

The Arrest of Jesus and Peter's Denial Mark 14:43-54, 66-72

by R.A. Torrey

Jesus Christ was betrayed, denied, and forsaken by his disciples, but he remained calm and submissive, and his followers learned valuable lessons about faith, trust, and repentance.

Scripture: Mark 14:43

Topics: "Betrayal", "Denial", "Repentance"

Description

R.A. Torrey explores the events surrounding the arrest of Jesus and Peter's subsequent denial, emphasizing the betrayal by Judas and the disciples' abandonment of Jesus in His hour of need. He highlights Peter's impulsive actions and his eventual denial, contrasting it with the steadfastness of Jesus, who faced betrayal and arrest with calm dignity. Torrey reflects on the nature of true courage and the importance of relying on Christ's love rather than our own strength. The sermon serves as a reminder of the human tendency to falter under pressure and the need for repentance and reliance on God's grace.

Transcript

(Compare Matthew 26:47-56, 69-75; Luke 22:47-62; John 18:1-27)

DISCOVERY OF THE FACTS

1. Jesus Betrayed, vv. 43-49 Who came to arrest Jesus? Who led the way? (Luke 22:47.) Had Judas ever been there before? (John 18:2.) What had Judas seen and heard there in times past? Did the sacred memory of these things hold Judas back from his awful sin? Why not? (John 18:27, f. h.) What kind of a company was it that came to arrest Jesus? (Compare John 18:3, R. V.) What preparations had they made for His capture? (Compare John 18:3, R. V., margin.) Why had they made these preparations?

Were they necessary (vv. 48, 49)? Would they have been of any use if Jesus had seen fit to resist arrest? (Matt. 26:53.) What two bands were to meet in that garden? Who was at the head of the one? Who at the head of the other? From whom did this mob come? Why does Mark mention this fact? Did they need to search much for Jesus? (John 18:4.) What sign had Judas appointed by which they might distinguish Jesus? What must have been the state of Judas' heart that he could appoint such a means of betrayal as that?

Do people nowadays ever betray Jesus by professions of loyalty and love? What had Judas told them to do with the one he kissed? Why was Judas so anxious that Jesus should by no possibility escape? Who is always the bitterest and most determined hater of the Saviour? What lay at the bottom of Judas, hatred of Jesus? Was Judas allowed to kiss Jesus without a protest on His part? (Luke 22:47, 48.) What was the purpose of that protest? Did that protest deter Judas from kissing Him?

What will deter one from his purposed sin when his heart is fully set within him to do evil? Did the opportunity and grace that Judas spurned make his fall any the less deep? Did Judas kiss Jesus only once? What is the significance of this repeated kissing? Was Jesus ever kissed again on earth? As soon as Judas had kissed Him what was done? (Compare John 18:12.) Did the disciples make any resistance? Was it a very wise act on Peter's part? Did it reveal any lack of faith? (Matt. 26:53.)

What does it always reveal when we come to the help of Christ's cause with carnal weapons? How did the rest show a wisdom superior to Peter's? (Luke 22:49.) Was Peter's blow very well directed? Why not? What prompted it? What was the trouble with the love? Which is better, rash love or the calculating selfishness that criticizes because it lacks the courage to imitate? What is better than either? Were the disciples cowards? What did they have the courage to do? What did they lack the courage to do?

Which is the higher kind of courage? To which kind of courage is it that God calls us now? (1 Peter 2:20, 21.) Did Peter's courage last? Does the courage that manifests itself in acts of rash daring usually last? What was Peter trying to prove? (Luke 22:33.) Did this act get Peter into any trouble (v. 26)? Did Peter get any praise for his daring act? (John 18:11; Matt. 26:52.) When alone will a daring act win the Master's praise? Did Jesus protest against the manner of His arrest?

With what thought did He comfort Himself in view of all the ignominy of it? What Scripture was fulfilled by this coming out after Him as after a robber and the desertion by His disciples? (Is. 43:12, 27, last half; compare Zech. 13:7.) To whom did the disciples owe their opportunity to escape? (John 18:8.) 2. Jesus Forsaken, vv. 50-53 When the disciples found they were not to be allowed to fight, did their courage last? Would we have done any better? Were they as much to blame for deserting Jesus in the hour of peril as we would be today?

Did the time ever come when they would not forsake Him? (Acts 4:19, 20; 5:28-32.) Is there anything better for us to depend upon to keep us from deserting Him than our love to Him? Who might we have expected from former professions to have stayed by Jesus in this hour of peril? (John 13:37; c. 10:38, 39.) Ought the disciple who closely follows Jesus expect that there may be times when he, too, will be deserted by trusted friends and left alone? (Matt. 10:24; John 15:20; 2 Tim. 4:16.)

Was Jesus entirely alone? (John 16:32.) When all men desert us are we alone? (Matt. 28:20; 2 Tim. 4:16, 17.) Is that enough? Was there any human sympathizer left when the eleven had fled? Who was this young man? (Compare Acts 12:12; 15:38.) Did Mark stay long? What were all those who now surrounded Jesus? Where did they lead Him? What had they already determined upon? (c. 14:1.) [NOTE.--The preliminary trial of Jesus before Annas previous to His being taken before Caiaphas, recorded only in John (John 18:12-27), occurred at this point, but will not be considered separately from the trial before Caiaphas]. 3.

Jesus Denied, vv. 54, 66-72 Was there anyone who did not altogether desert the Saviour? How had he said that very night that he would follow? (John 13:37.) How did he follow? How far did Peter follow? Was that a safe place for Peter? What warning of the Saviour's ought he to have remembered? (v. 38.) What

did Peter do when he got into the court? For what purpose did he go and sit down by the fire? Was it wise? (Ps. 1:1; Matt. 6:13.) Is it wise for us to seek comfort at the enemies' fire?

Do professed Christians ever do it nowadays? How? What is it pretty sure to end in? For what purpose alone can the Christian safely seek the society of the unsaved? Is there any fact recorded in this lesson that grieved Jesus more than this ill treatment on the part of His avowed enemies? Which grieves Jesus more today, the opposition of avowed enemies or the denial of His professed friends? Where was Peter? Does it ever happen nowadays that those who are very outspoken and zealous for Christ when surrounded by Christian associations try to cover up their allegiance to Him when in the midst of ungodly companions?

What charge was made against Peter? Was that a thing to be ashamed of? Are people ever ashamed of it nowadays? What does Christ say of such? (c. 8:38.) Who made the charge? (John 18:17.) How did she know him? (Luke 22:56.) How did Peter receive this accusation? Had this denial been predicted? (v. 30.) Was Peter then to blame? What steps had led up to this sad denial? (v. 29; compare Prov. 29:23; vv. 30, 31; compare Prov. 28:26; vv. 37-41; vv. 47, 54.) Who was back of Peter's fall? (Luke 22:31.)

What need have we to be on our guard against a like fall? (1 Peter 5:8.) Will God allow us to be led into any place where we cannot stand? (1 Cor. 10:13.) In order that we may continue to stand, what is it necessary that we do? (1 Cor. 10:12.) Were Peter's troubles settled by this first denial? Can we ever get ourselves permanently out of our difficulties by lying? What did Peter do after this first denial? What occurred then? How did he meet the accusation this time? How do we see that he was sinking deeper into the mire? (compare Matt. 26:72.)

Did Peter's troubles end with his perjury? How long did he have for reflection between his second and third denial? (Luke 22:59.) Had that hour been well spent? How did they back up the charge this time? (Compare John 18:26.) Who acted as spokesman for the company? (John 18:26.) How did Peter meet the charge this time? What reason had Peter for being especially emphatic this time? Is it a good reason for believing a man is telling the truth because he seeks to confirm his word by imprecations?

What happened just then? What effect had that crowing upon Peter? Hadn't the cock crowed before (v. 72)? What was it that went along with the cock crowing this time that awakened Peter? (Luke 22:61.) What kind of a look was it? What did Peter do after that look? What better evidence of repentance did Peter give than tears? (Acts 4:18-20; 5:28, 29.) Was there the same spirit of denying Christ lurking in the hearts of the other disciples that came out openly in Peter? Do Christians ever deny the Master now?

How? What difference was there between Peter and Judas in their fall? (Matt. 27:3-5.) How was Peter saved from utter ruin? (Luke 22:32.) What saves us? (Heb. 7:25; 1 John 2:1.) Was the fall in any way a good thing for Peter? (John 21:15-17.) Did Jesus forgive Peter his denial? (c. 16:7.) What proof have we that Peter learned the lesson of this experience well? (1 Peter 3:15; 5:5, 6, 8; 2 Peter 2:1.) Which of Peter's professions of love to Jesus meant the most, that which he made before his trial and fall (John 13:37) or that which he made after he was forgiven (John 21:17)? How can we invite to ourselves just such a humiliating fall as this of Peter? CLASSIFICATION OF TEACHINGS

1. Jesus Christ

(1). His character:

His deep humility, allowing Himself to be treated as a felon, 46, 48; compare Matt. 26:53;

His absolute fearlessness, 48, 49;

His imperturbable calmness, 48, 49;

His sublime dignity, 48, 49;

His unhesitating submission to the Father's will and the revealed Word, 49;

His keen sensitiveness, 48;

His wondrous love, loving even Judas, 43-45; compare Luke 22:47, 48.

(2). His treatment by men:

The chief priests and the scribes and the elders treated Him as an outlaw, sent a mob with swords and stones, etc., to take Him, 43, 48.

The mob laid their hands on Him and arrested Him, 46.

He was betrayed by one disciple, 43, 44; denied by another, 66-72; forsaken by all, 50.

2. Peter

(1). His love for his Master:

Its daring, 47; its instability, 50, 66-72.

(2). His courage:

He had the impulsive courage to strike in the face of overwhelming numbers, 47;

He lacked the steady courage to stand at his post and do nothing but await orders, 50.

(3). His blow:

He struck without orders, 47;

He struck without intelligent purpose, 47;

He struck without taking aim, 47;

Results of the blow were severance of a poor slave's ear, 47, and his own fall, 47; compare John 18:26, 27.

(4). His fall:

The cause was his trust in his own love to Christ (later he trusted in Christ's love to him and stood), 66-72; compare John 13:37.

The steps in his fall were: He struck a rash, foolish, unnecessary and unbidden blow, 47; forsook Christ and fled, 50; followed afar off, 54; went into a place of temptation, 54; sat with Christ's enemies, 54; sought

comfort at the enemies' fire, 54; frightened by the charge preferred by a maid, 68; denied his Lord, 68; denied Him again with an oath, 70; compare Matt. 26:72. Denied Him the third time with cursing and swearing, 71; (see also v. 29; compare Prov. 24:23, 30, 31; compare Prov. 28:26; vv. 37-41.)

(5). His repentance:

Its cause was the remembered word of Christ, 72;

Its manifestation was His weeping, 72;

He proved loyal in the face of awful peril, Acts 4:19, 20; 5:29.

3. Judas

(1). His perfidy:

Acted as the tool of the enemies of his Friend and Master, 43; consorted with the enemies of his Friend and Master, 43; compare John 18:5; betrayed his Friend and Master, 44, 45.

(2). His hypocrisy:

Betrayed Christ with a kiss (Humanity's parting kiss to its Saviour was the kiss of Judas), 44, 45.

(3). His insensibility to holy feeling:

Betrayed his Master at the spot where he had often seen Him bowed in prayer, 43; compare John 18:2.

(4). The bitterness of his hatred to Christ:

Feared lest by some mischance He should escape the cruelty and violence of His enemies, 44.

4. The Word of God

Its certainty, 49; its power to strengthen the heart in sore trial, 49; its power to produce repentance, 72.

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