

## ***When Evil Seems to be Winning***

Matthew 26:31-56 - NCBC, September 19, 2021

Main Point: **Jesus remains in control even when evil seems to be winning.**

- Jesus remains in control when you are afraid. (30-35)
  - Fear tempts you to reject Jesus' words.
  - Fear tempts you to forget Jesus' resurrection.

*Therefore, trust in Jesus' care for you!*

- Jesus remains in control when you are weak. (36-46)
  - Weakness tempts you to become spiritually careless.
  - Weakness tempts you to become prayerless.

*Therefore, trust in Jesus' obedience for you!*

- Jesus remains in control when you are mistreated. (47-56)
  - Injustice tempts you to spiritual confusion.
  - Injustice tempts you to fight like the world.

*Therefore, trust in Jesus' purpose for you!*

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### **Opening Announcements:**

- **Music Ministry Info Luncheon** Sept 26<sup>th</sup> at Noon in the Intersection Café. Come explore the wide range of service opportunities in our music ministry! Please sign up today!

<<How Firm a Foundation>>



**Amen.** Sometimes it seems as if all hell is striving to shake and destroy our souls, doesn't it? When evil seems so strong both inside us and outside us, it is so good to be able to gather together with our spiritual family and worship God. Because even in the darkest night of our souls, God is with us. Jesus is our strong and firm foundation whom we can trust.

Today we open our Bibles to **Matthew 26** where **verses 31-56** recount Jesus' betrayal and arrest the night before He was executed. As we recall the events of this dark night, these verses remind us how Jesus is still in control even when evil seems to be winning in our lives.



So please open your Bible to **Matthew chapter 26** and prepare for our Scripture reading together. If you need a Bible, simply raise your hand and we will gladly give you one as our gift to you.

Before we read the Scripture, let me quickly review the context:

It's late Thursday night. Jesus and His disciples have already celebrated the Passover in an upper room in Jerusalem. After Judas left to go get the arresting authorities, Jesus had transformed the Jewish Passover into the Lord's Supper which stands as a memorial feast for all of God's people today to look backward, forward, inward, upward, around and outward.

Then after an extended time of teaching and prayer,<sup>1</sup> Jesus and the 11 disciples left for their favorite resting place on the Mount of Olives where they planned to spend the night. They were headed for the garden of Gethsemane... the garden of the olive press, where olives were placed under great pressure to produce valuable oil.

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<sup>1</sup> John 13-17  
Page **2a** of 14

Here in this garden, in the middle of the dark night, Jesus too would be crushed as He looked at the cup of God's wrath He was preparing to drink to take away our sins.

But even in the midst of Jesus' profound agony, today's Scripture makes it clear that He was still in complete control.



Even when it looked like evil was winning, the sovereign plan and purposes of King Jesus were being fulfilled.

So let's stand together in honor of the reading of God's Word, as I read from **Matthew 26**, starting in **verse 31**, from the English Standard Version. Jesus and His disciples are walking across the Kidron Valley, towards Gethsemane...and **verse 31** says,

*<sup>31</sup> Then Jesus said to them, "You will all fall away because of me this night. For it is written, 'I will strike the shepherd, and the sheep of the flock will be scattered.'  
<sup>32</sup> But after I am raised up, I will go before you to Galilee."  
<sup>33</sup> Peter answered him, "Though they all fall away because of you, I will never fall away."  
<sup>34</sup> Jesus said to*

him, "Truly, I tell you, this very night, before the rooster crows, you will deny me three times." <sup>35</sup> Peter said to him, "Even if I must die with you, I will not deny you!" And all the disciples said the same.

<sup>36</sup> Then Jesus went with them to a place called Gethsemane, and he said to his disciples, "Sit here, while I go over there and pray." <sup>37</sup> And taking with him Peter and the two sons of Zebedee, he began to be sorrowful and troubled. <sup>38</sup> Then he said to them, "My soul is very sorrowful, even to death; remain here, and watch with me." <sup>39</sup> And going a little farther he fell on his face and prayed, saying, "My Father, if it be possible, let this cup pass from me; nevertheless, not as I will, but as you will."

<sup>40</sup> And he came to the disciples and found them sleeping. And he said to Peter, "So, could you not watch with me one hour? <sup>41</sup> Watch and pray that you may not enter into temptation. The spirit indeed is willing, but the flesh is weak." <sup>42</sup> Again, for the second time, he went away and prayed, "My Father, if this cannot pass unless I drink it, your will be done." <sup>43</sup> And again he came and found them sleeping, for their eyes were heavy. <sup>44</sup> So, leaving them again, he went away and prayed for the third time, saying the same words again. <sup>45</sup> Then he came to the disciples and said to them, "Sleep and take your rest later on. See, the hour is at hand, and the Son of Man is betrayed into the hands of sinners. <sup>46</sup> Rise, let us be going; see, my betrayer is at hand."

<sup>47</sup> While he was still speaking, Judas came, one of the twelve, and with him a great crowd with swords and clubs, from the chief priests and the elders of the people. <sup>48</sup> Now the betrayer had given them a sign, saying, "The one I will kiss is the man; seize him." <sup>49</sup> And he came up to Jesus at once and said, "Greetings, Rabbi!" And he kissed him. <sup>50</sup> Jesus said to him, "Friend, do what you

came to do." Then they came up and laid hands on Jesus and seized him. <sup>51</sup> And behold, one of those who were with Jesus stretched out his hand and drew his sword and struck the servant of the high priest and cut off his ear. <sup>52</sup> Then Jesus said to him, "Put your sword back into its place. For all who take the sword will perish by the sword. <sup>53</sup> Do you think that I cannot appeal to my Father, and he will at once send me more than twelve legions of angels? <sup>54</sup> But how then should the Scriptures be fulfilled, that it must be so?" <sup>55</sup> At that hour Jesus said to the crowds, "Have you come out as against a robber, with swords and clubs to capture me? Day after day I sat in the temple teaching, and you did not seize me. <sup>56</sup> But all this has taken place that the Scriptures of the prophets might be fulfilled." Then all the disciples left him and fled.

This is the reading of God's Word. Please be seated.

### Let's pray.

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You don't have to look very hard these days to see evidence of evil spreading in our world. Marriages are failing, children are being abused, sexual expression is the leading authority on identity, and righteousness is being silenced. You don't have to live long before you come face to face with various expressions of greed, injustice, or slavery to sin.

But Christians must not be surprised that evil is moving from bad to worse at this time. Jesus said this would happen.<sup>2</sup> And since the world hated Jesus, we should expect the world to hate all who follow Jesus as well.

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<sup>2</sup> Matthew 24:4-8; John 15:18-25, 16:1-4; 2 Timothy 3:12-13

Therefore faithful followers of Jesus ought not to wring our hands and fret when we see the wicked prospering.<sup>3</sup> Nor should Christians focus on condemning the world for their sin. God never commissioned His church to judge the world.<sup>4</sup> God commissioned us as His ambassadors of hope to go and proclaim good news to the world!<sup>5</sup> God has given us all His Spirit that we might humbly and boldly invite people to repent from sin, believe in Jesus, and receive forgiveness, freedom, and eternal life by the power of His death and resurrection.

After all, Christians humbly recognize that the most important battlefield against evil is always *inside* of us, rather than *outside* of us.<sup>6</sup> The evils of sinful anger, despair, anxiety, bitterness, insensitivity, selfishness, fear, pride, and life-dominating sins are always warring for supremacy within each of us.<sup>7</sup> Seeing evil increase outside of us often tempts us towards greater evil inside of us.

So **Matthew chapter 26** invites a very timely question for God's people today: what should we do when evil seems to be winning? How does God want Christians to respond when evil seems to be winning out there... or even more importantly... in here? When your own fears or weakness seems to handicap your ability to please the Lord.... Or when you are being mistreated by others.... **Matthew 26** reminds us that,

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<sup>3</sup> Psalm 37

<sup>4</sup> 1 Corinthians 5:12; Note the "saints judging the world" in 1 Corinthians 6:2 refers to the saints reigning with Christ in His kingdom and includes saints receiving greater authority than angels (1 Cor 6:3). However, during this church age, God has not given His church responsibility to judge or condemn the world.



**Jesus remains in control even when evil seems to be winning.** What was true in the Garden of Gethsemane is still true today: Jesus is King. Jesus is Lord. And even though you won't always understand it in the moment, Jesus is always sovereignly working to fulfill His good purposes for you through His own grace and power.<sup>8</sup>

So if you are wrestling with fear this morning, or you are overwhelmed with how weak you are, or if you are being mistreated and it seems like evil is winning... I have good news for you!

King Jesus is still in control. He knows and He cares. You can trust Jesus: He always obeys. Even when you are too weak to pray, Jesus still prays.<sup>9</sup> When you are confused, His good purposes will still be fulfilled. You are never safer than when you are trusting in our good and sovereign King Jesus.

<sup>5</sup> Matthew 28:18-20; Acts 1:8; 2 Corinthians 5:18-20

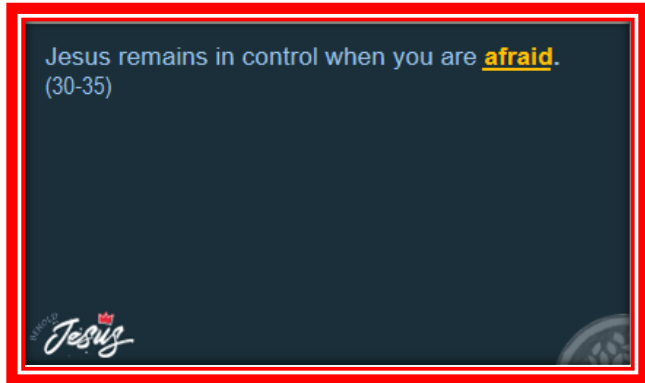
<sup>6</sup> Romans 7:18-23; James 4:1-5

<sup>7</sup> Galatians 5:16-26

<sup>8</sup> Romans 8:28-29; Philippians 1:6

<sup>9</sup> Romans 8:26

So let's begin by considering **verses 30-35**, where we observe that,



Jesus remains in control when you are afraid.

Look at **verse 31**. As the disciples are walking towards Gethsemane, Jesus tells them,

*You will all fall away because of me this night.* In just a few hours, all of you will jump ship and desert me.

Translation, all of you are about to fail.

Peter's response is recorded in **verses 33 and 35**, but the end of **verse 35** makes it clear that *all* the disciples were saying the same thing: No we won't! We will never fail you Jesus! I promise I will stay true to you until death.

Now, pull over the bus for a moment. There's a lot of pride here, right? Certainly it is arrogant self-confidence

that keeps insisting on your faithfulness while Jesus is telling you how you are about to fail.

But perhaps more than pride is driving the disciples' words here? I believe the reason Peter and the disciples were so quick to disagree with Jesus here was because they were afraid.

Jesus had just predicted their worst nightmare. This was their worst fear...that somehow they wouldn't be good enough for Jesus, or somehow they'd miss out on Jesus' kingdom.

And in their fear, their mouths spew out a litany of words to try to convince Jesus, and perhaps even themselves, of a different outcome.

After all, fear and control always go together.<sup>10</sup> Whatever you are afraid of will control you. And fear always leads us to try to control and manipulate circumstances and people to get what we want.<sup>11</sup> Fundamentally, fear always believes the lie that I would be better off if I was in control, and God was not.

So, if you ever dig in verbally and try to convince someone that you are right, ask yourself, "What am I afraid of?" Or whenever you micromanage or become suffocating in a relationship, ask yourself if you're afraid of that relationship failing in some way. Because fear and control always go together.

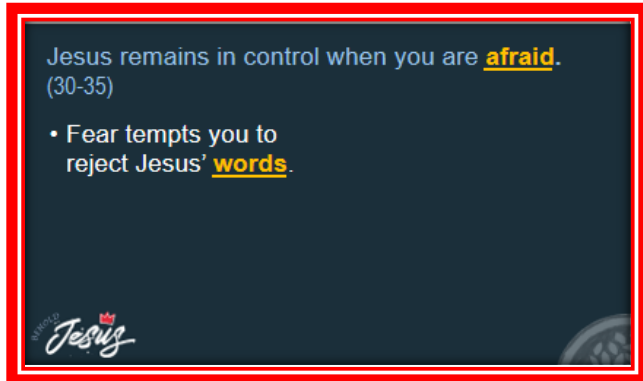
person to bring about a selfish outcome, love serves and sacrifices for another person's eternal good.

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<sup>10</sup> 2 Timothy 1:7; 1 John 4:18

<sup>11</sup> This is why, from a relational perspective, the biblical opposite of fear is love, not faith (1 John 4:19). Because where fear controls and uses another

So let's apply this. We must not respond to the evil around us and in us with fear.



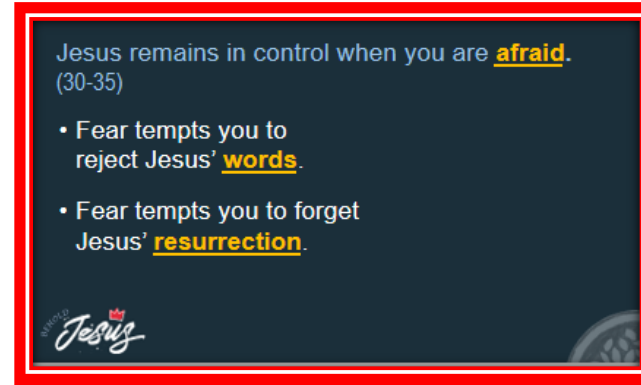
Because fear tempts you to reject Jesus' words, while increasing your own words. Fear always listens more to the lies in your own head more than the words of Jesus.

In **verse 31**, Jesus had quoted from **Zechariah 13:7**, appealing to the authority of Scripture for His prediction of their failure.

But in their fear, the disciples couldn't begin to comprehend how their defections could fulfill Scripture.

So let's remember church... as we see evil increasing around us in these times... we must not respond fearfully in a way that rejects what Jesus has told us. He's warned us that evil will increase in the last days. He's warned us that the world will hate us for loving Jesus. So then we must not give in to fear and start believing that if we just talk more, and post on facebook more, and convince more people that we are right, that we can somehow change what Jesus has said will happen.

After all, Jesus remains in control. And Jesus is good.



And fear always tempts you to forget Jesus' resurrection.

Isn't **verse 32** interesting? In the same breath of telling all the disciples that they are about to fall, Jesus adds,

*But after I am raised up, I will go before you to Galilee.*

Translation: but your failure is not going to be your end. I am going to be raised up. My resurrection, not your failure, is the basis for your future. My resurrection is going to make it possible for all of us to be reunited again in joyful relationship, back in Galilee.

Dear church... let this account restore your hope and joy this morning. Jesus remains in control! Don't listen to fear's lies and amnesia. Don't let fear shrink your hope to the size of your own promises and performance.

Jesus died and rose again to secure your eternal future with Him! Yes there will be days when it seems like evil is winning... even inside you... but turn away from focusing on your own promises and performance, and remember that Jesus conquered rose from the grave to give you an eternal hope! Jesus is still in control.





Therefore, trust in Jesus' care for you!

After all, Jesus didn't tell the disciples about their soon-coming failure to discourage them or shame them. He told them to prepare them. His prediction of their upcoming denials was an act of loving care for His disciples.

So yes, there are going to be days when evil seems to be winning inside you, and you will become afraid that you may even fall or not be strong enough to remain faithful until the end.

But those are not days to increase your own words or try to take more control for your destiny. Instead, when it seems that evil is increasing inside you, and you are afraid... cling to the promises of Jesus, and fix your hope on His resurrection.

Remember Jesus is our sovereign shepherd. He rose again to bring You to God. He has promised to never

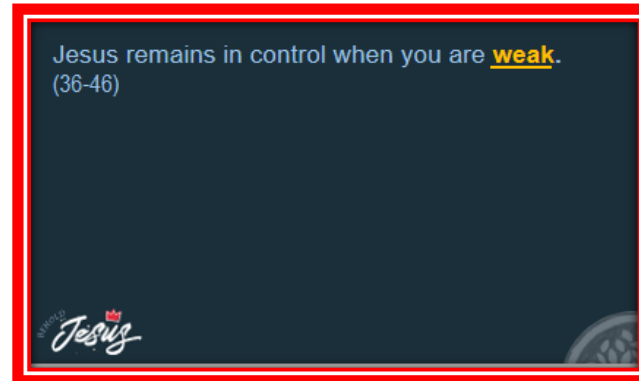
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<sup>12</sup> John 17:12

<sup>13</sup> Luke 12:32; c.f. Matthew 6:25-34

<sup>14</sup> Just as olives were pressed to bring out the valuable oil at Gethsemane, Jesus' soul was put under such Divine pressure that the physician Luke said,

leave any sheep behind.<sup>12</sup> You can trust His words and works more than your own. Fear not little flock. He cares for you.<sup>13</sup>



Now let's consider how Jesus remains in control when you are weak.

Because in **verse 36** Jesus and the disciples arrive to the Garden of the Olive Press. They all must have been exhausted. It was probably close to midnight. It had been a very full day. And in His human weariness Jesus began to experience profound sorrow as He prepared to die in our place for the forgiveness of our sins.

So Jesus asks for prayer. He specifically calls James and John to watch and pray with Him, and then prayerfully submits Himself to the Divine Olive Press of the Father's cup.<sup>14</sup>

Jesus knows what awaits Him. Drinking the Divine Cup<sup>15</sup> that was overflowing with God's righteous judgment

“his sweat became like great drops of blood falling down to the ground.”<sup>15</sup> (Luke 22:44)

<sup>15</sup> Matthew 20:22; 26:39, 42; Psalm 75:8; Jeremiah 25:15; Isaiah 51:17; Revelation 14:9-10

against sinners... the cup of death... was always the plan.<sup>16</sup> After all, the wages of sin is death.<sup>17</sup> There's no way God can ever forgive sin unless sinless blood covers it.<sup>18</sup>

So three times Jesus prays,

*My Father, if it be possible, let this cup pass from me; nevertheless, not my will, but Yours be done.*

Here we see the profound submission and obedience of Jesus. In His humanness, the shadow of the cross brought Him great agony. But in His Deity, we see perfect submission and obedience.

Such a contrast to the weak disciples here, right?

In **verse 41**, Jesus says their spirit was willing, but their flesh was weak. **Verse 43** says their eyes were heavy.

These disciples were so weak. So weary. So quickly overwhelmed and exhausted by all that was happening around them.

Can you relate to these weary disciples?

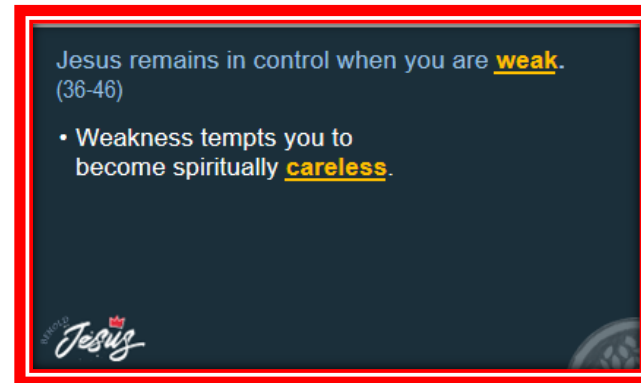
Be encouraged, loved ones. Jesus remains in control when you are weak, even when you are more aware of your weaknesses and inabilities than ever before.

You see, look carefully at **verse 41**. Jesus urges His disciples to,

*Watch and pray that you may not enter temptation...*

It's helpful to understand that physical weakness often brings temptation to sin with it.

First we must recognize that,



**Weakness tempts you to become spiritually careless.**

At the very moment when heavy hearts should have been praying, heavy eyes justified not watching. In other words, physical weakness often tempts us to justify spiritual carelessness.

Have you ever experienced this yourself? Have you noticed how physical weakness and tiredness and suffering can make you more vulnerable to spiritual temptation? It's often very tempting to lash out in sinful anger, or give in to temptations of the flesh, or selfishly live for yourself when you are overwhelmed by your own weakness?

<sup>16</sup> Genesis 3:15; John 1:29; Acts 2:23; 2 Corinthians 5:21

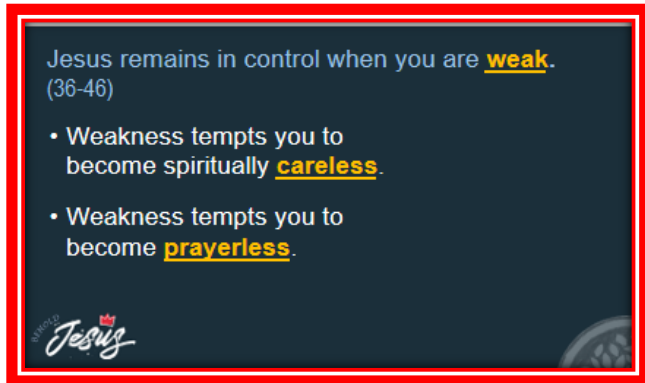
<sup>17</sup> Romans 6:23

<sup>18</sup> Leviticus 17:11; Hebrews 9:22



It's counter-intuitive, isn't it? You would think that when we are most aware of our weaknesses, we would be most spiritually alert. But instead, we often use physical weaknesses as justification for spiritual indifference that makes us more vulnerable to Satan's attack.

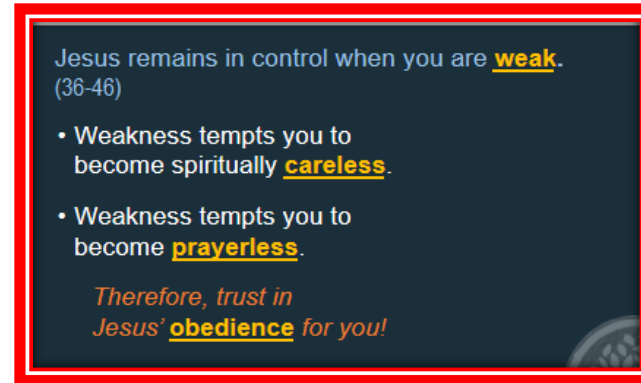
And of course here, we see how,



Weakness can tempt you to become prayerless as well.

The same disciples who had just insisted that they would be willing to die for Jesus now didn't even have enough strength to pray for Jesus.

So here's the lesson I want to draw out of this for us today: dear Christian... you and I are far weaker than we even know. But Jesus remains in control when we are weak. Our eternal hope, and present joy, is not based on how strong we are...but on how obedient Jesus is!



Therefore, trust in Jesus' obedience for you!

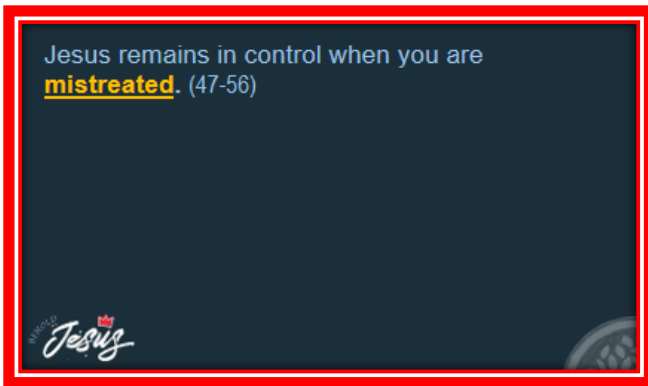
When the disciples are prayerless, Jesus is praying! When the disciples are careless, Jesus is careful. When the disciples are failing ... Jesus is humbly submitting Himself to the Father's will.

And this should give us great hope at those times when evil seems to be winning in us, or around us, and we can only see our own inability.

Jesus is both our Passover Lamb and our Great High Priest. Jesus is the strength for all our weakness, and the sufficiency for all we need. He is the Messiah – the Promised King and Deliverer of God's people, and He is worthy of your trust. For even when our flesh is weak, Jesus remains in control.

Are you trusting in Jesus' care for you? Are you trusting in Jesus' obedience on your behalf?

Jesus remains in control even when evil seems to be winning in your fears and in your weaknesses. Finally, let's consider how,



Jesus remains in control when you are mistreated.

In **verse 45** Jesus tells the disciples, “Look, the hour is at hand.” He knows exactly what is happening. Everything is working according to His Father’s plan. It’s time for His arrest and betrayal.

O from the outside, it seemed like evil was winning when Jesus was arrested. But Jesus was still fully in control...even while the greatest injustice of human history was playing out on this dark night.

**Verse 47** makes clear that Jesus was in control, for even,

*While He was still speaking, Judas came ... with a great crowd with swords and clubs... to seize Him.*

Now let’s be careful to feel some of the emotion of **verse 47** before we race past this.

Matthew just says this crowd was “great.” John’s gospel says this crowd included a band of Roman soldiers.<sup>19</sup> Typically a band of Roman soldiers numbered 600 armed

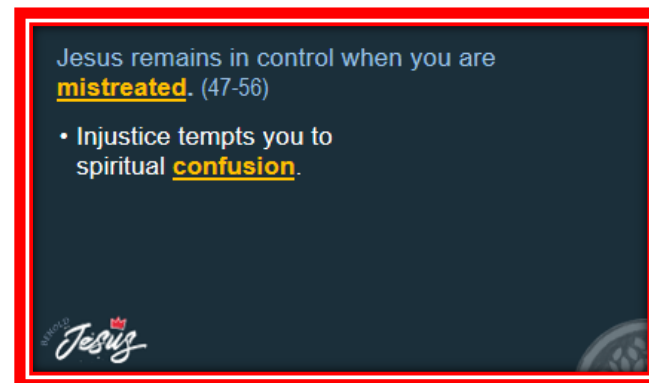
men. So along with the Sanhedrin and the high priest’s entourage, this crowd was likely close to 1,000 people!

Feel the emotion of this. It’s the middle of the night. Dark. And all the sudden Jesus shakes you awake and says, it’s time for my betrayal. And you look up to see 1,000 heavily armed people coming to seize Jesus...and they are led by... Judas!?

The verse makes a point to emphasize that Judas was one of the twelve disciples.

What is happening right now? Judas, what are you doing? No one suspected Judas would betray Jesus. No one saw this coming. I thought he was on our side!

This relates to the confusion we often experience when evil seems to be winning in our lives as well. Because,



Injustice often tempts us to spiritual confusion.

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<sup>19</sup> John 18:3

The 11 disciples had to be very confused in their half-wakened stupor. Judas greets Jesus, kisses Him, and then they hear Jesus say in **verse 50**,

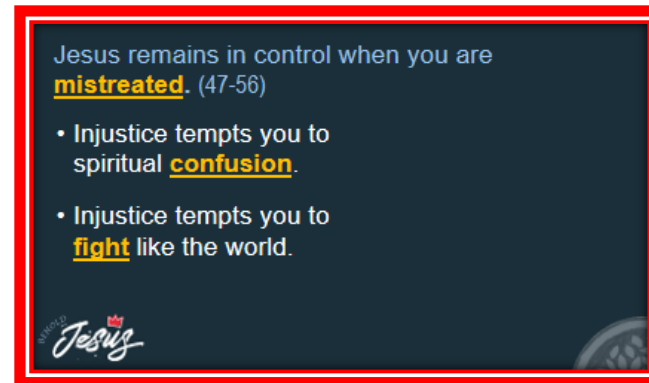
*Friend, do what you came to do.*

What? Is Jesus loving Judas in this moment? Jesus didn't seem angry... He called Judas friend. But didn't Jesus just say that He was being betrayed? Why would Jesus call Judas his friend? And now what is happening ... they are seizing Jesus. They are being rough with Him... and He's just going to let them do this?

This isn't the way the disciples thought the kingdom would be realized! How could Jesus be the sovereign King who is in control of all things, and yet this grave injustice is happening right before their eyes?

We know this feeling, don't we? When you or your loved ones are mistreated with a great injustice, it's very tempting to question God's goodness, or question God's power, or question what good purpose God may have for such evil.

And when we encounter such injustice, we are often tempted to,



fight back like the world.

After all, that's what Peter does in **verse 51**, right?<sup>20</sup>

Peter, like many of us who are confused and hurt deeply by this world's injustice, lashes out impulsively and seeks to overcome evil with evil.<sup>21</sup> He knew the 11 of them were no match for 1,000 heavily armed men...but this kind of injustice was unacceptable. Such mistreatment demanded that someone pay...and so Peter took his sword and tried to decapitate one of the high priest's servants near him.

Church – I think a lot of us can relate with Peter here. In our pain and confusion with all the evil around us, we first forget that Jesus remains in control, and so then we start to take justice into our own hands.

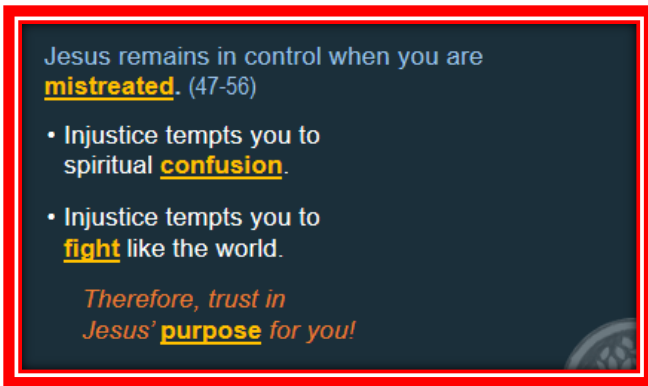
But "Vengeance is mine, I will repay" says the Lord.<sup>22</sup>

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<sup>20</sup> C.f. John 18:10; Luke 22:38

<sup>21</sup> Contra Romans 12:14-21; 1 Peter 4

<sup>22</sup> Ge 50:19; Le 19:18; Dt 32:35; 1 Sa 26:10; Ps 94:1; Pr 20:22; 24:29; Je 51:36; Mt 5:39; Ro 5:9; 12:17; 13:4-5; 14:19; 1 Th 4:6; Heb 10:30



Therefore, instead of fighting like the world, we must trust in Jesus' purpose for us!

In **verse 52**, Jesus tells Peter to put away His sword. Jesus knows what is happening, and He's in complete control.

**Verse 53**, *Do you think that I cannot appeal to my Father and He will at once send me more than twelve legions of angels?*

1 legion is 6,000 angels. Back in Israel's history, just one angel took out an entire Assyrian army of 185,000 warriors!<sup>23</sup> So the power of 72,000 angels is unimaginable.

Here's Jesus' point: Peter, I don't need you to fix my problems, or bring justice to this evil world. Even when you are being mistreated, I'm still in complete control. And I'm still good. It's not going to feel like it in the moment... I understand. I do know what it's like to be in great agony and sorrow of humanness.

<sup>23</sup> 2 Kings 19:35

<sup>24</sup> Genesis 50:20

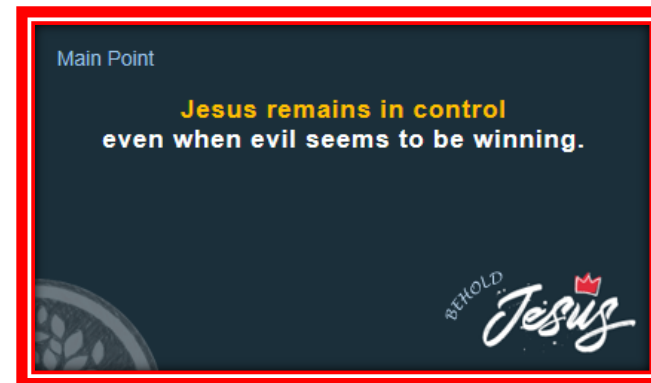
But You can still trust my eternal purpose for you.

**Verse 54**, the Scriptures are being fulfilled. What people mean for evil, God is intending for good.<sup>24</sup>

Then Jesus rebukes the crowd for their cowardly violence... reminding them that they are personally responsible for their own sin even while God's eternal purposes are being accomplished through it.

Because, note this loved ones... in all of His control... God Himself never sins.<sup>25</sup> God is holy. He is never unjust. Injustice is always the result of accountable people making their own personal decisions to sin... and every sinner is held accountable for their sin.

But take comfort in this truth that is clear in **Matthew 26**: no sinner can ever thwart God's eternal purposes for His glory and our eternal good.



Jesus remains in control even when evil seems to be winning.

<sup>25</sup> James 1:13

The very bookends of today's Scripture makes it so clear, doesn't it? In **verse 31**, Jesus predicts the disciples' defection, and in **verse 56** all the disciples left Him and fled.

And right in the middle is **verse 41**: *the spirit is willing, but the flesh is weak.*

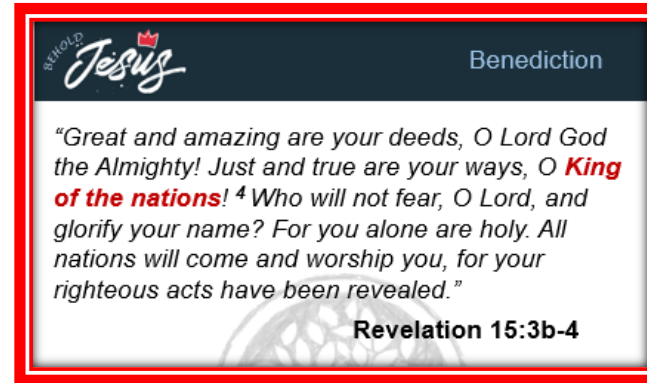
So yes, we are all far weaker than we would ever want to admit, and evil does often seem to be winning in our world – both inside us and outside of us. But our hope is sure. Our foundation is firm. And we will glory in our Redeemer. For King Jesus remains in full control, and we can trust in His care for us, His obedience on our behalf, and His eternal purposes for His glory and our eternal joy.



**Let's pray.**

<<I Will Glory in My Redeemer>>

**Let's pray our benediction together:**



*Great and amazing are your deeds, O Lord God the Almighty! Just and true are your ways, O King of the nations! Who will not fear, O Lord, and glorify your name? For you alone are holy. All nations will come and worship you, for your righteous acts have been revealed.*  
**Revelation 15:3b-4**

## **Recommended Resources on When Evil seems to be Winning:**

- Genesis 50:20
- Psalm 10; 37:1-7
- Zechariah 13:7
- Malachi 2:17-3:6
- Mark 14:27-50
- Luke 22:31-53
- John 13:36-38; 18:1-11
- Romans 8:28-29, 31-39; 12:14-21
- Philippians 1:6
- Hebrews 4:14-16
- 1 Peter 4
- Jude 24-25
  
- <https://www.thatttheworldmayknow.com/the-fifth-cup>
  
- *Lessons from the Upper Room*, Ferguson
- *The Darkness and the Glory*, Harris
- *Trusting God*, Bridges

## **Growing Deeper: Life Group Questions**

1. Read John 18:1-9. How does this show that Jesus was in control even when evil seems to be winning? How does this passage illustrate the stupidity of sinful hearts?
2. Review Matthew 26:31-35. Explain how the disciples' refusal to accept the possibility of their own failure was an expression of fear. Have you ever tried to overcome your fears with lots of words? What does it look like to trust Jesus' words rather than your own words when you are afraid of failure?
3. Review Matthew 26:36-46. What "cup" is Jesus referring to in His prayers? (c.f. Matthew 20:22; 26:39, 42; Psalm 75:8; Jeremiah 25:15; Isaiah 51:17; Revelation 14:9-10). Will you have to drink from this same "cup" someday? Why or why not?
4. Review Matthew 26:47-50. What must the 11 disciples felt when they saw Judas leading the large crowd who had come to arrest Jesus? Have you ever been deeply betrayed by a close friend? How did Jesus help you process through your spiritual confusion?
5. Review Matthew 26:51-55 and John 18:36. Why shouldn't Jesus' followers fight against injustice like the world? How does Romans 12:14-21 and 1 Peter 4 teach us to overcome injustice for God's glory today?
6. When you are confronted with fear, or weakness, or injustice, how are you most tempted to sin? Discuss together, and pray that God's Spirit will help you trust in Jesus' powerful purpose and provision for you even while evil seems to be winning.