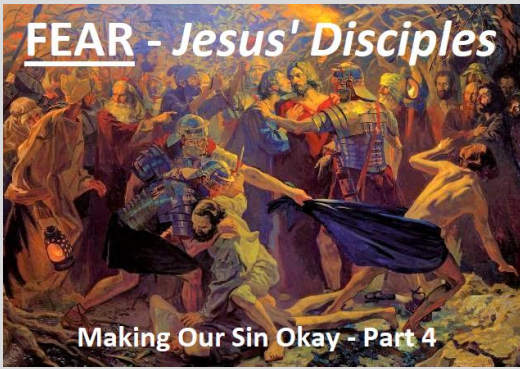


Text: Mark 14:43-52 NAU (New American Standard, 1995 Version)



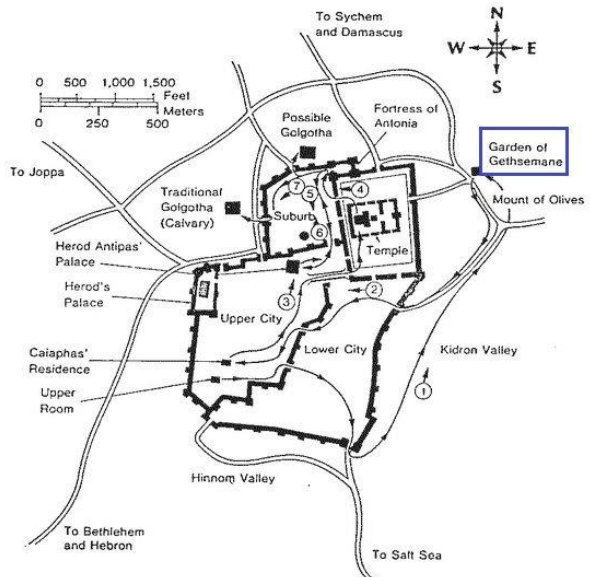
Wednesday, March 17 at 11:00 & 7:00
Fifth Wednesday in Lent – 2021

Introduction: Dear friends in Christ: From the Bible we know †who Jesus is – *the Son of God*, and †what He did to remove our sins – *by living sinlessly and dying sacrificially in our place*. Now, think about Jesus' disciples... they were with Him during His whole ministry – hearing His teaching and seeing His miracles, yet they feared and fled!

1. **The Setting and Participants:**

43 Immediately while [Jesus] was still speaking,

Judas, one of the twelve, came up accompanied by a crowd with swords and clubs, who were from the chief priests and the scribes and the elders.



- a. The place: The **Garden of Gethsemane**, *which is just east of the old city of Jerusalem, at the foot of the Mount of Olives*. Just before Jesus was arrested, He prayed His famous prayer in Gethsemane.
- b. The people: Jesus and His disciples; at least the eleven (the 12 minus Judas); possibly others too, *such as Joseph and Matthias (Acts 1:21-23)*. Then Judas Iscariot showed up, *accompanied by a crowd*. From John's gospel account, we know that Judas came with "**the Roman cohort [σπεῖραν] and officers from the chief priests and the Pharisees**" (Jn. 18:3 NAU). The term, **cohort [σπεῖραν]** is "**a Roman military technical term for the tenth part of a legion, normally containing 600 troops**" [*a legion containing 6,000*] (BW, Friberg). Since σπεῖραν was used, *there could have been a VERY LARGE crowd!*
- c. The fear: Why did the Jewish leaders seek to arrest Jesus ♣late at night, ♣away from the crowded city, and ♣with so many armed soldiers? Because they were ☹*afraid of the Roman government*, ☹*afraid of losing their jobs*, and ☹*afraid of losing their lives!* What are we afraid of? Is our fear Biblical or sinful?

2. **The Plan of Judas**: ⁴⁴ **Now [Judas] who was betraying [Jesus] had given them a signal, saying, "Whomever I kiss, He is the one; seize Him and lead Him away under guard."**

- a. The kiss: It is an *outward expression of affection*, yet Judas gave Jesus *the kiss of death* to mark Him for *execution!* The mafia also used/uses the kiss of death.
- b. Judas: What can be said about him? He ♣was one of the 12 disciples, ♣was a thief, ♣was entered into by Satan, ♣did betray Jesus (*for 30 pieces of silver, each piece*

the value of one day's labor), and ✦later felt remorse, returned the money, and hanged himself. God, *with His divine foreknowledge*, knew what Judas would do, *but God did NOT tempt him to do it* (James 1:13-15)!

3. **The Execution of the Plan:** ⁴⁵ **After coming, Judas immediately went to Him, saying, “Rabbi!” and kissed Him.** ⁴⁶ **They laid hands on Him and seized Him.** // It is amazing to me that Judas was NOT afraid to betray Jesus. Even though he did not believe in Him, *he witnessed many miracles and knew of Jesus' power*. Nevertheless, he ✦made the plan and ✦followed through. Some, *driven by evil*, are NOT afraid – *even though they should be terrified!*
4. **The Initial Courage of Peter:** ⁴⁷ **But one of those who stood by drew his sword, and struck the slave of the high priest and cut off his ear.** // From the gospel according to John (18:10), *we know the wielder of the sword was Peter*. As soon as they laid hands on Jesus, *Peter took courageous action!* **By acting immediately**, he did not have time to process the situation and become afraid. Sometimes immediate action can be good for us too! **Just do it!**
5. **The Secrecy of Jesus' Arrest:** ⁴⁸ **And Jesus said to them, “Have you come out with swords and clubs to arrest Me, as you would against a robber? ⁴⁹ Every day I was with you in the temple teaching, and you did not seize Me; but this has taken place to fulfill the Scriptures.”**
 - a. Who ultimately made the plan? Not Judas and the Jewish leaders, *but God!* Peter said these words on the Day of Pentecost: Jesus was “**delivered up according to the definite plan and foreknowledge of God**” (Acts 2:23

ESV). Jesus' †arrest, †beatings, †crucifixion, and †death were horrible, *yet they were all God's plan to save us!*

- b. Will all the Scriptures be fulfilled? *Definitely!* The wonderful ones – *about eternal bliss, as well as* the horrible ones – *about eternal torment!*

6. **The Fear of Jesus' Disciples:** ⁵⁰ **And they all left Him and fled.** ⁵¹ **A young man was following Him, wearing *nothing but a linen sheet over his naked body*; and they seized him.** ⁵² **But he pulled free of the linen sheet and escaped naked.** // We are so blessed with *under* and *outer* clothes!

- a. Why do we fear and flee? **Because we allow our *potential level of discomfort to become greater than our goal.*** When pain or illness or death become greater than our goal; *then we will fear and flee!*
- b. Why should we be fearless? By grace through faith in Jesus †we are forgiven, †Jesus is with us, †God will not forsake us, and †heaven is open for us! **Therefore, *when we are rightly fearing our Great God (Mt. 10:28); then we can be fearless*** in daily living for Christ!

Conclusion:

- **Truth** – God planned to save us – *and did it through Jesus!*
- **Relevance** – Most people – *are wrongly controlled by fear!*
- **Inspiration** – With God-pleasing goals and proper fear of the Almighty God – *let us be fearless unto God's glory!*

Let Us Pray: Dear Jesus, since Your goal of doing the Father's will was supreme, *You pushed through the agony for our salvation!* Now, †*give us right goals* and †*make us fearless!*