things like: scrolling on your phone through social media, turning on a TV show, or simply just sleeping? Is this not dissimilar to what the disciples did that night in the Garden?

They were overcome with sorrow. Their emotions were overwhelming them, and they fell asleep. Now on first read of these verses, I think we can read this and be like me and say, well that makes sense! They were sad, they were overwhelmed, and they fell asleep.

You don't have to live long as a human to quickly realize that emotions get the best of us, more often than we want to admit. Jesus also knew this, for he was not only the one who created us and gave us emotions, but he also became 100% human in the incarnation. Which means, he got to experience and know first-hand what emotions feel like as a human.

Therefore, if the one who created our emotions, and knows what they feel like, tells us to do something to help us, and demonstrates what it looks like, we ought to take note of it. So, Jesus, knowing that their emotions were about to overwhelm them, tells them to pray. Pray so that they would not enter into temptation.

In verse 44, you see Jesus in such agony that he is beginning to sweat like he's bleeding. But what does Luke say he does? He prayed more earnestly! How many times have you prayed more earnestly because after praying for a period of time, you realize you're in more anguish than you were before? We worship a God who leads from the front. Jesus not only gives the orders, but he then shows us what it looks like.

You have two case studies here. On one side you have the disciples, who are instructed to fight with prayer, but they disobey and become overwhelmed with sorrow and fall asleep. On the other side you have Jesus, who is in anguish it says. He is being assailed by the enemy and the thought of being separated from the Trinity. There will never be another person in as much agony as Jesus was in that garden, yet he prays.

Jesus obeys perfectly and shows what obedience looks like. He knows that his human body can only take so much, so he goes to the infinite Father, with the Spirit, in prayer. Therefore, when we are scared. When we are overwhelmed. When we are in anguish. When our emotions crash over us like a wave, we can still obey, and Jesus tells us how to obey here in this text. We pray.

When we are sorrowful, when we are in anguish, when we can't see the light, and the darkness is swallowing us up, run to the one who is light.

Maybe you're hearing this this morning and thinking to yourself, but I can't obey. Then my answer would be: you're absolutely right, you can't. But he can. This is why we needed Jesus. This is why he had to come. We needed Jesus to obey for us. This is the gospel brothers and sisters. The gospel says that JESUS did everything required to save us from our sins and reconcile us to God. Not Paul, JESUS. Not my perfect obedience, Jesus' perfect obedience. Not my works, his!

So if you're sitting here this morning and you haven't put your trust in Jesus, or you're worried you haven't done enough to 'earn' heaven, then I have the greatest news for you. You can trust in him right now. Right this very second. It's not too late. Put your trust in Jesus' name, not yours. Put your faith in his obedience, not yours. Jesus is waiting for you.

Not a single moment of Jesus' life and ministry was wasted. Each and every moment that is captured in the Gospels is meant to point us to Him and to help us love him more and more. In Jesus' darkest night, a night in which he experienced the greatest distress and anguish, we get another picture of Jesus, our Savior.

Jesus is the one whom we draw close to in our darkest nights because he knows what it's like to be in anguish and despair. Jesus is not unaware of the dark nights. Instead, he took on our darkness so that we could walk in the newness of the light.

Whether you're a believer in this room or not, hear these words from John Bunyan who so beautifully captures our Savior's heart for those who are in Christ and need help out of the darkness, or for those who are still under darkness and have not put your trust in him.

"Surely they that come after Christ in chains come to him in great difficulty, because their steps, by the chains, are straitened. And what chains are so heavy as those that discourage you? Your chain, which is made up of guilt and filth, is heavy; it is a wretched bond about your neck, by which your strength fails."

Is this not the dark nights that we feel? Our chains are heavy, our guilt and filth are too much. What are we to do?

But come, though you come in chains, it is glory to Christ that a sinner comes after him in chains. The chinking of your chain, though troublesome to you, is not, nor can be obstruction to your salvation. It is Christ's work and glory to save you from your chains, to enlarge your steps, and set you at liberty. The blind man, though called, surely could not come [swiftly] to Jesus Christ, but Christ could stand still, and stay for him. True, 'He rideth upon the wings of the wind,' but yet he is long-suffering, and his long-suffering is salvation to him that cometh to him."

So run to this Savior. Run to this Jesus. He is waiting for you.

As we begin our second point this morning, I think a pretty common reaction to this section of the passion narrative is this: Is Jesus in control? Throughout the entire book of Luke, and especially through Holy Week, from the time of the triumphal entry, until now, Jesus has been in control.

These events, while they caused great sorrow in the disciples, also pointed to Jesus being in complete control. Even as he predicted his betrayal, death, and resurrection many times over, he seemed in control. Yet we come to this section of the last hours of Jesus and we suddenly feel like Jesus is out of control.

If you feel that way, you're certainly not alone. Even the disciples who were there for the three years of ministry with him felt this way, and in turn acted in response to the seemingly out of control-ness of Jesus.

But what might seem like Jesus being out of control, is actually Jesus showing the disciples then, and us now, that Jesus is over all of it. Nothing is outside of God's sovereignty.

Our second point this morning, we are going to see Jesus **resting in the Father** in verses 47-53. Read with me verses **47-48**, and we will see our first sub-point: the sovereign kiss.

A couple weeks ago, we worked through the Lord's Supper, and at the end of the supper, Jesus tells the disciples that the one who would betray him has his hand on the table. John records that after he gave Judas his morsel of bread, that he told him, "What you are going to do, do quickly."

Judas was God's chosen instrument to ultimately betray him. Judas had always been God's chosen instrument. Judas betraying Jesus was no accident. Judas willingly betrayed him. The text says that he "was leading them." But Jesus was not surprised by this betrayal.

It's amazing to think that when Jesus called Judas to come and follow him, that he knew then that he would betray him in the end. What's even more amazing to think, is that the very lips that kissed and betrayed Jesus, were the very lips that were foreknown by Jesus before the creation of the world.

Judas was always going to betray Jesus. The question is why? Why would Jesus choose Judas to betray him. Why would he bring him into his inner circle for him to betray him? But we can't stop there. If we are going to ask the question about Judas and his purposes, we have to also ask why did Jesus choose Peter, if he knew that he would betray him three times, as we saw last week.

I hope you've picked up on it, through this sermon, but there's been a common theme throughout this passage, and that thread is 'trust.' Jesus perfectly trusted God the Father to remove the cup from him if it were possible to do so. This is why he has been able to do everything he's done up to this point in his life, and we see this most clearly in his prayers.

This theme of trust extends into the selection of the disciples as well. Jesus knew that Judas would betray him. Jesus also knew that Peter would deny him three times. Yet, Jesus perfectly trusted his Father in heaven to accomplish his purposes for the salvation of sinners and for glory of God.

If Jesus could willingly trust and submit to his Father in heaven, even while knowing that two of his best friends would betray and deny him in the end, how much more can we trust him with our daily lives?

For this is why Paul wrote in **Romans 8:28**, “²⁸We know that for those who love God all things work together for good, for those who are called according to his purpose.” This is exactly what Jesus was trusting his Father for. He was trusting that no matter what, God was going to accomplish that which he purposes, and it’s all for our good.

For Judas, his purposes led to his own death, but eternal life for those who would place their trust in Jesus. For Peter, it led to his restoration, and Peter becoming a martyr for the faith, for which we still stand on today.

Human institutions are going to fail us. Friends are going to disappoint you. Family is going to turn your back on you. But all of it, when placed in the trust of God, works together for good and his purposes. So trust in the Father and his sovereignty.

After Judas betrays Jesus, we get a glimpse that the disciples had a misunderstanding of what Jesus came to do as well.

This leads us to our second subpoint, **man’s misunderstanding and sovereign compassion**. Read **verses 49-51** with me.

These verses show another incredible comparison with the previous verses. First, you have Jesus telling the disciples to arm themselves and to fight with the power of prayer so that they would not enter into temptation. But we saw that instead of fighting, they fall asleep.

Now fast forward to what we just read and you now see the disciples realize that the hour their master had been warning about is really here, and what do they do? They spring into action! But not with prayer, but with swords, instead. And instead of Jesus fighting with them, you see him resting in the Father.

As I was meditating on these verses, I kept thinking to myself over and over, why were the disciples so dumb? Why did they miss Jesus’ warnings?

One of my seminary professors exhorted us in class to never read the gospels or the Bible in general with the thought, ‘I would’ve never done that.’ It’s not only a terrible way to read the Bible, but it’s also lying to yourself. You are that guy. You are Israel. In Kevin DeYoung’s Biggest

Story Bible, he perfectly describes Israel (and us). He says we fail to see how good God is, and how truly terrible our sin is.

But to continue the introspection here, a question I kept coming to was: where am I trusting in the weapons and view of the world instead of the sovereign plan and Word of God.

For instance, I think many of us in the West, live in a sort of make-believe world. We read the Bible as an old near Eastern book that was written a long, long time ago, and comfortably assume that Jesus' prophecies and predictions about the future are not for us.

In **Luke 21**, Jesus tells us that, ¹⁶"You will be delivered up even by parents and brothers and relatives and friends, and some of you they will put to death. ¹⁷You will be hated by all for my name's sake." Over and over again, Jesus tells us that trial is coming. Persecution is coming. The sword is coming.

Yet day after day, month after month, year after year, I, we, are continually surprised when this comes. Why?? I truly believe it's because we aren't taking Jesus at his word, just as his disciples didn't take him at his word. He told them he was going to be betrayed and handed over, and what did they do? Peter draws his sword and cuts off a man's ear!

So as you read Scripture, as you read Jesus' words or the letters of the apostles, take heed. Listen. Don't neglect the warnings. Don't skip over the hard things. But make no mistake, the Bible is not just full of warnings, it's also full of promises. Sweet, sweet promises that you can take to the bank each and every day. So take heed of the warnings, and clench tightly to his promises and trust them to bring you home to him.

Not only do we see the disciples' misunderstanding of what Jesus' came to do, but we also see his compassion towards his enemies, even while being betrayed. Verse 50 says, "he touched his ear and healed him." Even when the disciples are confused and scared, Jesus continues to teach his disciples what being a subject in God's kingdom looks like.

Jesus puts his money where his mouth is and shows the disciples what he meant when he said to love your enemies. In Jesus' sermon on the plain, in **Luke 6**, Jesus says, ²⁷"But I say to you who hear, Love your enemies, do good to those who hate you, ²⁸bless those who curse you, pray for those who abuse you."

Sure, every year, when it's time for the Cat-Griz game, it's hard to love Bobcat fans like Devan Leder, but it's another story to love and forgive those that are about to deliver you up to be tortured and killed.

Yet, in this passage, we see Jesus, in one of the darkest moments of his life, continuing to teach his disciples what truly loving someone looks like. Truly loving someone, loving your enemy often comes at a great cost to you. But what does Jesus remind us of, earlier in the same sermon in **Luke 6**? ²²"Blessed are you when people hate you and when they exclude you and

revile you and spurn your name as evil, on account of the Son of Man! ²³ Rejoice in that day, and leap for joy, for behold, your reward is great in heaven.”

Why are we to rejoice and leap for joy? Because our reward is great in heaven! You see, this world expects retribution for evil. It expects for a wrong to be made right. People are crying from the streets for justice, justice, justice! But where is true justice found? While this isn't a bad question, I think the better question to ask is: In whom is justice ultimately found?

There's a Christian rap group or you could also call them spoken Word artists, called Beautiful Eulogy, and they have this line from this song that has always stuck with me regarding justice.

**“I’m not afraid to talk about social injustices
Let’s also talk about the throne where perfect justice is
It sounds insensitive and some will hate the stench of it
But the church is not faithful if we fail to mention it
We worship a God who can speak to the world's pain
Because salvation for us came through the Lamb who was slain”**

So you see that Jesus is teaching his disciples then, and us now, that compassion to our enemies, can be done, because ultimately justice finds its beginning and end with him. For justice will either be doled out onto an individual on judgment day, or it will be fulfilled on the cross of Jesus on that final day.

So have compassion. Love your enemies. Pray that God would give you the power to forgive those that have hurt you, or betrayed you. We don't have that power within us, it is given to us by Jesus, so ask for it. Ask for help from the one who is justice in himself.

This leads us to our last subpoint this morning, **the sovereign darkness.**

I hate horror movies. I'm sorry if you like them. I have never understood why people literally pay money to watch bad movies. But you don't have to waste your money to know that most horror movies take place at night. I don't know an exact percentage, but I'm sure the number is something like 100%.

The reason horror movies take place at night is because it hints at the spiritual darkness that is always implied in these movies. As someone who worked night shift for almost 10 years in an ER, I can tell you with absolute certainty that spiritual darkness and bad things happen at night.

Now something that has been understood, but not actually said in this passage, is that this is all happening at night. They moved from the Lord's Supper to the Mount of Olives. So this entire scene is draped in darkness.

There are not many scenes in the gospels that occur at night, besides Jesus going away to pray in the early hours of the morning, or Jesus' ministry stretching into the night. Almost all of

Jesus' interactions with the religious elite happen in the daylight. But besides this scene there's one other that really stands out. Kids, do you know which scene from the gospels occurs at night and is probably one of his most famous conversations in the Bible?

John 3 and Jesus' conversation with Nicodemus. Now Nicodemus came in sincerity. He came to ask good questions. He was a true seeker. Yet he came in the middle of the night. Why? Because John was showing not only that Nicodemus was too afraid to ask these questions during the day where others might see him, but more importantly, it was showing the dark spiritual nature of his heart. He was still blinded by the darkness.

Here in this passage, we have the religious elite coming to arrest Jesus at night, with swords and clubs as if they were coming after a robber, verse 52 says. The religious elite knew that if they came and arrested Jesus during the day, the crowds wouldn't allow it. The crowds loved Jesus. Everyone wanted to see the one who was calling himself the Messiah and healing people.

So, what did they do? They came in the night. They came when no one could dispute them. Jesus tells them in verse 53 that he was with them in the daytime day after day in the temple and they did nothing to him. Yet, here and now, they come to arrest him in the night. And we'll see in the coming weeks that they put him on trial during the night, when there would be no resistance to condemn him to death.

The night was showing the darkness inside their hearts. This was the spiritual battle we have been talking about manifesting itself in the darkness of the night. It seems the night has won. Darkness has won. Jesus has been betrayed by a trusted friend and now everything the disciples had worked for was over.

But pay close attention to the last half of **verse 53**. Jesus says, "But this is your hour, and the power of darkness."

Your hour. Not hours. One hour. One hour of the 24 in a day was theirs. One hour was given to darkness to do its bidding. Now don't get me wrong. This one hour was the darkest hour in human history.

In this hour, the creator God, who knitted the bodies of the men in their mother's womb who stood before him, was about to be put on trial and put to death by these very men. The creator God who made the tree that was made into two beams of wood, would be hung on this tree that he spoke into being. Make no mistake, this was the vilest hour that will ever exist.

But. But darkness was only given one hour. And through this evil hour, the greatest good came to be. For in this hour, the lamb of God would die in the place of sinners, and would take away the sin of the world. In this hour, the serpent's head would be crushed. In this hour, salvation for people from every tribe, nation and tongue was bought. In this hour, our God became sin for us.

And there was soon coming an hour that would last forever. Jesus says just a couple hours later in front of the Sanhedrin, “⁶⁹ But from now on the Son of Man shall be seated at the right hand of the power of God.” He sits down because the work is finished, the serpent is dead, and the King is on his throne.

Darkness doesn’t have the final say. Jesus has the final say. If you’re sitting here this morning and all you’ve known in your life is darkness, then please don’t miss this. If all you’ve known in this life is the sins of others and the sin pouring out of your heart, then hear these words. The one whom John says is the light of men has come. He has come to bring light to the darkness in your heart. He is faithful and just to forgive you. So repent. Confess your sins, and walk into the light of forgiveness that only Jesus can give you.

Dear brothers and sisters of this church, when the night seems dark. When you feel like you can’t see out of the darkness. When sin seems to crash over you like a wave, remember this. Remember that Jesus, in his darkest hour, perfectly obeyed. He did the will of the Father and drank the cup that was meant for you and for me. Run to this Jesus. Trust in this Jesus, until he brings us home to him.