

Mark 14 : 43-52

Betrayal at the hands of a friend

BIBLE STUDY



INTRODUCTION

Starter:

Betrayal (or being badly let down), particularly by a friend, is deeply painful. What situations might be seen as betrayal in our modern society? (think about friendship, family, work).

Pray to start:

Ask God to speak to us through Biblical words which may be familiar. Thank him that we know he can identify with us as we go through times when friends and colleagues or family betray us and let us down.

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Read: Mark 14 : 43-52

Let's unpack the passage.....

1. Look at verses 41 – 42 to remind yourself of the setting of this infamous passage. Imagine you are one of the three disciples who have just been caught sleeping by Jesus. What might be going through your head as the crowd approaches where you are in the garden?
2. What might have been particularly astonishing for the disciples as they noticed the appearance of Judas with the crowd? (Consider how he had spent the last three years).
3. Look at Matthew 26 v 50 to see Jesus' reaction to Judas' kiss. Jesus could have walked away – as his disciples did! Why didn't he do so? (v. 49b)
4. It is widely thought to be Peter who cut off the ear of the servant of the high priest (although it is only John who actually names him as Peter). What typical character traits (both positive and negative) does Peter show here? What had he misunderstood about Jesus?
5. What was the price paid to Judas for Jesus (Matt 26 v 15)? This same amount is the price due to the owner of a slave that was gored to death by a farm animal (Exodus 21 v 32). How might this fact, together with other parts of today's passage, show how misrepresented the Son of God was as he turned willingly towards the cross?

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GOING DEEPER

Whilst pages of commentary have been given to the betrayal by Judas in this story, it is Jesus' reaction to events that we are going to be looking at here.

Talk about how each of these characteristics are displayed by Jesus in this passage:

- **Humility.** How does Jesus' humility show in this passage? How does it contrast with the other players in the scene?
- **Meekness.** This sometimes misunderstood word is one that Jesus fully represents in this passage in his submission to God's will. Talk about what you think Jesus shows by meekness in contrast to the Cambridge dictionary definition: 'the quality of being quiet, gentle, and unwilling to argue or express your opinions'.
- **Obedience.** If Jesus had cried out to God, God would have helped him. Look at Matthew 26 v 53 to see the power of obedience in action.
- **Forgiveness.** What do you believe Jesus' death on the cross signifies about the value of your life?

Some questions inspired by: William Taylor – 'A purposeful death' (St Helen's Bishopsgate)

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PRAY & REFLECT

Reflect on the price paid by Jesus in this passage as he set his face towards the cross. Thank him as he shows beauty, humility, meekness and obedience in the face of betrayal.

There are times as believers when we walk away from what Jesus asks of us. Why? Maybe, like Judas, we 'sell our faith cheaply' because we have 'bought it' too cheaply – we have not understood everything that is being asked of us. Ask God to help you fully understand what Jesus asks of us – and also what he gives us.

