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Sermon Notes

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A Brilliant Light Shining in the Darkest Night

Matthew 26:47-56

I. The Darkest Night in History...Christ Shining All the Brighter

A. As We Come to Matthew 26:47-56, we come to the tragic and disgusting account of the betrayal of Jesus by Judas, and the arrest of the Son of God by wicked men

1. In this account, we will see the sinfulness of the human heart in darkest hue
2. In this account also, we will see the radiance of the glory of Christ shining all the brighter
3. The night that Christ was born, the darkness of the night was ripped apart by the appearance of a single angel

Luke 2:9 An angel of the Lord appeared to them, and the glory of the Lord shone around them

4. In a similar but very different way, the glory of Christ ripped apart the moral darkness of human history and showed us the perfection of His nature

B. This Was the Darkest Night in History

1. John 13: two things linked to Judas taking the bread:

John 13:27 As soon as Judas took the bread, Satan entered into him.

John 13:30 As soon as Judas had taken the bread, he went out. And it was night.

2. The "Darkness" is human sin... the wickedness of the human heart, when the alliance between Satan and sinful men reached its darkest and deepest level
3. Jesus called this time the time of darkness... when the evil of sin was on full display

In Luke's Gospel, Jesus spoke these words to the people arresting Him:

Luke 22:53 Every day I was with you in the temple courts, and you did not lay a hand on me. But this is your hour-- when darkness reigns."

What a CHILLING PHRASE: this is YOUR HOUR, WHEN DARKNESS REIGNS!!

- a. The sinfulness of Judas's treacherous betrayal, culminating in the most disgusting symbol of dishonor in history—his KISS
 - b. The sinfulness of the chief priests and the elders of the Jewish nation, who should have recognized the time of God coming to them in the person of Christ, but who instead killed Him out of selfishness, jealousy, power-lust, greed, and pride
 - c. The sinfulness of the Roman soldiers and the crowd, who were there to arrest the Prince of Peace with swords and clubs
 - d. The sinfulness of Peter, who through unbelief did not accept Jesus' statements about the need for Him to die for their sins, and who sought to derail God's redemptive plan by fighting for Jesus' escape from arrest
 - e. The sinfulness of all the disciples, who in selfish cowardice abandoned Jesus in His hour of need and fled for their lives
4. This was the darkest night in history... when the human race arrested, tried, condemned, mocked and tortured the only perfectly good man that ever lived, and even worse, did that to the Son of God!!
 5. This darkness was a darkness that could be felt because of the thickness of human evil
 6. And yet, in the darkest night, the light of the world shone all the brighter

C. Christ the Light of the World

John 8:12 Jesus said, "I am the light of the world."

John 1:4-5 In him was life, and that life was the light of men. ⁵ The light shines in the darkness, but the darkness has not understood it.

1 John 1:5 This is the message we have heard from him and declare to you: God is light; in him there is no darkness at all.

1. Jesus Christ is perfect light... the absolutely perfect display of the attributes of God

Hebrews 1:3 The Son is the radiance of God's glory and the exact representation of his being,

2. To see Him is to see the Father

***John 14:8-9 Philip said, "Lord, show us the Father and that will be enough for us." 9
Jesus answered: "Don't you know me, Philip, even after I have been among you such a long time? Anyone who has seen me has seen the Father.***

3. How does Jesus put the glory of the Father on display in this account?
 - a. Behold His courage: going willingly to His death at the hands of such evil men
 - b. Behold His humility: making Himself nothing and being treated so shamefully as they came out with swords and clubs to arrest Him as if He were a common criminal
 - c. Behold His love: laying down His life for sinners like us, and even loving His enemy by healing Malchus's ear so tenderly
 - d. Behold His authority: in that the angels of heaven would have been put at His full disposal and would have obeyed His slightest command
 - e. Behold His wisdom: in reasoning with Peter and with His enemies
 - f. Behold His submission: by obeying Scripture and His Father's will, even though it meant His shameful and excruciating death on the cross
 - g. Behold His great patience: in not striking down His enemies with the sword of His mouth

4. Truly

John 1:4-5 [His] light shines in the darkness, but the darkness has not understood it.

5. Truly Christ's light shines all the brighter when contrasted so plainly with every other human being in this story

D. Marvel at the Fact: The Son of God ARRESTED!!

1. They tied up Jesus!!!

John 18:12 Then the detachment of soldiers with its commander and the Jewish officials arrested Jesus. They bound him

2. Jesus said "One greater than Solomon is here" and "One greater than Jonah is here"... friends, in the same way, "One greater than Samson is here"

Judges 15:13-15 they bound [Samson] with two new ropes and led him up from the rock. 14 ¶ As he approached Lehi, the Philistines came toward him shouting. The Spirit of the LORD came upon him in power. The ropes on his arms became like charred flax, and the bindings dropped from his hands. 15 Finding a fresh jawbone of a donkey, he grabbed it and struck down a thousand men.

3. There is only one reason that Jesus stayed bound after His arrest: He WANTED to stay bound... He willed it!!

John 10:18 No one takes [my life] from me, but I lay it down of my own accord.

II. Judas Betrays Jesus With a Kiss: The Darkest Act of the Night (vs. 47-50)

Matthew 26:47-50 While he was still speaking, Judas, one of the Twelve, arrived. With him was a large crowd armed with swords and clubs, sent from the chief priests and the elders of the people. ⁴⁸ Now the betrayer had arranged a signal with them: "The one I kiss is the man; arrest him." ⁴⁹ Going at once to Jesus, Judas said, "Greetings, Rabbi!" and kissed him. ⁵⁰ Jesus replied, "Friend, do what you came for." Then the men stepped forward, seized Jesus and arrested him.

A. While He Was Still Speaking

1. The last thing Jesus said

Matthew 26:44-46 So he left them and went away once more and prayed the third time, saying the same thing. ⁴⁵ Then he returned to the disciples and said to them, "Are you still sleeping and resting? Look, the hour is near, and the Son of Man is betrayed into the hands of sinners. ⁴⁶ Rise, let us go! Here comes my betrayer!"

2. The time of prayer continued right up until the last possible moment
3. Jesus drank from the Father's presence and kept drinking until it was time to go
4. Harmonizing with John's Gospel... much clearer display of Christ's courage, leadership, and boldness
 - a. Vs. 46: "Rise let us go..."
 - b. Judas arrives with a LARGE CROWD (armed w swords and clubs)
 - c. Then Jesus WENT OUT to meet this entourage... an incredible display of POWER!!!

John 18:4-6 Jesus, knowing all that was going to happen to him, went out and asked them, "Who is it you want?"

"Went out" (because Gethsemane was probably a walled private garden, and Jesus went out through the gate to meet them)

⁵ "Jesus of Nazareth," they replied. "I AM," Jesus said. (And Judas the traitor was standing there with them.) ⁶ When Jesus said, "I AM," they drew back and fell to the ground.

d. Clear display of Christ's power as God the Son... He merely says "I am" and the whole lot of them falls to the ground before Him"

B. Judas, One of the Twelve

1. Amazing how Judas is identified this way years later by Matthew
2. Rather than resorting to insulting words, like "Judas, the wicked traitor," or something like that, Matthew (under the inspiration of the Holy Spirit) says "One of the Twelve"
3. Many apocryphal accounts written later sought to demonize Judas in the worst way

(apocryphal account) "The Story of Joseph of Arimathea" called Judas the son of the brothers of Caiaphas the evil high priest, and said Judas was a plant from Caiaphas, sent to infiltrate the disciples to spy on Jesus

Even more outrageous was the apocryphal writing, "The Acts of Pilate" which said that Judas went home after the betrayal of Jesus and found his wife roasting a chicken. When Judas told her he was planning on killing himself because he was afraid Jesus would rise from the dead and take vengeance on him for betraying him, his wife said that Jesus would no more rise from the dead than that the chicken she was cooking would jump out of the fire and crow; at that moment, the bird did precisely that

These ridiculous and mythical stories show the lengths to which NON-INSPIRED writers sought to slander Judas and drag his name through the mud

4. How much more dignified is Matthew (as well as Mark, Luke and John)... for they all identified Judas as "one of the Twelve"... this actually HEIGHTENS the sense of moral outrage at what he did to Jesus

Psalm 41:9 Even my close friend, whom I trusted, he who shared my bread, has lifted up his heel against me.

C. The Crowd with Judas

Matthew 26:47 With him was a large crowd armed with swords and clubs, sent from the chief priests and the elders of the people.

1. The chief priests and the elders had sent this huge crowd, armed for a fight, to arrest Jesus
2. According to John's Gospel, there was a detachment (Greek *speira*) of Roman soldiers, as many as 600 from the barracks in Fort Antonia... along with temple guards
3. All told, there may have been as many as 1000 armed men that night to arrest one man, a leader of twelve other peaceful men... Jesus had never led any

kind of insurrection against them, so He exposed the foolishness of their weapons

Matthew 26:55 At that time Jesus said to the crowd, "Am I leading a rebellion, that you have come out with swords and clubs to capture me? Every day I sat in the temple courts teaching, and you did not arrest me.

4. It is very late at night, or perhaps very early in the morning... maybe three in the morning at this point... the dead of night
5. The mixed multitude a picture of the world and its disdain for Jesus
 - a. The crowd was UNJUST: Jesus had broken no part of the Law of Moses, nor of Roman Law... He was a perfectly innocent man
 - b. The crowd was MINDLESS: most of them there that night probably knew very little about Jesus and were just following orders... they had no personal knowledge about Christ and were ignorant of His person and works; they were in it just for their own personal welfare... they were hired hands just doing a job; so most of the world's population knows little of Jesus and cares little for Him, and simply goes about their daily lives as though He didn't exist at all; so in church history, many hired mercenaries have fought against Christ and his church without having any idea what the issues were... they wanted their paycheck and to stay out of trouble
 - c. The crowd was also COWARDLY: they came at night to avoid trouble with the population of Jerusalem
 - d. The crowd was BLASPHEMOUS: for it was the Son of God they were there to lay their hands on, arrest and lead to His death

D. The Kiss

Matthew 26:48-49 Now the betrayer had arranged a signal with them: "The one I kiss is the man; arrest him." ⁴⁹ Going at once to Jesus, Judas said, "Greetings, Rabbi!" and kissed him.

1. The most disgusting part of the whole wicked affair
2. Judas had received his thirty pieces of silver for his wicked intention... but now the time had come to betray Jesus
3. The evil signal was concocted in the mind of Judas, who by this time was inhabited by the devil himself... Satan thought up this wicked twist
4. A kiss is a sign of loving relationship... but it is given in a variety of ways

- a. A slave who loved his master would only have the boldness to kiss the feet of his master; so would an enemy who was pleading for mercy from a conquering king
- b. An ordinary servant would kiss the hem of the garment or the back of the master's hand
- c. A kiss on the cheek showed tremendous intimacy and closeness... but even then, it would only have been initiated by the master... the disciple or servant or son would wait for the king to initiate... he wouldn't be so bold as to initiate such intimacy
- d. Judas greeted Jesus, "HAIL, RABBI!!" and the Greek says Judas kissed him in an intense way (kataphileo)... with great affection and perhaps multiple times
- e. It was exceptionally wicked because of its hypocrisy and arrogance

Luke 22:48 but Jesus asked him, "Judas, are you betraying the Son of Man with a kiss?"

E. Jesus' Last Words to Judas

Matthew 26:50 Jesus replied, "Friend, do what you came for." Then the men stepped forward, seized Jesus and arrested him.

Jesus used a term that showed a relationship (like companion) but it wasn't a close term...

Then He speaks these final words to Judas

Judas must still be thinking about these words, as he will for all eternity...

Judas came to that Garden to betray Jesus... now the work was done

III. Peter's Faithless Fight (vs. 51)

Matthew 26:51 With that, one of Jesus' companions reached for his sword, drew it out and struck the servant of the high priest, cutting off his ear.

A. Matthew, Mark, and Luke Maintains Anonymity... John Tells Us it was Peter

1. Some commentators have wondering if Matthew, Mark and Luke were trying to protect Peter from Roman reprisals because he was arrested and in their power
2. In any case, John tells us who it was

3. John also tells us the servant's name was Malchus

B. Peter Consistently Refused to Believe Jesus' Words About the Cross

Matthew 16:21-23 *From that time on Jesus began to explain to his disciples that he must go to Jerusalem and suffer many things at the hands of the elders, chief priests and teachers of the law, and that he must be killed and on the third day be raised to life. ²² Peter took him aside and began to rebuke him. "Never, Lord!" he said. "This shall never happen to you!" ²³ Jesus turned and said to Peter, "Get behind me, Satan! You are a stumbling block to me; you do not have in mind the things of God, but the things of men."*

C. Earlier, Peter Had Boasted... Now He Put His Sword Where His Boast Was

Matthew 26:35 *But Peter declared, "Even if I have to die with you, I will never disown you."*

1. The sword was a long dagger or a very short sword... not a battle weapon
2. Peter was no trained soldier... he was swinging wildly and accomplished very little except severing Malchus's ear
3. Abishai was one of David's mighty men and an excellent soldier...

1 Samuel 26:8 *Abishai said to David, "Today God has delivered your enemy into your hands. Now let me pin him to the ground with one thrust of my spear; I won't strike him twice."*

4. Peter was not an excellent soldier... his actions were faithless and completely misguided
5. Jesus HAD to die for Peter's sins, or the wrath of God would consume Peter forever... Peter was trying to STOP the eternal redemptive plan of Almighty God!!

D. Jesus Healed Malchus's Ear

Luke 22:51 *But Jesus answered, "No more of this!" And he touched the man's ear and healed him.*

E. Peter's Action a Symbol of Misguided Faithless Mission in Christ's Name

1. Jesus' statement to Pilate

John 18:36 *Jesus said, "My kingdom is not of this world. If it were, my servants would fight to prevent my arrest by the Jews. But now my kingdom is from another place."*

Peter sought to FIGHT to prevent His arrest from the Jews... and that was, to Jesus, clear evidence of the way KINGDOMS OF THIS WORLD advance

2. Jesus' statement on how His Kingdom advances

John 12:24 I tell you the truth, unless a kernel of wheat falls to the ground and dies, it remains only a single seed. But if it dies, it produces many seeds.

NOT BY KILLING BUT BY DYING!!!!

More on this at the end

IV. Jesus' Perfect Submission to Scripture (vs. 52-56)

Matthew 26:52-56 "Put your sword back in its place," Jesus said to him, "for all who draw the sword will die by the sword. ⁵³ Do you think I cannot call on my Father, and he will at once put at my disposal more than twelve legions of angels? ⁵⁴ But how then would the Scriptures be fulfilled that say it must happen in this way?" ⁵⁵ At that time Jesus said to the crowd, "Am I leading a rebellion, that you have come out with swords and clubs to capture me? Every day I sat in the temple courts teaching, and you did not arrest me. ⁵⁶ But this has all taken place that the writings of the prophets might be fulfilled." Then all the disciples deserted him and fled.

A. Jesus' Command to Peter: Put Your Sword Back in its Place (vs. 52)

1. Jesus kingdom would not advance by the sword
2. Jesus intervenes with words and authority, stopping Peter from being arrested that night; enabling Peter and all the rest of the disciples to escape, which is exactly what Jesus wanted them to do

John 18:8-9 "I told you that I am he," Jesus answered. "If you are looking for me, then let these men go." ⁹ This happened so that the words he had spoken would be fulfilled: "I have not lost one of those you gave me."

3. Peter was completely off the track of what God wanted done, what Jesus had said plainly would be done
4. Jesus' words alone saved Peter from death that night!
5. They also showed plainly the determination He had to do the Father's will by dying on the cross

John 18:11 Jesus commanded Peter, "Put your sword away! Shall I not drink the cup the Father has given me?"

B. Reason #1: All Who Draw the Sword Die by the Sword

1. Jesus gives Peter a strong dose of reality
2. He was surrounded by 600 Roman soldier, trained killers... all of them capable of killing Peter instantly
3. If Peter insisted on fighting, he would be cut down immediately

Illus: Like a hostage situation in New York City in which some crazy terrorist has held hostage twenty people for two hours in a bank... the bank is surrounded by hundreds of police officers, many of them trained snipers... the negotiator talks the terrorist out onto the sidewalk... as the terrorist stands there in a heavy overcoat, there are hundreds of red laser dots on his chest signifying that this man is clearly in the sights of dozens of expert snipers who will cut him down instantly if he so much as twitches

That is a picture of Peter's situation... he will die that very night if he doesn't put away his sword

Probably Peter was banking on the Lord's supernatural power to rescue him... the Lord merely spoke to him!

4. Two deeper possibilities:
 - a. First: this is speaking as in a general proverb—people who live a life of violence usually die as they lived, by violence
 - b. Second: Peter is opposing God-ordained authorities, even if they are acting unjustly... to fight governmental forces with violence is insurrection, rebellion, and it leads to the SWORD of the government justly coming down on the rebel; Jesus is submissive to the Roman authorities and the Jewish religious authorities even though He is being unjustly accused

Romans 13:4 But if you do wrong, be afraid, for [the government ruler] does not bear the sword for nothing. He is God's servant, an agent of wrath to bring punishment on the wrongdoer.

- i) Even the GROSSEST INJUSTICE IN HISTORY (the arrest and death of Jesus) does not merit vigilante justice... fighting wicked governments by the sword

C. Reason #2: If I were trying to escape arrest, I wouldn't be relying on your dagger!

Matthew 26:53 Do you think I cannot call on my Father, and he will at once put at my disposal more than twelve legions of angels?

1. Note the language of SUBMISSION even in this assertion
2. Jesus would never REBEL against the true source of all authority... His Father

3. His Father alone would be the source of Jesus' military power to crush His enemies... Jesus does nothing apart from the Father's will
4. If the Father willed to deliver Jesus from arrest that night by killing Jesus' enemies, the amount of power He could put at Jesus' full disposal would be amazing!!!
5. One legion = 6000 Roman soldiers... the most powerful military force on the face of the earth at that time...
6. Jesus said the Father would dispatch MORE THAN twelve legions of angels...
 - a. This is just a small portion of all the heavenly army... Daniel 7 records a HUNDRED MILLION angels standing around the throne of God ready to serve Him
 - b. Twelve legions of angels = 72,000... Jesus said "MORE THAN" so let's just round up to 75,000 angels.
 - c. One angel killed 185,000 Assyrian troops in one night... by that simple math, twelve legions could kill 15 billion people in one night... far more than were alive on the planet at that time
 - d. Those angels would be put completely at the disposal of Jesus... ready to do His bidding... whatever He commanded, they would do without the slightest hesitation

Matthew 6:10 your kingdom come, your will be done on earth as it is in heaven.

ALL THE WAY
RIGHT AWAY
WITH A HAPPY SPIRIT!!!!!!

Revelation 16:4-7 The third angel poured out his bowl on the rivers and springs of water, and they became blood. ⁵ Then I heard the angel in charge of the waters say: "You are just in these judgments, you who are and who were, the Holy One, because you have so judged; ⁶ for they have shed the blood of your saints and prophets, and you have given them blood to drink as they deserve." ⁷ And I heard the altar respond: "Yes, Lord God Almighty, true and just are your judgments."

- e. If Jesus were trying to avoid arrest by the killing of His enemies, He would call on His Father and it would be done immediately
- f. BUT... Jesus was NOT trying to avoid arrest by the killing of His enemies:

Luke 9:53-56 [The Samaritan village] did not receive Him, because His face was set for the journey to Jerusalem. ⁵⁴ And when His disciples James and John saw

this, they said, "Lord, do You want us to command fire to come down from heaven and consume them, just as Elijah did?" ⁵⁵ But He turned and rebuked them, and said, "You do not know what manner of spirit you are of. ⁵⁶ "For the Son of Man did not come to destroy men's lives but to save them."

John 3:17 For God did not send his Son into the world to condemn the world, but to save the world through him.

D. The Ultimate Reason to Put the Sword Away: Scripture Cannot Be Broken!!

Matthew 26:54 But how then would the Scriptures be fulfilled that say it must happen in this way?"

1. Stand in awe of the attitude of Jesus Christ toward Scripture!!!!
2. There is not a man, woman, or child alive on earth today or who has ever lived who has a higher view of Scripture than Jesus!!
3. This is the passage I have used several times to speak to college students who have come with questions about the inspiration and authority of Scripture because of questions from their intelligent mocking professors
4. I simply want to assert this: let every Christian have the same attitude toward the authority and perfection of Scripture that Jesus has
5. Jesus' reason to Peter to put the sword away is this: SCRIPTURE HAS SAID I MUST DIE, AND THEREFORE I MUST DIE!!!
6. The word "fulfilled" is the standard one used in Matthew's Gospel for Old Testament Prophecies about Christ
 - a. The Scriptures reveal the ETERNAL DECREE of Almighty God... it was written before the foundation of the earth that I would die on the cross for sins

1 Peter 1:18-20 For you know that it was not with perishable things such as silver or gold that you were redeemed from the empty way of life handed down to you from your forefathers, ¹⁹ but with the precious blood of Christ, a lamb without blemish or defect. ²⁰ He was chosen before the creation of the world, but was revealed in these last times for your sake.

b. In the fullness of time, God revealed His plan through the Prophets

Psalm 22:1 My God, my God, why have you forsaken me?

Psalm 22:14-18 I am poured out like water, and all my bones are out of joint. My heart has turned to wax; it has melted away within me. ¹⁵ My strength is dried up like a potsherd, and my tongue sticks to the roof of my mouth; you lay me in

the dust of death. ¹⁶ Dogs have surrounded me; a band of evil men has encircled me, they have pierced my hands and my feet. ¹⁷ I can count all my bones; people stare and gloat over me. ¹⁸ They divide my garments among them and cast lots for my clothing.

Isaiah 53:5-10 But he was pierced for our transgressions, he was crushed for our iniquities; the punishment that brought us peace was upon him, and by his wounds we are healed. ⁶ We all, like sheep, have gone astray, each of us has turned to his own way; and the LORD has laid on him the iniquity of us all. ⁷ He was oppressed and afflicted, yet he did not open his mouth; he was led like a lamb to the slaughter, and as a sheep before her shearers is silent, so he did not open his mouth. ⁸ By oppression and judgment he was taken away. And who can speak of his descendants? For he was cut off from the land of the living; for the transgression of my people he was stricken. ⁹ He was assigned a grave with the wicked, and with the rich in his death, though he had done no violence, nor was any deceit in his mouth. ¹⁰ Yet it was the LORD's will to crush him and cause him to suffer,

c. Peter... this is the eternal plan of God for YOUR SALVATION, and for the salvation of a countless multitude from every tribe and nation on earth... this is the fulfillment of every animal sacrifice that there has ever been... this is what God has been building towards for thousands of years...

d. PUT YOUR SWORD AWAY, for Scripture has said I MUST DIE... and I WOULD RATHER DIE THAN VIOLATE SCRIPTURE

7. That is the essence of Jesus' infinitely lofty view of Scripture... Scripture is the revealed will of His heavenly Father, and I would RATHER DIE THAN VIOLATE SCRIPTURE

E. So, Witness Also Jesus' Final Statement to the Crowd

Matthew 26:55-56 At that time Jesus said to the crowd, "Am I leading a rebellion, that you have come out with swords and clubs to capture me? Every day I sat in the temple courts teaching, and you did not arrest me. ⁵⁶ But this has all taken place that the writings of the prophets might be fulfilled."

F. The Disciples Flee

Matthew 26:56 Then all the disciples deserted him and fled.

“Deserted” is a very strong word... they turned their backs on Jesus, abandoned Him, forsook Him, gave up on Him, fled from Him to save their lives

That also is a direct fulfillment of Scripture:

Zechariah 13:7 "Strike the shepherd, and the sheep will be scattered, and I will turn my hand against the little ones.

V. Applications

A. Come to Christ!!

1. The whole purpose of the arrest of Jesus was that Scripture might be fulfilled... and those prophecies were written for our salvation
2. Jesus allowed Himself to be arrested so that He might die for our sins
3. Trust in Him!!

Isaiah 53:5-6 But he was pierced for our transgressions, he was crushed for our iniquities; the punishment that brought us peace was upon him, and by his wounds we are healed. ⁶ We all, like sheep, have gone astray, each of us has turned to his own way; and the LORD has laid on him the iniquity of us all.

B. Worship Christ for the Brilliant Light Shining in a Very Dark World

1. The darkness continues until this present day
2. That was indeed the darkest night in the history of the world...
3. But Christ is every bit as much the light of the world now as He was then
4. Worship Him for His attributes on display here
 - a. Behold His courage: going willingly to His death at the hands of such evil men
 - b. Behold His humility: making Himself nothing and being treated so shamefully as they came out with swords and clubs to arrest Him as if He were a common criminal
 - c. Behold His love: laying down His life for sinners like us, and even loving His enemy by healing Malchus's ear so tenderly
 - d. Behold His authority: in that the angels of heaven would have been put at His full disposal and would have obeyed His slightest command
 - e. Behold His wisdom: in reasoning with Peter and with His enemies
 - f. Behold His submission: by obeying Scripture and His Father's will, even though it meant His shameful and excruciating death on the cross
 - g. Behold His great patience: in not striking down His enemies with the sword of His mouth

C. Understand the Darkness of Human Sin

1. See the wickedness of the human heart on display here
2. The wickedness of the chief priests and rulers, who daily studied the Scriptures that testified to Jesus... and they refused to believe what was written, but selfishly sought to preserve their position of power
3. The wickedness of Judas, who was the hypocrite of all hypocrites in his betrayal of Jesus with a kiss
4. The mindless callousness of the Romans and the rest of the crowd who were blindly following orders to arrest Jesus
5. The unbelief of Peter, who did not understand the purposes of God in Christ death and took matters into his own hands with his sword
6. The cowardice of the disciples, who loved their lives in this world so much that they forsook Jesus (all of them!!!) and fled
7. See the sin in your own heart!!

D. Zero in on Judas's Kiss

1. Judas was a reprobate and, God-willing, by His grace, you are not
2. BUT is there not some of the Judas kiss in each one of us?
3. Isn't it true that any time we do something outwardly righteous to honor Christ, but our hearts are cold toward Him, it's like a Judas kiss?

Matthew 15:8-9 "These people honor me with their lips, but their hearts are far from me. ⁹ They worship me in vain

4. Plead with the Lord to transform your heart and make everything you do for Christ pure and holy, passionate and flowing from a deep love for Jesus

E. Reject the Sword as the Tool of Gospel Advance

1. Peter thought the sword was how the Kingdom would come
2. Jesus' statement to Pilate

John 18:36 Jesus said, "My kingdom is not of this world. If it were, my servants would fight to prevent my arrest by the Jews. But now my kingdom is from another place."

Peter sought to FIGHT to prevent His arrest from the Jews... and that was, to Jesus, clear evidence of the way KINGDOMS OF THIS WORLD advance

3. Jesus' statement on how His Kingdom advances

John 12:24-26 I tell you the truth, unless a kernel of wheat falls to the ground and dies, it remains only a single seed. But if it dies, it produces many seeds. ²⁵ The man who loves his life will lose it, while the man who hates his life in this world will keep it for eternal life. ²⁶ Whoever serves me must follow me; and where I am, my servant also will be. My Father will honor the one who serves me.

NOT BY KILLING BUT BY DYING!!!!

4. Paul's statement about our warfare

2 Corinthians 10:3-5 For though we live in the world, we do not wage war as the world does. ⁴ The weapons we fight with are not the weapons of the world. On the contrary, they have divine power to demolish strongholds. ⁵ We demolish arguments and every pretension that sets itself up against the knowledge of God, and we take captive every thought to make it obedient to Christ.

5. BUT... the Crusades, from 11th through 13th centuries, a series of nine terribly misguided military campaigns by European monarchs representing Christendom, bloody kings who were used to converting people by the sword and conquest; they thought God wanted them to reconquer Jerusalem by the sword from the Muslims

Ralph Winter [US Center for World Mission]: “[The Crusades were] the most massive and tragic misconstrual of Christian mission in all of history.”

Winter noted that all of the major crusades were led by descendants of the Vikings

6. And all who have confused loyalty to a nation (patriotism) and military service with the advance of Christ's Kingdom

7. “The End of the Spear”... Nate Saint's son wanted his father to take a gun with them when they met the Waodani tribe

Just before flying in to engage the Waodani, Steve Saint asks his father if they will use their guns if attacked. He replies, “No. If we die, we are ready for heaven, but the Waodani are not.”

8. “Coexist”... the bumper stickers speak of the need for all religions to get along and not kill each other... Christians should understand this better than anyone from the parable of the wheat and the weeds

Matthew 13:28-30 'Do you want us to go and pull them up?' ²⁹ "'No,' he answered, 'because while you are pulling the weeds, you may root up the wheat with them. ³⁰ Let both grow together until the harvest. At that time I will tell the harvesters: First collect the weeds and tie them in bundles to be burned; then gather the wheat and bring it into my barn.'"

9. True Christians understand that the Kingdom of Christ does not advance by killing but by dying

F. Embrace Christ's View of Scripture

Matthew 26:54 how then would the Scriptures be fulfilled that say it must happen in this way?"

1. Total perfection of Scripture

2 Timothy 3:16 All Scripture is God-breathed

2. Absolute authority of Scripture

John 10:35 the Scripture cannot be broken-

3. Jesus' attitude: "I would rather die than break Scripture!"

G. Sanctification: Embrace the Angels' Attitude Toward Serving Christ

Matthew 26:53 Do you think I cannot call on my Father, and he will at once put at my disposal more than twelve legions of angels?

Romans 6:13 Do not offer the parts of your body to sin, as instruments of wickedness, but rather offer yourselves to God, as those who have been brought from death to life; and offer the parts of your body to him as instruments of righteousness.